DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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CONTENTS

	PAGE NO.
GOVERNOR HOPES DISCUSSIONS IN HANOI WILL GET ARRANGEMENTS INTO PLACE ..	1
UNDERSTANDING, PROTECTING ENVIRONMENT A BIG CHALLENGE	2
INCREASE IN NUMBER OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE DEALERS	3
ESTABLISHMENT OF HK COALITION OF SERVICE INDUSTRIES WELCOMED	4
PUBLIC URGED TO SUBMIT VIEWS ON SOCIAL WELFARE	5
CONSULTANCY STUDY ON STAGING INT'L TECHNOLOGY FAIR	6
MARINE INQUIRY INTO HYDROFOIL STRANDING ORDERED	7
CSD TO TAKE PART IN FLOWER SHOW	7
SECOND FRENCH MINERAL WATER BEING EXAMINED	8
COMMUNITY HALL FOR SHA TAU KOK RESIDENTS	8
YAU TSIM DB TO DISCUSS GUESTHOUSE LICENSING	9
CIVIC EDUCATION CARNIVAL IN WONG TAI SIN	10
COMMITTEE TO GAUGE VIEWS ON HOUSING FOR ELDERLY	11
YAU TSIM TO HOLD FIGHT CRIME CARNIVAL	12
CIVIC EDUCATION VARIETY SHOW	13
TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN CENTRAL	13
LANE CLOSURE AT AIRPORT	14
TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF WUHU VEHICULAR UNDERPASS	14
TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN WANG TAU HOM	15
LONG VEHICLE BAN IN LUEN WO HUI	15
FLUSHING WATER CUT IN HO MAN TIN AND KING'S PARK	15

GOVERNOR HOPES DISCUSSIONS IN HANOI WILL GET ARRANGEMENTS INTO PLACE

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THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY) HE HOPED THAT WE WOULD GET ARRANGEMENTS INTO PLACE FOR VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE WHO WERE NOT ACTUALLY VOLUNTEERS, TO BE SENT BACK TO VIETNAM IN DISCUSSIONS NOW GOING ON IN HANOI THIS WEEK.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER OPENING THE PETER SCOTT FIELD STUDIES CENTRE AT MAI PO, SIR DAVID SAID: "BECAUSE THAT MUST BE PART OF ANY ARRANGEMENT FOR DEALING WITH THE WHOLE PROBLEM AND PUTTING INTO EFFECT THE WHOLE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION. YOU NEED RESETTLEMENT; YOU NEED VOLUNTEERS TO GO BACK AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE; AND YOU NEED ARRANGEMENTS FOR THOSE WHO HAVEN'T ACTUALLY VOLUNTEERED."

SIR DAVID ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS AGREEMENT WITH THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT TO SEND BACK PEOPLE WHO HAD NOT ACTIVELY VOLUNTEERED TO GO BACK.

"THAT AGREEMENT IS THERE. WE'VE USED IT ONCE. WE WANT TO GO ON USING IT. WHAT WILL NOW BE DISCUSSED IN HANOI IS THE TECHNICAL DETAILS, HOW CAN WE CONTINUE THAT AGREEMENT," HE SAID.

ASKED ABOUT THE USE OF FORCE TO SEND BOAT PEOPLE BACK, SIR DAVID SAID: "WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO IS USE THE ARRANGEMENTS THAT EVERY COUNTRY EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD USES FOR DEPORTING PEOPLE WHO ARE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

"WE DO IT EVERY DAY, SENDING PEOPLE BACK TO CHINA; THE UNITED STATES DOES IT EVERY DAY, SENDING PEOPLE BACK TO HAITI, SENDING PEOPLE BACK TO MEXICO; BRITAIN DOES IT EVERY DAY, SENDING PEOPLE WHO HAVE ENTERED BRITAIN ILLEGALLY.

"WE NEED THE SAME ARRANGEMENTS IN PLACE IN HONG KONG FOR RETURNING PEOPLE TO VIETNAM," THE GOVERNOR SAID.

SIR DAVID SAID IT WOULD BE A VERY GOOD THING IF WE COULD INCREASE THE NUMBER OF BOAT PEOPLE WHO HAD VOLUNTEERED TO RETURN TO VIETNAM, AND TO DO SO AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

"SO IF VIETNAM NOW PUTS IN PLACE ARRANGEMENTS FOR GETTING VOLUNTEERS BACK TO VIETNAM QUICKER THEN WE WILL BE PLEASED, AND THE MORE PEOPLE WHO VOLUNTEER, THE HAPPIER WE SHALL ALL BE," HE ADDED.

THE GOVERNOR POINTED OUT THAT HE DID NOT THINK PEOPLE GOING BACK AS VOLUNTEERS COULD SOLVE THE WHOLE PROBLEM, BUT THAT IT COULD HELP TO DEAL WITH SOME BITS OF THE PROBLEM.

