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MONDAY, MAY 30, 1988

FOREIGN SECRETARY REAFFIRMS BRITAIN'S COMMITMENT TO HK

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS, SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, TODAY (MONDAY) REITERATED THAT BRITAIN'S COMMITMENT TO HONG KONG AND ITS FUTURE IS FIRM AND UNSHAKEABLE.

"WE HAVE UPHELD AND WILL UPHOLD OUR OBLIGATIONS TO HONG KONG," SIR GEOFFREY SAID IN A LUNCH SPEECH TO COMMUNITY LEADERS.

THE BRITISH COMMITMENT CAME FROM THE PRIME MINISTER AND COLLEAGUES, HE SAID, ADDING THAT "WE HAVE A DEEP SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY TO HONG KONG AND ITS PEOPLE."

HE POINTED OUT THAT HE HIMSELF HAD HAD SEVEN MEETINGS IN THE LAST TWO YEARS WITH CHINA'S FOREIGN MINISTER, MR WU XUEQIAN, NOW A VICE PREMIER. "HONG KONG HAS BEEN AT THE HEART OF THOSE DISCUSSIONS," HE SAID.

SIR GEOFFREY THEN SAID: "SO LET ME ONCE AND FOR ALL DISPOSE OF THE MYTH THAT BRITAIN EVER HAS OR EVER WOULD SACRIFICE HONG KONG'S INTERESTS IN THE PURSUIT OF BETTER SINO-BRITISH RELATIONS.

"THAT IS HOGWASH. EVEN IF WE WERE DAFT ENOUGH TO THINK THERE WAS ANY BENEFIT IN DOING SO, IT WOULD NOT BE WITHIN OUR POWER. NOTHING WOULD DESTROY SINO-BRITISH RELATIONS FASTER THAN A FAILURE OF OUR JOINT ENTERPRISE IN HONG KONG. AND DON'T FORGET THAT OUR OWN ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN HONG KONG ARE IMMENSE.

"AND THE SAME IS TRUE OF CHINA. THEIR ECONOMIC INTEREST IN HONG KONG'S SUCCESS IS EVEN LARGER THAN OURS.

"QUITE APART FROM THAT, THEY HAVE THE OVERWHELMING INCENTIVE OF PROVING THAT DENG XIAOPING'S INSIGHT, ONE COUNTRY TWO SYSTEMS, CAN BE MADE A REALITY. THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THAT REALITY IS FUNDAMENTAL TO DEEPLY FELT CHINESE ASPIRATIONS FOR NATIONAL UNITY.

"SO HOWEVER YOU LOOK AT IT, BRITAIN AND CHINA HAVE THE STRONGEST INTEREST IN WORKING FOR HONG KONG'S SUCCESS. THIS COMMON INTEREST HAS BROUGHT US TOGETHER IN A CLOSE PARTNERSHIP.

"HONG KONG HAS BEEN THE CATALYST OF THIS RELATIONSHIP AND ITS CHIEF BENEFICIARY. THERE IS EVERY REASON FOR CONFIDENCE THAT HONG KONG CAN IN THE YEARS AHEAD RETAIN AND CONTINUE ITS KEY ROLE IN THE FASTEST GROWING REGION OF THE WORLD."

IN HIS SPEECH TO THE LUNCH GATHERING, WHICH WAS HOSTED BY THE CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR DAVID FORD, SIR GEOFFREY SAID HONG KONG'S FUTURE WAS COMING TOGETHER REMARKABLY WELL CONSIDERING THE MAGNITUDE AND UNIQUENESS OF THE TASK.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID THE PROGRESS MADE SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE JOINT DECLARATION IN 1984 OWED MUCH TO THE SPIRIT OF HONG KONG--THE DETERMINATION AND THE ABILITY TO TURN THOUGHT INTO ACTION AND HOPE INTO REALITY.

"WHERE DOUBT AND UNCERTAINTY EXISTED BEFORE, WE ARE BUILDING STEP-BY-STEP A STRUCTURE OF CLARITY AND CONFIDENCE.

"IT IS THAT HONG KONG SPIRIT WHICH GIVES ME THE CONVICTION THAT WHAT WE HAVE EMBARKED ON IS GOING TO WORK," HE SAID.

THE JOINT DECLARATION REMAINED AS STRONG A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE AS EVER, HE ADDED.

SIR GEOFFREY EMPHASISED THAT THOUGH HE WAS "UNASHAMEDLY UPBEAT" HE DID REALISE THAT THERE WERE FEARS AND CONCERNS AMONG HONG KONG PEOPLE, AND HE UNDERSTOOD THESE.

HE SAID: "IT IS RIGHT AND NATURAL THAT YOU SHOULD CONSTANTLY ASK YOURSELVES IF EVERYTHING IS BEING DONE WHICH CAN BE DONE TO SECURE YOUR FUTURE. THAT YOU SHOULD QUESTION, EXAMINE AND SUGGEST.

"IT IS IMPORTANT TOO THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD HAVE A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR VIEWS AND CONCERNS. THAT IS WHY I AM HERE."

REFERRING TO THE DRAFT BASIC LAW, SIR GEOFFREY SAID BRITAIN WELCOMED THE CLOSE INVOLVEMENT OF HONG KONG PEOPLE IN THE PROCESS OF DRAFTING AND CONSULTATION, AND IT WELCOMED THE STEPS BEING TAKEN BY THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT TO SEEK HONG KONG OPINION.

HE DESCRIBED THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE BASIC LAW AS A MASSIVE TEXT WHICH INCORPORATED, AS IT SHOULD, VIRTUALLY ALL THE PROVISIONS OF THE JOINT DECLARATION, OFTEN VERBATIM.

IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE OUTCOME OF THE BASIC LAW DRAFTING SHOULD NOT BE SEEN TO FETTER HONG KONG'S AUTONOMY IN ANY WAY, HE ADDED.