"IT IS OBVIOUSLY BETTER THAT PEOPLE SHOULD VOLUNTEER TO GO BACK THAN WE SHOULD HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THEY ARE SENT BACK AS NON-VOLUNTEERS. BUT IT WOULD BE NAIVE TO EXPECT THAT WE COULD SOLVE THE WHOLE PROBLEM SIMPLY BY WAITING FOR PEOPLE TO VOLUNTEER," SIR DAVID SAID.

"THAT IS WHY WE ALSO WANT TO GET IN PLACE ARRANGEMENTS FOR RETURNING PEOPLE WHO HAVE NOT ACTUALLY VOLUNTEERED TO GO BACK," HE ADDED.

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UNDERSTANDING, PROTECTING ENVIRONMENT A BIG CHALLENGE

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PROMOTING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE NEED TO PROTECT IT IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC AS HONG KONG MOVES TOWARDS A NEW CENTURY, THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE HONG KONG PETER SCOTT FIELD STUDIES CENTRE AT MAI PO, SIR DAVID SAID THE OPENING OF THE CENTRE WOULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN THAT PROCESS.

"I HOPE IT BRINGS ENJOYMENT AND GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF NATURE TO EVER INCREASING NUMBERS OF PEOPLE IN HONG KONG," HE SAID.

THE GOVERNOR POINTED OUT THAT PEOPLE IN HONG KONG LIVED IN ONE OF THE MOST CROWDED ENVIRONMENTS IN THE WORLD, AND IT WAS ALSO ONE OF THE WORLD'S CROSSROADS.

LAST YEAR 16.2 MILLION PASSENGERS USED KAI TAK AIRPORT, AND MANY CAME AS TOURISTS TO SEE THE FASCINATING CITY THAT HONG KONG WAS.

SIR DAVID SAID, FORTUNATELY, OUTSIDE ITS URBAN ENVIRONMENT HONG KONG HAD LARGE AREAS OF UNSPOILT COUNTRYSIDE, AND THE MARSHLAND OF MAI PO WAS AN IMPORTANT AND UNIQUE PART OF IT.

"IT IS PERHAPS ONLY A SLIGHT EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT THE MAI PO MARSHES ARE THE KAI TAK OF THE BIRD WORLD. 180 MIGRATORY SPECIES STOPPED OFF THERE ON THE WAY TO AND FROM OTHER DESTINATIONS.

"MAI PO IS THUS OF MAJOR INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE AS A STOPOVER FOR MIGRATORY BIRD TRAFFIC," SIR DAVID SAID.

THE GOVERNOR SAID ITS PRESERVATION WAS AMPLY JUSTIFIED BY ITS INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE.

BUT IN OUR CROWDED ENVIRONMENT HERE WE COULD NOT AFFORD THAT IT SHOULD BECOME SIMPLY THE PRESERVE OF A FEW PEOPLE OR A FEW SPECIALISTS.

"WE NEED TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE PRESENCE IN OUR MIDST OF SUCH AN IMPORTANT NATURE RESERVE TO EDUCATE OUR POPULATION, PARTICULARLY YOUNG PEOPLE, IN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND OF WILDLIFE," HE SAID.

THE GOVERNOR ADDED THAT HONG KONG WAS VERY FORTUNATE IN THE ENERGETIC APPROACH TAKEN BY THE HONG KONG BRANCH OF THE WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE IN MAINTAINING AND DEVELOPING MAI PO AS A RESERVE.

"I HAVE BEEN CONSTANTLY IMPRESSED WITH THE VIGOUR AND ORGANISATIONAL ABILITY WHICH THEY HAVE SHOWN," SIR DAVID SAID.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID THE OPENING OF THE PETER SCOTT CENTRE, WHICH WAS NAMED AFTER A VERY GREAT NATURALIST AND A PIONEER OF CONSERVATION, WAS YET ANOTHER IMPORTANT MILESTONE IN THE HISTORY OF THE MAI PO NATURE RESERVE.

THE NEW CENTRE WILL PROVIDE ON-SITE ACOMMODATION FOR RESERVE STAFF FROM CHINA AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA FOR THE WETLAND MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION COURSES WHICH ARE BEING OFFERED AT MAI PO MARSHES.

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INCREASE IN NUMBER OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE DEALERS

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A SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING ON 52 OF THE MOST ACTIVE FOREIGN EXCHANGE BANKS AND DEPOSIT TAKING COMPANIES SHOWED THAT THE NUMBER OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE DEALERS EMPLOYED BY THESE INSTITUTIONS ROSE FROM 657 TO 662 LAST YEAR.

THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING, MR ANTHONY NICOLLE, SAID THIS TODAY (THURSDAY) WHEN HE SPOKE AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHINESE BANKING IN ASIA-PACIFIC REGION AT THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS FASHIONABLE THESE DAYS TO COLOUR ANY ASSESSMENT OF HONG KONG WITH PESSIMISM, CITING AS AN EXAMPLE THE CONSTANT HARPING ON A SUPPOSED STRONG EXODUS OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE DEALERS.