ON PROGRESS MADE SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE JOINT DECLARATION, SIR GEOFFREY SAID BRITAIN HAD CONTINUED INTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH CHINA THROUGH THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP AND IN MANY OTHER CONTACTS.

HE POINTED TO NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS THAT HAD ALREADY BEEN REGISTERED:

* AGREEMENT ON HONG KONG'S SEPARATE MEMBERSHIP OF GATT
* AGREEMENT ON HONG KONG'S CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
* WIDE-RANGING AGREEMENTS ON TRAVEL DOCUMENTS
* ON AIR SERVICES
* ON CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONS

/"IN EVERY .....

"IN EVERY CASE WE SECURED WHAT HONG KONG NEEDED. THE SAME IS TRUE IN THE LAND COMMISSION. AND THIS VERY PRACTICAL AND NECESSARY WORK GOES ON."

THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP HAD NOT INTERFERED IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF HONG KONG, NOR WOULD IT DO SO -- "IT IS A MEANS OF CONSULTATION AND CO-OPERATION IN THE INTERESTS OF HONG KONG AND ITS PEOPLE."

SIR GEOFFREY NOTED THAT CONTROVERSY HAD ARISEN IN THE AREA OF CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM, AND SAID THIS WAS NOT SURPRISING AS THERE WERE DEEPLY AND SINCERELY HELD VIEWS ON THIS SUBJECT IN HONG KONG AS IN ANY OTHER COMMUNITY, AND THEY DIFFERED.

BUT HE SAID THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WERE RESPONDING TO THE WIDELY EXPRESSED DESIRE IN HONG KONG FOR MORE PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS ONLY THREE YEARS SINCE THE FIRST ELECTED SEATS OF ANY KIND WERE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND, IN ONLY THREE YEARS FROM NOW, 10 DIRECTLY ELECTED SEATS WOULD BE INTRODUCED.

THIS WAS NOT A LONG INTERVAL, BUT IT WAS, HE BELIEVED, A REASONABLE RESPONSE TO THE WIDESPREAD WISH FOR EVOLUTION TO BE STEADY AND GRADUAL.

FURTHER CHANGES WOULD BE NECESSARY AFTER 1991 TO MEET THE JOINT DECLARATION PROVISION FOR A LEGISLATURE ALL OF WHOSE MEMBERS WERE ELECTED.

"IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT THE BASIC LAW WILL INCLUDE A SUBSTANTIAL DIRECTLY ELECTED COMPONENT IN THE POST-1997 LEGISLATURE. WE HAVE COME A LONG WAY IN A SHORT TIME," HE ADDED.

AT THE OUTSET OF HIS SPEECH, SIR GEOFFREY PAID TRIBUTE TO THE VIBRANCY OF HONG KONG AND ITS PEOPLE, AND THEIR REMARKABLE DEVELOPMENTS, AND SAID THE TERRITORY AND ITS FUTURE HAD BEEN VERY HIGH ON HIS LIST OF PRIORITIES SINCE HE BECAME FOREIGN SECRETARY FIVE YEARS AGO.

HE SAID: "LIKE MOST OTHERS WHO WATCH FROM OUTSIDE, I AM STUNNED BY YOUR SPECTACULAR ECONOMIC SUCCESSES; YOUR BOOMING TRADE AND INVESTMENT; YOUR FULL EMPLOYMENT; YOUR GDP GROWTH; YOUR AMBITIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. YOU ARE THE envy OF WESTERN AND EASTERN ECONOMIC MANAGERS."

BUT HE SAID HE WAS WELL AWARE THAT HONG KONG ALSO HAD ITS PROBLEMS, AND REFERRING TO THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE PROBLEM, HE POINTED OUT THAT HE HAD BEGUN HIS PROGRAMME HERE BY LOOKING AT THIS ISSUE.

/HOWEVER, HE .....

HOWEVER, HE EMPHASISED THAT PROBLEMS NEEDED TO BE KEPT IN PERSPECTIVE AGAINST THE WIDER PICTURE OF REMARKABLE SUCCESS.

CONCLUDING, SIR GEOFFREY SAID HE REALISED THAT NOW AS IN THE PAST SOME HONG KONG PEOPLE WERE CHOOSING TO MOVE ELSEWHERE TO SEEK A NEW HOME, OR EVEN IN SOME CASES TO SEEK A DIFFERENT NATIONALITY, AND A NUMBER WERE ALSO RETURNING TO THE TERRITORY.

HE FELT THAT THERE SHOULD NOT BE UNDUE ALARM OVER THESE MOVEMENTS, BUT NOR SHOULD THERE BE COMPLACENCY.

"IN THE END IT IS UP TO US ALL, NOT LEAST THE GOVERNMENTS OF BRITAIN AND CHINA, BY OUR WORDS AND ACTIONS, TO CONVINCE PEOPLE THAT HONG KONG WILL REMAIN A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE IN," HE SAID.

"AND WHAT WE CAN SAY IS THAT THE ROAD AHEAD IS CHARTED AND THE SIGNPOSTS ARE IN PLACE. YOU HAVE A CLEAR FRAMEWORK; YOU HAVE THE UNPARALLELED ENERGY AND INGENUITY OF YOUR PEOPLE; AND YOU HAVE THE GOODWILL AND SUPPORT OF BRITAIN AND CHINA."

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HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO HUMAN SUFFERING

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HONG KONG'S GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE ARE RESPONDING TO THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE SITUATION IN A HUMANITARIAN WAY, THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS, SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, SAID TODAY (MONDAY). IT WAS A TRULY HUMAN PROBLEM OF SUFFERING.

THE WHOLE PROBLEM WAS BECOMING INCREASINGLY INTOLERABLE, AND IT WAS DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT THINGS COULD POSSIBLY GO ON AS THEY WERE, SIR GEOFFREY TOLD REPORTERS AFTER VISITING THE CHI MA WAN CLOSED CENTRE ON LANTAU AND THE GREEN ISLAND RECEPTION CENTRE.

"IT MUST BE SAID THAT WHAT WE SEE HERE IS A DREADFUL INDICTMENT ON THE MANAGEMENT OF AFFAIRS IN VIETNAM, AND THE CENTRAL RESPONSIBILITY MUST BE LAID UPON THE SHOULDERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM," HE SAID.

SIR GEOFFREY SAID HE HAD BEEN MOVED BY THE SUFFERING AND TRAGEDY THAT WAS INVOLVED FOR MANY FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS.

BUT HE SAID THERE WAS NO EASY SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM, NO "QUICK FIX" AVAILABLE.

/"THAT'S WHY .....

"THAT'S WHY I'VE BEEN WANTING TO DISCUSS THIS WHOLE PROBLEM DURING THE REST OF MY VISIT WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG," HE SAID.

ASKED IF HE SAW ANY MERIT IN CHANGING THE BRITISH POLICY OF GIVING FIRST ASYLUM TO ALL VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE, SIR GEOFFREY SAID HE WOULD NOT MAKE POLICY PRONOUNCEMENTS AT THIS POINT IN TIME.

"I KNOW THAT SOME PEOPLE ARE MAKING THAT SUGGESTION, AND IT WILL BE ONE OF THE THINGS OBVIOUSLY I SHALL BE WANTING TO DISCUSS HERE IN HONG KONG."

AS TO WHETHER BRITAIN WAS REALLY DOING ENOUGH, HE SAID IT WAS DOING A VERY GREAT DEAL.

BRITAIN HAD BEEN CARRYING THE RESPONSIBILITY ON BEHALF OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IN PRESENTING THE PROBLEM IN ALL ITS ASPECTS TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.

"WE SHALL GO ON DOING THAT AND AS I SAID THERE IS NO EASY, QUICK SOLUTION TO WHAT IS A TERRIBLE HUMAN PROBLEM."

ASKED IF BRITAIN COULD TAKE MORE REFUGEES FOR RESETTLEMENT, HE SAID THAT WAS NOT A QUESTION THAT COULD BE ANSWERED QUICKLY.

"IT IS A VERY DIFFICULT ASPECT OF AN EXTREMELY COMPLEX PROBLEM," HE SAID.

WHEN ASKED WHAT BRITAIN'S RESPONSIBILITY WAS, SIR GEOFFREY SAID THAT THOUGH BRITAIN HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF HONG KONG, THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT ITSELF HAD BEEN PLAYING A VERY DIRECT AND SUBSTANTIAL PART IN DISCHARGING THAT TASK, AND IN PROVIDING AND MANAGING THE FACILITIES FOR REFUGEES OF THE KIND HE HAD VISITED TODAY.

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SIR GEOFFREY BRIEFED ON REFUGEE PROBLEM

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS, SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, WAS GIVEN A DETAILED BRIEFING TODAY (MONDAY) ON THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE PROBLEM THAT CONFRONTS HONG KONG.

AFTERWARDS, HE AND LADY HOWE VISITED THE CHI MA WAN CLOSED CENTRE ON LANTAU AND THE GREEN ISLAND RECEPTION CENTRE.

THE FOREIGN SECRETARY WAS BRIEFED INITIALLY AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE BY THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, AND THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR GEOFFREY BARNES.

SIR GEOFFREY WAS TOLD THAT IN THE FIRST FIVE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR MORE THAN 4,500 BOAT PEOPLE HAVE ARRIVED IN HONG KONG -- MORE THAN IN ANY FULL YEAR SINCE 1982.

THE CURRENT ARRIVAL RATE OF 100 PER DAY IN MAY IS UNPRECEDENTED SINCE 1979, AND IS SEVERELY STRETCHING HONG KONG'S RESOURCES FOR ACCOMMODATING ALL THE REFUGEES.

SIR GEOFFREY WAS TOLD THAT THE THREE EXISTING CLOSED CENTRES HAVE REACHED THEIR MAXIMUM CAPACITY, AND ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY CENTRES HAVE HAD TO BE ESTABLISHED AT SHORT NOTICE TO HOUSE OVER 3,000 MORE REFUGEES.

FOLLOWING THE INITIAL BRIEFING BY THE GOVERNOR AND MR BARNES, SIR GEOFFREY WENT TO THE CHI MA WAN CLOSED CENTRE. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY MR BARNES AND OTHER SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

CHI MA WAN ACCOMMODATES MORE THAN 2,500 REFUGEES -- ALMOST 20 PER CENT OVER THE CENTRE'S OFFICIAL CAPACITY.

SIR GEOFFREY SAW FOR HIMSELF THE CONDITIONS IN THE CENTRE'S DORMITORIES.

AT THE GREEN ISLAND RECEPTION CENTRE, THE FOREIGN SECRETARY WAS BRIEFED BY THE CHIEF STAFF OFFICER OF THE CIVIL AID SERVICES, MR JOHN FORTUNE, ON THE PROCEDURES FOR RECEIVING NEWLY ARRIVED VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

HE WAS ALSO SHOWN THE WOODEN BOATS IN WHICH REFUGEES TRAVEL TO HONG KONG.

THE RECEPTION FACILITIES ON GREEN ISLAND WERE DESCRIBED AS BASIC BUT ADEQUATE.

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FOREIGN SECRETARY VISITS CONTAINER TERMINAL
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THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS, SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, THIS (MONDAY) AFTERNOON VISITED THE MODERN TERMINALS LIMITED (MTL) AT THE KWAI CHUNG CONTAINER TERMINAL.

HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE, MR DERICK HALL, AND THE COMPANY'S CHAIRMAN, MR DAVID GLEDHILL.