TO GET MATTERS INTO PERSPECTIVE, A SURVEY WAS CARRIED OUT AND THE RESULT SHOWED THAT THE NUMBER OF DEALERS ROSE, ALBEIT MODESTLY.

"OF COURSE OUR FUTURE HAS A NUMBER OF UNCERTAINTIES. BUT WE MUST NOT LET THESE MASK THE OPPORTUNITIES WHICH LIE AHEAD," MR NICOLLE SAID.

"NEITHER SHOULD WE ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE DETERRED FROM TAKING POSITIVE STEPS TO OVERCOME OUR DIFFICULTIES, FOR EXAMPLE BY STEPPING UP OUR TRAINING EFFORT.

"THE ROLE OF THE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IS CRUCIAL, AS IS THAT OF THE BANKING TRAINING COUNCIL," HE SAID.

TURNING TO HONG KONG'S BANKING INDUSTRY, MR NICOLLE SAID IT WAS IN GOOD HEALTH AND BANKS WERE REPORTING GOOD RESULTS FOR LAST YEAR.

"THEY ARE WELL-CAPITALISED, ALREADY CONFORMING TO THE INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL ADEQUACY STANDARDS, THREE YEARS AHEAD OF MANY OF THEIR INTERNATIONAL COMPETITORS.

/"OUR SUPERVISORY .....

"OUR SUPERVISORY ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY OVER-HAULED. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE WILL BE NO REPETITION OF PREVIOUS DECADES WHEN ILL-QUALIFIED PEOPLE ESTABLISHED OR CONTROLLED BANKS HERE," HE SAID.

MR NICOLLE POINTED OUT THAT THE ACTIVITY AND PROFITS GENERATED FROM BANKING WERE KEY ELEMENTS IN HONG KONG'S CURRENT PROSPERITY, ADDING THAT THESE ELEMENTS HAD GROWN RAPIDLY IN RECENT YEARS AS HONG KONG DEVELOPED INTO ONE OF THE WORLD'S MAJOR BANKING CENTRES.

"OF THE 165 LICENSED BANKS, NO LESS THAN 150 WERE EITHER INCORPORATED OVERSEAS, OR WERE OWNED BY OVERSEAS INTERESTS.

"ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FOUR OF THE BANKS WERE COUNTED AMONGST THE WORLD'S LARGEST 500 BANKS.

"AT THE END OF LAST YEAR, TWO-THIRDS OF THE BANKING SECTOR'S BALANCE SHEET WAS REPRESENTED BY CLAIMS ON OVERSEAS COUNTRIES. AND THIS TAKES NO ACCOUNT OF THE AMOUNTS LENT WITHIN HONG KONG TO FINANCE THE OVERSEAS TRADE OF OUR BUSINESSES," HE SAID.

HE NOTED THAT IN THE SPHERE OF BANKING, THE GOVERNMENT'S TASK WAS TO CONTINUE WITH THE WORK WHICH HAD NOW BEEN UNDERWAY FOR THE PAST FOUR TO FIVE YEARS, CONSOLIDATING THE IMPROVEMENTS TO OUR SUPERVISORY SYSTEM.

"AND WE MUST CONTINUE TO ENSURE THAT HONG KONG REMAINS AN ATTRACTIVE PLACE FOR LOCAL AND OVERSEAS BANKS, CHINESE AND NON-CHINESE, TO DO BUSINESS," HE SAID.

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ESTABLISHMENT OF HK COALITION OF SERVICE INDUSTRIES WELCOMED

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS WELCOMED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HONG KONG COALITION OF SERVICE INDUSTRIES (HKCSI).

"IT IS ENCOURAGING TO SEE THE ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT OF A WIDE RANGE OF SERVICE INDUSTRIES FOR THE HKCSI BY VIRTUE OF THEIR PARTICIPATION AS MEMBERS," THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR JOSEPH W.P. WONG, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

MR WONG SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE HKCSI WOULD HELP PROMOTE THE INTERESTS OF HONG KONG'S SERVICE INDUSTRIES THROUGH CO-OPERATION BETWEEN MEMBERS.

ALSO, AS A FOCAL POINT FOR LIAISON WITH THE GOVERNMENT, THE HKCSI WOULD PROVIDE USEFUL INPUT TO THE EXISTING CONSULTATIVE PROCESS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR REGARDING THE CURRENT URUGUAY ROUND NEGOTIATIONS ON TRADE IN SERVICES, HE SAID.

/OVER 100 .....

OVER 100 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES WERE NEGOTIATING WITH A VIEW TO REACHING A MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON PROGRESSIVE LIBERALISATION OF TRADE IN SERVICES AND HONG KONG WAS AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

"BEING A REPRESENTATIVE BODY OF HONG KONG'S SERVICE SECTOR INDUSTRIES, THE HKCSI WILL ALSO BE ANOTHER MEANS BY WHICH HONG KONG CAN LIAISE OR CO-ORDINATE WITH INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND SIMILAR BODIES IN OTHER COUNTRIES," MR WONG SAID.