SIR GEOFFREY WAS TOLD THAT IN 1987 HONG KONG SURPASSED ROTTERDAM TO BECOME THE NUMBER ONE PORT IN TERMS OF CONTAINER THROUGHPUT.

THIS EQUATED TO 3.46 MILLION TWENTY-FOOT EQUIVALENT UNITS (TEU'S) WITH 2.61 MILLION TEU'S BEING HANDLED AT KWAI CHUNG.

SIR GEOFFREY LEARNT THAT THE KWAI CHUNG CONTAINER TERMINAL COMPRISED SEVEN BERTHS OPERATED BY THREE COMPANIES - MTL, SEA-LAND ORIENT LIMITED AND HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL TERMINALS LIMITED.

HE WAS ALSO BRIEFED ON CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS AT KWAI CHUNG INCLUDING THE RECENT OPENING OF THE FIRST BERTH OF TERMINAL 6 AND THE RESULT OF THE OPEN TENDER EXERCISE CONDUCTED BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS FOR TERMINAL 7.

MR HALL EXPLAINED THAT THE FULL COMPLETION OF TERMINAL 6 NEXT YEAR AND TERMINAL 7 BY 1991 WOULD PRACTICALLY DOUBLE KWAI CHUNG'S CONTAINER HANDLING CAPACITY TO ALMOST FIVE MILLION TEU'S WHICH SHOULD BE ABLE TO MEET HONG KONG'S DEMAND UP TO 1993-94.

OWING TO SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH RATES IN 1986 AND 1987, THE GOVERNMENT HAD COMMISSIONED CONSULTANTS TO UNDERTAKE A PORT AND AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY STUDY (PADS) TO CONSIDER VARIOUS PROPOSALS TO PROVIDE NEW PORT AND AIRPORT FACILITIES.

"THIS IS A MAJOR STUDY TO PROVIDE FOR EXPECTED GROWTH UP TO THE YEAR 2011 AND ALSO INCLUDES INFRASTRUCTURE, CROSS-HARBOUR CONNECTIONS, HOUSING CONSIDERATIONS AND SO ON," MR HALL ADDED.

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LIVE BROADCAST OF SIR GEOFFREY HOWE'S PRESS CONFERENCE

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THE PRESS CONFERENCE TO BE GIVEN BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS, SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, TOMORROW (TUESDAY) WILL BE BROADCAST LIVE ON TVB-JADE, TVB-PEARL, ATV-GOLD, AND RTHK'S RADIO 1 (CHINESE) AND RADIO 3 (ENGLISH).

THE PRESS CONFERENCE WILL START AT 4.30 PM.

ATV-DIAMOND WILL CARRY THE PRESS CONFERENCE FROM 6.45 PM TO 7.30 PM.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE GIS THEATRE, FIFTH FLOOR, BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL AT 4.30 PM.

AS SPACE IS LIMITED, YOU ARE REMINDED THAT ADMISSION WILL BE ON THE BASIS OF ONE REPORTER PER ORGANISATION. THE PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE PRECEDED BY A BRIEF PHOTO CALL.

REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE PRINT MEDIA ARE REQUESTED TO ARRIVE BY 4 PM AT THE LATEST AS THERE WILL BE THE USUAL SECURITY CHECKS.

AS FOR THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA, REPRESENTATIVES ARE ADVISED TO ARRIVE AT 3.30 PM AT THE LATEST TO SET UP THEIR CAMERAS AT FIXED POSITIONS.

GIS WILL ISSUE A TRANSCRIPT OF SIR GEOFFREY'S PRESS CONFERENCE IN BOTH LANGUAGES THROUGH THE TELEPRINTER NETWORK.

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JI PENGFEI TO VISIT HONG KONG

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AT THE INVITATION OF THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, THE DIRECTOR OF THE HONG KONG AND MACAU AFFAIRS OFFICE OF THE STATE COUNCIL OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, MR JI PENGFEI, WILL VISIT HONG KONG FROM JUNE 1 TO 3.

MR JI WILL HAVE A MEETING WITH THE GOVERNOR FOLLOWED BY DINNER ON JUNE 3.

HIS VISIT WILL INCLUDE A BRIEFING ON HONG KONG DEVELOPMENT AND VISITS TO A CONTAINER TERMINAL AND THE HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

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GOVT TO SPEND $6 BILLION ON TRANSPORT PROJECTS

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THE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO SPEND ABOUT $6 BILLION ON TRANSPORT PROJECTS IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE, MISS MARIA TAM, SAID TODAY (MONDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE $70 MILLION LAM KAM ROAD FLYOVER IN TAI PO, MISS TAM SAID SHE WAS ENCOURAGED BY THE ENORMOUS INVESTMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY'S NEED AND TO SUPPORT ITS SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAIN ECONOMIC GROWTH.

SHE WAS ALSO PLEASED TO LEARN THAT A NUMBER OF TRANSPORT STUDIES ARE IN HAND TO IDENTIFY FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE HIGHWAY SYSTEM.

IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, PARTICULARLY, PLANNING IS UNDERWAY FOR ROUTE X (TO BE CALLED ROUTE 3 LATER ON) FROM YUEN LONG TO TSING YI AND KWAI CHUNG EVENTUALLY LINKING INTO A THIRD CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL TO HONG KONG IN WESTERN DISTRICT.

ON MOBILITY IN NORTHERN NEW TERRITORIES, MISS TAM SAID THAT SINCE THE NEW TERRITORIES TRUNK ROAD FROM SHA TIN, TAI PO, TO FANLING WAS OPENED IN SEPTEMBER 1985, SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES IN TRAFFIC HAD BEEN RECORDED EACH YEAR ON THIS IMPORTANT EXPRESSWAY.

THESE HAD RESULTED FROM IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CROSSINGS AT MAN KAM TO AND SHA TAU KOK AS WELL AS DEVELOPMENT IN FANLING NEW TOWN.

/THE TRAFFIC .....

THE TRAFFIC ALONG THE ROUTE WOULD INCREASE EVEN FURTHER WITH THE COMPLETION OF THE VEHICULAR BORDER LINK AT LOK MA CHAU EARLY NEXT YEAR.

SHE SAID THE OPENING OF THE LAM KAM ROAD FLYOVER WOULD BE WELCOMED BY MOTORISTS BECAUSE THE PRESENT TORTUOUS NEGOTIATION OF THE TWO ROUNDABOUTS AT THE JUNCTIONS WITH LAM KAM ROAD AND HONG LOK YUEN ROAD WOULD NO LONGER BE NECESSARY.

IT WOULD ALSO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC CAPACITY WHICH WOULD BE REQUIRED IN FUTURE YEARS.

THE DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS, MR HAROLD BEATON, WHO ALSO OFFICIATED AT THE CEREMONY, SAID THE DUAL TWO-LANE FLYOVER WAS DESIGNED AND SUPERVISED BY HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT ENGINEERS.

A PREREQUISITE OF PLANNING WAS TO MAINTAIN TRAFFIC FLOW WITH AS LITTLE DISTURBANCE AS POSSIBLE. AESTHETIC ASPECTS ALSO WERE A MAJOR CONSIDERATION.

WITH ITS COMPLETION, HE SAID THE NEW TERRITORIES CIRCULAR ROAD WAS NOW FULLY GRADE-SEPARATED AT ALL INTERSECTIONS, PROVIDING TRULY "FREE-WAY" TRAFFIC FLOW BETWEEN SHA TIN AND FANLING.

THIS WOULD RESULT IN REDUCED JOURNEY TIMES, PROVIDING ENHANCED LEVELS OF SERVICE AND ROAD SAFETY TO MOTORISTS.

MR BEATON ADDED THAT THE LAM KAM ROAD FLYOVER COMPLETED THE UPGRADING OF THE NEW TERRITORIES TRUNK ROAD FROM SHA TIN, TAI PO TO FANLING.

MANY MAJOR PROJECTS, LIKE THE NEW TERRITORIES CIRCULAR ROAD IMPROVEMENT, YUEN LONG SOUTHERN BYPASS, TUEN MUN-YUEN LONG EASTERN CORRIDOR AND ROUTE 5 FROM TSUEN WAN TO SHA TIN ARE EITHER UNDER CONSTRUCTION OR BEING PLANNED.

THESE MAJOR TASKS, SUPPLEMENTED BY OTHER SMALLER SCALE ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS SUCH AS LAM KAM ROAD WIDENING, TO BE COMMENCED TOWARDS THE END OF THIS YEAR, WOULD PROVIDE AN EFFICIENT HIGHWAY SYSTEM FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, LINKING UP THE NEW TOWNS AS WELL AS THE BORDER CROSSINGS TO THE LARGER URBAN AREAS, HE SAID.

THE LAM KAM ROAD FLYOVER WILL BE OPEN TO TRAFFIC FROM 10 AM TOMORROW (TUESDAY).

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SEMINAR TO START OFF FOOD HYGIENE CAMPAIGN

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A SEMINAR ON FOOD HYGIENE TO BE HELD ON JUNE 8 (WEDNESDAY) IN THE CITY HALL THEATRE WILL START OFF THE TERRITORY-WIDE FOOD HYGIENE CAMPAIGN ORGANISED JOINTLY BY THE URBAN COUNCIL, REGIONAL COUNCIL AND THE MUNICIPAL SERVICES BRANCH.

WITH "FOOD SAFETY IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS" AS ITS THEME, THIS YEAR'S CAMPAIGN IS AIMED AT PROMOTING GOOD HYGIENE PRACTICES AND PERSONAL HABITS IN ORDER TO MINIMISE THE OCCURRENCE OF FOOD-BORNE DISEASES AND POISONING.

THE SEMINAR IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF 26 TO BE CONDUCTED DURING THE CAMPAIGN PERIOD FOR FOOD TRADERS. THE SEMINARS WILL FOCUS ON HOW FOOD TRADERS CAN HELP PREVENT FOOD-BORNE DISEASES BY ADOPTING PROPER FOOD HYGIENE AND PERSONAL HYGIENE PRACTICES IN THEIR BUSINESS.

CONDUCTED BY EXPERIENCED HEALTH OFFICIALS, THESE EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS WILL PROVIDE UPDATED INFORMATION ON FOOD SAFETY AND FOOD HYGIENE.

A SLIDE SHOW AND A FILM ON FOOD HYGIENE PRINCIPLES WILL BE SHOWN DURING THE SEMINARS, WHICH WILL ALSO INCLUDE AN OPEN DISCUSSION SESSION.

APART FROM THE SEMINARS FOR FOOD TRADERS, THERE WILL BE THREE OTHER SEMINARS FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS, ORGANISED JOINTLY WITH THE EDUCATION AND THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENTS.

PARTICIPANTS OF THESE SEMINARS WILL BE ISSUED A CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE AFTER THE CAMPAIGN.

FOOD TRADERS, TEACHERS OR INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED AN INVITATION BUT WISH TO ATTEND THE SEMINARS MAY CALL 5-729361 EXTENSION 35 FOR INFORMATION AND SEAT ARRANGEMENTS.

TO MARK THE START OF THE CAMPAIGN, AN OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY WILL BE HELD AT 3 PM ON JUNE 8 IN THE CITY HALL THEATRE.

OFFICIATING GUESTS WILL INCLUDE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE URBAN COUNCIL'S FOOD HYGIENE SELECT COMMITTEE, MR KWAN LIM-HO, AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL'S ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE SELECT COMMITTEE, DR PANG HOK-TUEN.