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PUBLIC URGED TO SUBMIT VIEWS ON SOCIAL WELFARE
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MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE TODAY (THURSDAY) URGED TO SEND IN THEIR VIEWS IN WRITING ON SOCIAL WELFARE POLICIES AND SERVICES INTO THE 1990'S AND BEYOND.

THE SECRETARY OF THE WORKING PARTY ON THE WHITE PAPER ON SOCIAL WELFARE POLICIES AND SERVICES, MRS LOUISE WONG, SAID THE FIVE SUB-COMMITTEES HAD CONVENED THEIR FIRST MEETINGS RECENTLY AND WERE NOW WORKING ON A VERY TIGHT SCHEDULE.

"THE VIEWS COLLECTED WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTY FOR CONSIDERATION AND REFERENCE," SHE SAID.

"THE WORKING PARTY'S CONCLUSION ON EACH SPECIFIC PROGRAMME AREA WILL BE MADE KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC THROUGH THE MASS MEDIA.

"PUBLIC VIEWS ON THESE CONCLUSIONS WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN THE WORKING PARTY FINALISES ITS PROPOSALS," SHE ADDED.

MRS WONG ALSO REMINDED THE PUBLIC THAT THE RENTAL OF A CENTRAL POST OFFICE POST BOX TO RECEIVE WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS ON THE PROPOSED WHITE PAPER WAS DUE TO EXPIRE ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28.

"HOWEVER, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC CAN CONTINUE TO SEND IN THEIR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS AFTER THAT DATE.

"THEY SHOULD ADDRESS THEIR SUBMISSIONS EITHER TO THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE OR TO THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE," SHE SAID.

THE ADDRESSES ARE: SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, MAIN WING, GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT, LOWER ALBERT ROAD, HONG KONG OR THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, WORLD TRADE CENTRE, 19TH FLOOR, 280 GLOUCESTER ROAD, CAUSEWAY BAY, HONG KONG.

MRS WONG NOTED THAT A TOTAL OF 50 WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS HAD BEEN RECEIVED SINCE THE RENTAL OF THE POST BOX LAST DECEMBER. THE MOST OF THE SUBMISSIONS WERE FROM INDIVIDUALS.

/COMMENTING ON .....

COMMENTING ON THE BACKGROUND INFORMATION PAPER, MRS WONG EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS DESIGNED TO GIVE THE PUBLIC A SYNOPSIS OF THE SERVICES CURRENTLY BEING PROVIDED AND TO SEEK VIEWS ON THE ADEQUACY OR OTHERWISE OF THESE.

"THE DOCUMENT DOES NOT INDICATE POSSIBLE CHANGES OR NEW IDEAS BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO PRECONCEIVED VIEWS ON THIS MATTER AND IT IS FOR THE WORKING PARTY TO PROPOSE CHANGES, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE VIEWS OF THE PUBLIC," SHE CONCLUDED.

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CONSULTANCY STUDY ON STAGING INT'L TECHNOLOGY FAIR
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THE TRADE AND INDUSTRY BRANCH, ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, HAS COMMISSIONED CONSULTANTS TO CARRY OUT A STUDY ON THE FEASIBILITY OF STAGING AN INTERNATIONAL TECHNOLOGY FAIR IN HONG KONG IN THE EARLY 1990'S.

THE CONTRACT FOR THE STUDY WAS SIGNED TODAY (THURSDAY) BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR JOHN CHAN.

THE $0.48 MILLION STUDY IS TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY BDG MANAGEMENT LTD AND BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL TRADE FAIRS LTD. IT IS FINANCED BY A DONATION FROM THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB.

THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, WHICH ADVISES THE GOVERNMENT ON NEW SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ISSUES, IS EXPLORING THE IDEA OF AN INTERNATIONAL TECHNOLOGY FAIR AS A MEANS OF ENHANCING HONG KONG'S IMAGE IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

THE AIM WOULD BE TO ACHIEVE INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR HONG KONG AS A REGIONAL CENTRE CAPABLE OF FACILITATING THE EXCHANGE OF COMMERCIALISABLE OR NEAR-COMMERCIALISABLE TECHNOLOGIES.

THE CONSULTANTS WILL ASSESS THE DEMAND IN NORTH AMERICA, EUROPE AND ASIA FOR A HONG KONG-BASED TECHNOLOGY EXCHANGE FAIR.

IF THE OUTLOOK IS FAVOURABLE, THEY WILL GO ON TO DEVELOP A DETAILED PLAN AND IDENTIFY POSSIBLE SPONSORS.

THE STUDY IS EXPECTED TO START NEXT MONTH AND BE COMPLETED IN ABOUT 20 WEEKS.

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MARINE INQUIRY INTO HYDROFOIL STRANDING ORDERED
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THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE, MR MICHAEL C.C. SZE, TODAY (THURSDAY) APPOINTED SENIOR SURVEYOR OF SHIPS, MR B.B. RAO, TO CONDUCT A LOCAL MARINE INQUIRY INTO THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE STRANDING OF A HYDROFOIL, FLYING ALBATROSS, IN DEEP BAY ON FEBRUARY 19.