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MANUFACTURERS URGED TO REFER TO STANDARDS

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THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR HAMISH MACLEOD, TODAY (MONDAY) URGED LOCAL MANUFACTURERS TO REFER TO STANDARDS AND BUILD QUALITY INTO THEIR ENTERPRISE.

ADDRESSING A SEMINAR ON STANDARDS INFORMATION SYSTEMS, MR MACLEOD TOLD PARTICIPANTS THAT STANDARDS WORK SHOULD NOT END WITH INDIVIDUAL PRODUCTS AND PROCESSES, OR WITH THE PROVISION OF TECHNICAL INFORMATION AND ADVICE.

"DEMAND FOR ATTAINING OVERALL QUALITY HAS IN RECENT YEARS BEEN FOLLOWED BY A GROWING CONVICTION THAT MANUFACTURERS SHOULD ENDEAVOUR TO BUILD QUALITY INTO THEIR ENTERPRISE.

"IT IS NOW INCREASINGLY NECESSARY FOR MANUFACTURERS TO REFER TO STANDARDS DURING THE VARIOUS STAGES OF THE PRODUCTION PROCESS - DESIGN, PROCUREMENT OF PARTS AND MATERIALS, PRODUCTION, PRODUCT TESTING AND EVEN MARKETING," HE SAID.

HE ADMITTED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE GOOD QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURAL SUPPORT FOR THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR.

IN HONG KONG, HE SAID, THE GOVERNMENT, THROUGH THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT, HAD ATTAINED REPRESENTATION ON THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR STANDARDISATION (ISO) AS A CORRESPONDENT MEMBER AND HAD OBTAINED OBSERVER STATUS ON 86 OF THE ORGANISATION'S TECHNICAL COMMITTEES.

WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT'S PRODUCT STANDARDS INFORMATION BUREAU, PROVISION OF SERVICES BY THE GOVERNMENT'S STANDARDS AND CALIBRATION LABORATORY AND THE HONG KONG LABORATORY ACCREDITATION SCHEME, MR MACLEOD SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONSIDERING WHETHER TIME HAD COME TO TAKE FURTHER STEPS TO ENCOURAGE INDUSTRIES TO ADOPT QUALITY ASSURANCE METHODS BASED ON RECOGNISED STANDARDS, AUTHENTIC MEASUREMENTS AND TESTING SYSTEMS AS WELL AS BUILT-IN QUALITY IN THE PRODUCTION PROCESSES.

THE SEMINAR ON STANDARDS INFORMATION SYSTEMS, SPONSORED BY A BRITISH EXPERT IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY -- THE "RESOURCE" -- WAS A JOINT VENTURE BY THE ISO AND THE BRITISH STANDARDS INSTITUTION (BSI) FOR MORE THAN 70 REPRESENTATIVES FROM LOCAL TRADE AND INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS, TESTING LABORATORIES AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

THE AIM OF THIS SEMINAR WAS TO WIDEN LOCAL MANUFACTURERS AND EXPORTERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS OF OVERSEAS MARKETS AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO GAIN ACCESS TO A WIDER RANGE OF STANDARDS DOCUMENTS AND TO VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF TECHNICAL INFORMATION.

/SPEAKERS AT .....

SPEAKERS AT THE SEMINAR INCLUDED BSI'S DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION AND MARKETING, MR M.J. MANN, AND RESOURCE'S PROJECT MANAGER, MR J.S. WIDDOWSON.

THEIR LECTURES COVERED THE BACKGROUND TO THE INFORMATION REVOLUTION AND THE NEED FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN THE STANDARDS WORLD.

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GOVT ACCEPTS EDUCATION COMMISSION PROPOSALS ON SIXTH FORM

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS ACCEPTED THE EDUCATION COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING SIXTH FORM EDUCATION IN HONG KONG, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (MONDAY).

THESE PROPOSALS ARE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME AS THOSE MADE IN THE COMMISSION'S REPORT NO. 2 WHICH WAS PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 1986, BUT MODIFIED TO SOME EXTENT IN RESPONSE TO COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD WHICH FOLLOWED THE PUBLICATION OF REPORT NO. 2.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS ACCEPTED THE COMMISSION'S VIEW THAT ALL SIXTH FORM COURSES SHOULD LAST FOR TWO YEARS FOLLOWING SECONDARY 5 AND SHOULD LEAD TO THE EXISTING ADVANCED (A) LEVEL EXAMINATION.

SIXTH FORM COURSES WILL EVENTUALLY BE MADE AVAILABLE IN ALL TYPES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL.

"THIS MEANS THAT THE 'CHINESE MIDDLE' SCHOOLS, WHICH HAVE TRADITIONALLY OFFERED A SIX-YEAR SECONDARY COURSE, WILL NOW BE ENCOURAGED TO OFFER THE FULL SEVEN-YEAR PROGRAMME AND TO TEACH A LEVEL COURSES," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"AS SOON AS THESE SCHOOLS HAVE CONVERTED TO A TWO-YEAR SIXTH FORM, THE HIGHER (H) LEVEL EXAMINATION, FOR WHICH ENROLMENT HAS DROPPED BY OVER TWO-THIRDS SINCE 1984, WILL BE ABOLISHED."

SIXTH FORMS WILL ALSO BE EXTENDED TO THE PREVOCATIONAL SECTOR, WHICH AT PRESENT PROVIDES COURSES ONLY UP TO CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION (HKCE) LEVEL.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PROVIDE SUBSIDISED SIXTH FORM PLACES FOR UP TO ONE-THIRD OF THE PUPILS IN SUBSIDISED SECONDARY 4 PLACES.

/THE NUMBER .....

THE NUMBER OF PUPILS ENTERING SECONDARY 6 IN ANY PARTICULAR YEAR WILL DEPEND ON HOW MANY ENTERED SECONDARY 4 TWO YEARS EARLIER AND THEN SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THEIR HKCE.

STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN EDUCATED ENTIRELY IN THE MEDIUM OF CHINESE WOULD FIND IT HARD TO TACKLE THE PRESENT SIXTH FORM COURSE WHICH PREPARES CANDIDATES FOR THE ENGLISH MEDIUM A LEVEL EXAMINATIONS.

"TO REMOVE THIS DIFFICULTY, A LEVELS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN CHINESE AS WELL AS IN ENGLISH. THIS WILL ENSURE THAT STUDENTS IN THE 'CHINESE MIDDLE' SCHOOLS ARE NOT DISADVANTAGED BY LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES WHEN TAKING A LEVELS," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT A LEVEL COURSES IN CHINESE MIGHT BE ABLE TO START AS EARLY AS 1990 IF SUITABLE STUDY MATERIALS COULD BE PREPARED IN TIME. THE CHINESE TEXTBOOKS COMMITTEE HAS BEEN ASKED TO ADVISE WHETHER THIS TIMING IS PRACTICAL.

THE EXISTING SIXTH FORM COURSE HAS BEEN CRITICISED FOR BEING OVER SPECIALISED, AND IN REPORT NO. 2 THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDED BROADENING THE COURSE IN TWO WAYS.

THE FIRST IS TO PROVIDE A LEVEL COURSES IN NEW SUBJECTS OF A TECHNICAL AND PRACTICAL NATURE, WHICH WOULD BE ESPECIALLY USEFUL TO PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOLS.

THE SECOND IS TO INTRODUCE A NEW TYPE OF COURSE, EQUIVALENT TO HALF AN A LEVEL COURSE, AND LEADING TO A NEW EXAMINATION CALLED THE INTERMEDIATE OR "I" LEVEL.

THE COMMISSION ORIGINALLY PROPOSED THAT THE I LEVEL SHOULD BE TAKEN AFTER ONE YEAR. THE INTENTION WAS TO PROVIDE AN EXIT QUALIFICATION FOR STUDENTS WISHING TO LEAVE SCHOOL AFTER SECONDARY 6.

BUT THE PUBLIC RESPONSE DID NOT SUPPORT THE NEED FOR AN ADDITIONAL EXIT QUALIFICATION WHICH MANY BELIEVED WOULD WEAKEN THE INTEGRITY OF THE TWO-YEAR SIXTH FORM. THE COMMISSION THEREFORE RE-EXAMINED ITS PROPOSALS AND CONCLUDED THAT THE I LEVEL SHOULD BE TAKEN AFTER TWO YEARS, AT THE SAME TIME AS A LEVELS.

THE AIM OF THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS IS TO ACHIEVE AN INTEGRATED, BROAD SIXTH FORM CURRICULUM, CAPABLE OF FLEXIBLE APPLICATION.

"TO ACHIEVE THIS AIM SEVERAL POSSIBLE TYPES OF I LEVEL COURSE ARE ENVISAGED. SOME ARE LIKELY TO BE DEVELOPED FROM EXISTING A LEVELS, WHILE OTHERS WILL BE SUBJECTS NEW TO THE SIXTH FORM, SUCH AS COURSES OF A GENERAL NATURE IN ARTS AND SCIENCES WHICH COULD HELP AVOID OVER-SPECIALISATION, OR NEW COURSES IN PRACTICAL AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS.

/"IT WILL .....

"IT WILL TAKE SOME YEARS TO PREPARE NEW COURSES AND MATERIALS, AND THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS WILL RELY HEAVILY ON INPUT FROM THE TEACHING PROFESSION," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN CRITICISMS OF THE LINGUISTIC ABILITY OF SCHOOL LEAVERS. TO IMPROVE THE POSITION, LANGUAGE STUDIES IN BOTH ENGLISH AND CHINESE WILL BE AN ESSENTIAL FEATURE OF ALL SIXTH FORM COURSES. THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO DEVELOP COURSES IN PRACTICAL LANGUAGE SKILLS AS A MATTER OF HIGH PRIORITY.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT A WORKING PARTY WOULD BE FORMED TO GUIDE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE RECOMMENDATIONS. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS AND THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS WILL BE INVITED TO TAKE PART.

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JOINT EFFORT WILL ENSURE DEVELOPMENT OF MANUFACTURING

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THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY AND THE GOVERNMENT MUST TOGETHER ENSURE THAT HONG KONG CONTINUES TO PROVIDE THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO NURTURE AND DEVELOP OUR MANUFACTURING CAPABILITIES.

SPEAKING AT THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE YOUNG HWA COMPANY (HK) LTD THIS (MONDAY) EVENING, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ANSON CHAN, SAID THAT THIS JOINT EFFORT WOULD PROVIDE THE BEST GUARANTEE FOR HONG KONG'S FUTURE.

MRS CHAN ALSO NOTED THAT HONG KONG'S STRATEGIC LOCATION ENABLED THE TERRITORY TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY THE FAST GROWING ASIAN-PACIFIC REGION.

"IN PARTICULAR, OUR CULTURAL, POLITICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL TIES WITH CHINA PROVIDE EASY ACCESS TO AN EXPANDING MARKET WITH VAST POTENTIAL.

"WE ARE ALREADY WITNESSING THE GROWING ECONOMIC INTER-DEPENDENCE BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA. AS CHINA'S MODERNISATION AND OPEN-DOOR POLICIES GATHER MOMENTUM, THIS INTER-DEPENDENCE WILL STRENGTHEN TO THE MUTUAL BENEFIT OF OUR ECONOMIES," SHE SAID.

MRS CHAN POINTED OUT THAT DESPITE THE STEADY EXPANSION OF THE SERVICES AND FINANCIAL SECTORS IN RECENT YEARS, THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR REMAINED THE MAJOR EMPLOYER OF LABOUR AND THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO HONG KONG'S GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP).