THE INQUIRY WAS ORDERED BY MR SZE UNDER THE SHIPPING AND PORT CONTROL ORDINANCE, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE MARINE DEPARTMENT SAID.

THE HYDROFOIL WAS RETURNING TO HONG KONG FROM MACAU WHEN THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED. THERE WERE NO INJURIES TO PASSENGERS AND ONLY SUPERFICIAL DAMAGE TO THE VESSEL.

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CSD TO TAKE PART IN FLOWER SHOW
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THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE HONG KONG FLOWER SHOW FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR.

THE SHOW, ORGANISED BY THE REGIONAL COUNCIL AND THE URBAN COUNCIL, WILL BE HELD FROM TOMORROW (FRIDAY) TO MARCH 4 AT VICTORIA PARK, CAUSEWAY BAY.

THE COLOURFUL FLOWERS AND PLANTS ON DISPLAY AT THE DEPARTMENT'S STALL ARE ALL GROWN BY INMATES AND STAFF WHO ARE INTERESTED IN GARDENING.

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF MA HANG PRISON, MR NG WAI-MAN, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY) THAT THE DEPARTMENT'S PARTICIPATION IN THE FLOWER SHOW WOULD HELP BOOST THE GARDENING PROGRAMME WHICH WAS ONE OF THE CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMMES AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR PRISONERS.

"THE GARDENING PROGRAMME, DESIGNED TO HELP INMATES CULTIVATE A HEALTHY HOBBY, HAS BEEN INTRODUCED TO PENAL INSTITUTIONS FOR MANY YEARS.

"IT IS PARTICULARLY WELL PROMOTED AT MA HANG PRISON, TAI TAM GAP CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION AND HEI LING CHAU ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTRE," HE SAID.

MR NG ADDED THAT WITH THE JOINT EFFORT OF STAFF AND INMATES, OVER 1,000 POTTED PLANTS AND FLOWERS WERE NOW CULTIVATED AT MA HANG PRISON AND OTHER PENAL INSTITUTIONS. THERE WERE MANY SPECIES, AND SOME WERE GROWN IN GREENHOUSES, HE SAID.

/"PARTICIPATING IN .....

"PARTICIPATING IN THE FLOWER SHOW WILL HELP TO ENCOURAGE INMATES TO IMPROVE ON THE VARIETY OF PLANTS AND LANDSCAPING IN THE INSTITUTIONS.

"WE HOPE TO TAKE PART IN FUTURE FLOWER SHOWS AND EVEN ENTER COMPETITIONS," MR NG ADDED.

AT THE END OF THE FLOWER SHOW, ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR THE INMATES TO HELP THE REGIONAL AND URBAN COUNCILS CLEAN UP THE VENUE AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE.

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SECOND FRENCH MINERAL WATER BEING EXAMINED

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FOOD INSPECTORS OF THE MUNICIPAL SERVICES BRANCH (MSB) TODAY (THURSDAY) TOOK TWO SAMPLES OF ANOTHER FRENCH MINERAL WATER FOR LABORATORY TESTS FOLLOWING REPORTS FROM PARIS THAT TRACES OF ALKANES WERE FOUND IN THE BOTTLED DRINKING WATER.

THE HYGIENE ADVISER OF THE MSB, DR MOHAMMED ALI, SAID THE RESULT OF THE ANALYSIS WOULD BE MADE PUBLIC AS SOON AS THEY ARE AVAILABLE.

DR ALI URGED MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC NOT TO BE UNDULY ALARMED BY THE RECENT FRENCH REPORTS.

COMMENTING ON THE LATEST INCIDENT, DR ALI SAID ONLY A LARGE AMOUNT OF THE CHEMICAL, A TYPE OF PETROLEUM OIL COMMONLY USED AS AN INDUSTRIAL SOLVENT, COULD BE TOXIC IF INGESTED.

DR ALI STRESSED THAT THE TINY AMOUNT REPORTEDLY FOUND IN THE FRENCH MINERAL WATER WAS NO DANGER TO CONSUMERS.

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COMMUNITY HALL FOR SHA TAU KOK RESIDENTS

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A COMMUNITY HALL MANAGED BY THE NORTH DISTRICT OFFICE WAS OFFICIALLY OPENED TODAY (THURSDAY) TO SERVE RESIDENTS WITHIN THE FRONTIER CLOSED AREA OF SHA TAU KOK AND ITS NEIGHBOURING ISLANDS.

THE SHA TAU KOK COMMUNITY HALL, LOCATED IN A RURAL PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATE, IS PART OF A WIDE RANGE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES PROVIDED UNDER THE $319 MILLION REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN THE BORDER TOWNSHIP OF SHA TAU KOK.

/IT COMPRISES .....

IT COMPRISES A MULTI-PURPOSE HALL WITH A STAGE, A PUBLIC ENQUIRY SERVICE CENTRE AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICES.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF THE COMMUNITY HALL, THE NORTH DISTRICT OFFICER, MR WILLIAM HUI, SAID: "THE HALL NOT ONLY PROVIDES A VENUE FOR COMMUNITY FUNCTIONS AND INDOOR GAMES, BUT ALSO SERVES AS A BASE FOR THE NORTH DISTRICT OFFICE TO BRING ITS SERVICE TO THE DOORSTEPS OF THE RESIDENTS IN SHA TAU KOK AND ITS NEIGHBOURING ISLANDS.

"IT IS HOPED THAT AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION CHANNEL BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND RESIDENTS WOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO REFLECT RESIDENTS' NEEDS."

SERVICES AVAILABLE AT THE NEW PUBLIC ENQUIRY SERVICE CENTRE INCLUDE GENERAL ENQUIRIES, ADMINISTERING DECLARATIONS, GIVING ASSISTANCE IN SOLVING PERSONAL PROBLEMS, AND DISTRIBUTING GOVERNMENT INFORMATION MATERIAL.

MR HUI BELIEVED THAT THE SHA TAU KOK COMMUNITY HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WOULD HELP TO BOOST USE OF THE HALL, WHICH IS EQUIPPED WITH RECREATIONAL FACILITIES SUCH AS CHINESE BILLIARDS AND TABLE TENNIS.

ALSO OFFICIATING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY WAS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, MR LAU TIN-FUK.

THE COMMUNITY HALL IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FROM 10 AM TO 12 NOON AND FROM 2 PM TO 4 PM, FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY.

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YAU TSIM DB TO DISCUSS GUESTHOUSE LICENSING
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THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT BOARD WILL DISCUSS THE GOVERNMENT'S PLAN TO LICENSE GUESTHOUSES AT ITS MEETING TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

THE PLAN AIMS AT ALLOWING THE GOVERNMENT TO KEEP A REGISTER OF GUESTHOUSES AND TO IMPOSE NECESSARY REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS FOR THEIR OPERATION.

IT WOULD COVER GUESTHOUSES PATRONISED BY BUDGET TOURISTS AND LOCAL PEOPLE, HOTELS, HOLIDAY FLATS, MOTELS AND YOUTH HOSTELS.

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HONG KONG AND KOWLOON IN THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION, MRS SUSAN MAK, WILL OUTLINE THE PLAN.

/ALSO ON .....

ALSO ON THE AGENDA ARE THE INITIAL OPTIONS OF THE METROPLAN STUDY AND SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES IN THE 1990'S.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT BOARD'S MEETING TOMORROW (FRIDAY) IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF YAU TSIM DISTRICT OFFICE, SECOND FLOOR, 490 NATHAN ROAD.

THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 2.30 PM.

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CIVIC EDUCATION CARNIVAL IN WONG TAI SIN

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A CARNIVAL IN SUPPORT OF THE TERRITORY-WIDE "CIVIC EDUCATION DAY" WILL BE HELD IN WONG TAI SIN ON SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 25).

THE CARNIVAL WILL BEGIN AT 2.30 PM AT THE OPEN-AIR THEATRE IN MORSE PARK. ADMISSION IS FREE.

THE EVENT, ORGANISED BY THE WORKING GROUP ON THE PROMOTION OF CIVIC EDUCATION OF THE WONG TAI SIN DISTRICT BOARD'S COMMUNITY BUILDING COMMITTEE, WILL ALSO MARK THE CONCLUSION OF THE DISTRICT'S PUBLICITY PROGRAMME ON CIVIC EDUCATION.

THERE WILL BE PERFORMANCES BY SINGERS JOSEPH TAY, WONG PO-YAN, CHOI LAP-YEE, SO WING-HONG AND LAW KAM-WING, AS WELL AS FOLK DANCES AND GAME STALLS.

THE GAME STALLS, FEATURING THE TWIN THEMES OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PROMOTION OF CIVIC EDUCATION, WILL BE SET UP BY 11 OF THE DISTRICT'S AREA COMMITTEES.

THE THEMES ARE TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF, AND PARTICIPATE IN, LOCAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS, AND TO PROMOTE THE SPIRIT OF THE RULE OF LAW.

/A COMBINED .....

A COMBINED OPENING AND PRIZE PRESENTATION CEREMONY WILL BE HELD AT THE CARNIVAL. OFFICIATING WILL BE THE WONG TAI SIN DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMAN, DR MICHAEL LEE; A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE ON PROMOTION OF CIVIC EDUCATION, MADAM NORA YAU; DISTRICT OFFICER, MR BRIAN LAU; EAST KOWLOON REGIONAL SOCIAL WELFARE OFFICER, MR LOK MAN-PAN; DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER FOR WONG TAI SIN, MISS MAN WAI-LING; AND CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING GROUP, MR ALBERT LI.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE WONG TAI SIN CIVIC EDUCATION CARNIVAL WHICH WILL BEGIN AT 2.30 PM ON SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 25) AT THE OPEN-AIR THEATRE IN MORSE PARK, WONG TAI SIN.

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COMMITTEE TO GAUGE VIEWS ON HOUSING FOR ELDERLY

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THE SHAM SHUI PO DISTRICT BOARD'S COMMUNITY WELFARE COMMITTEE IS ORGANISING A SERIES OF ACTIVITIES TO HELP FAMILIARISE LOCAL RESIDENTS WITH A REPORT ON HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY AND TO COLLECT THEIR VIEWS.

THE REPORT, JOINTLY PRODUCED BY THE HOUSING AND SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENTS, CONTAINS PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENT TO THE ACCOMMODATION AND CARE SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS, ESPECIALLY IN RESPECT OF PUBLIC HOUSING POLICIES.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO DEPARTMENTS HAVE BEEN INVITED TO EXPLAIN THE REPORT TO LOCAL RESIDENTS AT FOUR SEMINARS BEING JOINTLY ORGANISED BY A COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP AND SEVEN LOCAL CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY.

THE FIRST WILL BE HELD ON SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 25) FROM 3 PM TO 4.30 PM AT THE NAM CHEONG DISTRICT COMMUNITY CENTRE AT NAM CHEONG ESTATE.

THE OTHERS WILL BE ON FEBRUARY 27 AT THE SHEK KIP MEI COMMUNITY HALL, MARCH 6 AT THE PAK TIN COMMUNITY HALL, AND MARCH 13 AT THE CHEUNG SHA WAN COMMUNITY CENTRE, ALL FROM 2.30 PM TO 4 PM.

THE WORKING GROUP WILL ALSO PUBLISH 10,000 COPIES OF A LEAFLET GIVING A SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE REPORT. ATTACHED TO THE LEAFLET WILL BE A QUESTIONNAIRE WHICH SEEKS TO GAUGE THE VIEWS OF RESIDENTS.

/THE LEAFLETS .....

THE LEAFLETS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AT THE SEMINARS AND CERTAIN CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY IN THE DISTRICT.

IT IS HOPED THAT ANALYSIS OF THE VIEWS COLLECTED WILL BE COMPLETED IN APRIL AND THE RESULTS WILL THEN BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED FOR CONSIDERATION.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE SEMINARS.

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YAU TSIM TO HOLD FIGHT CRIME CARNIVAL
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A CARNIVAL WILL BE HELD AT THE PIAZZA OF KOWLOON PARK ON SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 25) TO DRIVE HOME THE FIGHT CRIME MESSAGES. IT WILL START AT 2.30 PM.

THE PROGRAMME WILL INCLUDE STALL GAMES, AN ANTI-CRIME QUIZ AND A VARIETY SHOW.

CHILDREN AGED UNDER 12 WILL RECEIVE A GIFT UPON FINISHING AN ANTI-CRIME DRAWING. CRAYONS AND DRAWING PAPER WILL BE PROVIDED.

SPONSORED BY THE DISTRICT BOARD, THE CARNIVAL IS ONE OF THE ACTIVITIES ORGANISED BY THE DISTRICT'S FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE TO ENLIST PUBLIC SUPPORT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME.

OFFICIATING AT THE CARNIVAL'S OPENING WILL BE THE POLICE REGIONAL COMMANDER FOR KOWLOON, MR PETER LEE LAM-CHUEN.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME CARNIVAL TO BE HELD AT THE PIAZZA, KOWLOON PARK, BEGINNING AT 2.30 PM ON SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 25).

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CIVIC EDUCATION VARIETY SHOW
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A VARIETY SHOW WILL BE HELD AT THE KO SHAN THEATRE ON SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 25) TO MARK THE CLOSING OF THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT'S FOUR-MONTH CIVIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN.

THE EVENT IS BEING JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE DISTRICT OFFICE, URBAN COUNCIL AND THE DISTRICT'S CIVIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN ORGANISING COMMITTEE.

OFFICIATING AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY WILL BE A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PROMOTION OF CIVIC EDUCATION, MR CHAN CHUN-FAT; KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT OFFICER, MR DUNCAN PESCOD; KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMAN, MR WONG SIK-KONG; PRESIDENT OF THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT CIVIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN ORGANISING COMMITTEE, MR WU SHING-SUEN; AND AN URBAN COUNCILLOR, MR PAO PING-WING.

MORE THAN 3,000 LOCAL RESIDENTS WILL BE ENTERTAINED BY MUSIC PERFORMANCES BY LOCAL GROUPS.

PERFORMERS TAKING PART WILL INCLUDE SINGER WONG PO-YAN AND THE BAND "BEYOND".

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE CLOSING CEREMONY AND VARIETY SHOW OF THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT CIVIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN, WHICH WILL BEGIN AT 8 PM AT THE KO SHAN THEATRE ON SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 25).

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TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN CENTRAL
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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES THAT FROM 10 AM ON SATURDAY (FEBRUARY 24), THE SOUTHERN KERBSIDE LANE OF WESTBOUND CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL, FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH QUEEN VICTORIA STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 30 METRES WEST OF JUBILEE STREET, WILL BE DESIGNATED AN URBAN CLEARWAY 24 HOURS DAILY FOR A PERIOD OF ABOUT THREE MONTHS TO FACILITATE ROAD RE-CONSTRUCTION WORKS.

NO VEHICLES EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS THERE.

/ALSO FROM .....

ALSO FROM 10 AM ON SATURDAY, A SECTION OF THE EXISTING URBAN CLEARWAY FROM 7 AM TO 7 PM DAILY FOR ALL VEHICLES EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES AND THOSE WITH PERMITS ISSUED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT ON THE WESTERN KERBSIDE LANE OF DUDDELL STREET, FROM A POINT 72 METRES SOUTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL TO A POINT 91 METRES SOUTH OF THE SAME JUNCTION, WILL BE CANCELLED.

AT THE SAME TIME, ALL VEHICLES EXCEEDING SEVEN METRES IN LENGTH WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING DUDDELL STREET 24 HOURS DAILY.

THE BAN ZONE IN DUDDELL STREET FOR ALL VEHICLES EXCEEDING EIGHT METRES IN LENGTH WILL BE CANCELLED.

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LANE CLOSURE AT AIRPORT

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES THAT THE WESTBOUND KERBSIDE LANE OF ARRIVALS ROAD AT THE HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IMMEDIATELY NEXT TO THE DOWN RAMP LEADING FROM THE WESTERN END OF DEPARTURES ROAD TO ARRIVALS ROAD, HAS BEEN CLOSED TO FACILITATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ESCALATOR.

THE OFFSIDE TRAFFIC LANES WILL REMAIN OPEN.

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TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF WUHU VEHICULAR UNDERPASS

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES THAT THE WUHU VEHICULAR UNDERPASS LEADING FROM NORTHBOUND CHATHAM ROAD NORTH TO SOUTHBOUND GILLIES AVENUE WILL BE CLOSED FROM 1 AM TO 5 AM ON SATURDAY (FEBRUARY 24) BECAUSE OF CLEANSING WORKS.

DURING THE CLOSURE, MOTORISTS TRAVELLING FROM TSIM SHA TSUI, YAU MA TEI AND THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL TO HUNG HOM AREA ARE ADVISED TO USE EITHER CHATHAM ROAD SOUTH, CHEONG WAN ROAD, ON WAN ROAD, CHEONG WAN ROAD AND GILLIES AVENUE; OR GASCOIGNE ROAD, CHATHAM ROAD SOUTH, CHATHAM ROAD NORTH, PAK KUNG STREET, SHUN YUNG STREET, FAT KWONG STREET AND MA TAU WAI ROAD.

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TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN WANG TAU HOM
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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES THAT TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED IN WANG TAU HOM FOR ABOUT 10 DAYS TO FACILITATE URGENT ROAD REPAIR WORKS.

VEHICLES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO TURN FROM JUNCTION ROAD ONTO HENG LAM STREET. AFFECTED VEHICLES WILL BE DIVERTED VIA TUNG TAU TSUEN ROAD AND FUNG MO STREET.

KMB ROUTES 7 AND 11C AND GREEN MINIBUS ROUTE 14 ARE ALSO DIVERTED.

ALSO WITH INMEDIATE EFFECT VEHICLES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO TURN LEFT FROM WANG TAU HOM EAST ROAD SOUTHBOUND ONTO FU MEI STREET EASTBOUND, TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW AND ROAD SAFETY.

MOTORISTS ON WANG TAU HOM EAST ROAD SOUTHBOUND HEADING FOR FU MEI STREET EASTBOUND ARE ADVISED TO TRAVEL VIA FU MEI STREET WESTBOUND, FU KEUNG STREET, WANG TAU HOM CENTRAL ROAD AND WANG TAU HOM EAST ROAD NORTHBOUND.

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LONG VEHICLE BAN IN LUEN WO HUI
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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES THAT FROM 10 AM ON SATURDAY (FEBRUARY 24), VEHICLES EXCEEDING 12 METRES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENTER WO LUNG STREET IN LUEN WO HUI, NEW TERRITORIES.

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FLUSHING WATER CUT IN HO MAN TIN AND KING'S PARK
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FLUSHING WATER SUPPLY TO ALL PREMISES IN HO MAN TIN AND KING'S PARK WILL BE SUSPENDED FROM 2 PM ON SATURDAY (FEBRUARY 24) TO MIDNIGHT THE NEXT DAY TO FACILITATE WATER WORKS.

THE AREA AFFECTED IS LOCATED AT HO MAN TIN AND KING'S PARK DISTRICT, INCLUDING KING GEORGE V SCHOOL, HO MAN TIN ESTATE, OI MAN ESTATE, CHUN MAN COURT AND VALLEY ROAD ESTATE.

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