/SHE SAID .....

SHE SAID THAT THE STRONG EXTERNAL DEMAND AND THE DOUBLE-DIGIT GROWTH OF THE HONG KONG ECONOMY OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS HAD RESULTED IN A MORE ROBUST AND PRODUCTIVE MANUFACTURING SECTOR OVERALL.

"THIS IS REFLECTED IN A 34 PER CENT INCREASE IN THE VOLUME OF MANUFACTURING OUTPUT WITH ONLY A TWO PER CENT INCREASE IN ITS LOCAL WORKFORCE," MRS CHAN SAID.

HOWEVER, SHE WARNED THAT INTERNATIONAL TRADE WAS SUBJECT TO FLUCTUATIONS AND HONG KONG, BEING A RELATIVELY SMALL OPEN ECONOMY, WAS ALWAYS EXPOSED TO EXTERNAL FORCES BEYOND OUR CONTROL, NOT THE LEAST PROTECTIONISM AND GLOBAL EXCHANGE RATE MOVEMENTS.

"IT IS THEREFORE UNREALISTIC TO ASSUME THAT THE HIGH RATE OF GROWTH THAT WE HAVE ENJOYED IN OUR DOMESTIC EXPORTS OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS CAN BE MAINTAINED YEAR AFTER YEAR.

"UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE BEST STRATEGY FOR OUR MANUFACTURING SECTOR IS TO CONTINUE TO SEEK TO IMPROVE ITS EXPORT CAPABILITY IN RESPONSE TO CHANGING MARKET NEEDS, AND AGAINST INCREASING COMPETITION FROM OTHER EXPORTING ECONOMIES," SHE SAID.

MRS CHAN NOTED THAT HONG KONG MANUFACTURERS HAD BEEN PURSUING THIS STRATEGY FOR SOME TIME AND SHE FELT SURE THAT THEY WERE WELL AWARE THAT EFFORTS IN THIS DIRECTION WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSCIOUSLY SUSTAINED, AND FURTHER STRENGTHENED.

"IMPORTANT AREAS OF ATTENTION INCLUDE PRODUCTIVITY AND QUALITY UPGRADING, IMPROVEMENT IN THE SKILLS AND TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORKERS, AND THE UPKEEP OF AN EFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK WHICH WILL ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF MANUFACTURING ACTIVITIES.

"THESE HAVE BEEN THE INGREDIENTS FOR OUR SUCCESS IN THE PAST AND INCREASINGLY WILL BE THE DETERMINANTS OF OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC GROWTH, PARTICULARLY AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF RAPID TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN ADVANCED COUNTRIES AND THE SUCCESS ACHIEVED BY A NUMBER OF ECONOMIES IN THE ASIAN-PACIFIC REGION TO EXPAND THEIR LOW COST LABOUR BASED PRODUCTIVITY CAPACITY.

"IN ALL THESE AREAS TOO, THE GOVERNMENT HAS INVESTED HEAVILY AND WILL CONTINUE TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE TO COMPLEMENT THE EFFORTS OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR," SHE SAID.

SHE CITED AS AN EXAMPLE THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT'S COMMISSIONING OF A PROGRAMME OF TECHNO-ECONOMIC AND MARKET RESEARCH STUDIES OF HONG KONG'S PRINCIPAL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES SINCE 1983. THE FIRST CYCLE OF THESE STUDIES WOULD BE COMPLETED IN 1988.

/ANOTHER OF .....

ANOTHER OF THE MORE RECENT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE FACILITIES FOR THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR WAS THE DECISION TO INTRODUCE A MORE PERMANENT INDUSTRIAL EXTENSION SERVICE TO MARKET, THROUGH DIRECT CONTACT WITH SELECTED MEDIUM-SIZED MANUFACTURERS, INDUSTRIAL SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED EITHER BY THE GOVERNMENT OR BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS.

"THESE SERVICES IN THEIR DIFFERENT WAYS EITHER IMPROVE THE INFRASTRUCTURE WITHIN WHICH OUR INDUSTRIES OPERATE OR ENABLE THEM TO DEVELOP BY IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY AND RAISING QUALITY.

"AN ADDITIONAL BENEFIT OF THIS SERVICE IS THAT THROUGH PERSONAL CONTACTS WITH MANUFACTURERS, AND WITH THEIR CO-OPERATION, GOVERNMENT CAN BECOME MORE RESPONSIVE TO INDUSTRY'S CHANGING NEEDS," MRS CHAN SAID.

THE THIRD INITIATIVE FROM THE GOVERNMENT CONCERNED HONG KONG'S NEED FOR A TECHNOLOGY CENTRE, SHE NOTED.

THE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT BOARD HAD RECENTLY CONSIDERED THIS AND HAD ADVISED THAT CONSULTANTS WOULD BE APPOINTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO ADVISE WHETHER THERE WAS SCOPE FOR A SUCCESSFUL TECHNOLOGY CENTRE IN HONG KONG TO PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION UNDER ONE ROOF FOR COMPANIES ENGAGED IN INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCT AND PROCESS IMPROVEMENT, MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY SERVICES AND VENTURE CAPITAL OPERATIONS.

"THIS STUDY IS EXPECTED TO TAKE SIX MONTHS AND SHOULD PROVIDE A FIRM BASIS FOR GOVERNMENT TO TAKE A DECISION," MRS CHAN SAID.

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SALE OF THREE SITES FETCHED $224 M

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THREE GOVERNMENT SITES WERE SOLD AT A PUBLIC AUCTION HELD TODAY (MONDAY) WITH A REALISED TOTAL PREMIUM OF $224 MILLION.

THIS IS THE FIRST LAND AUCTION HELD BY THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT IN THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR.

TWO OF THE SITES ARE IN THE NEW TERRITORIES AND ONE ON HONG KONG ISLAND. ALL ARE FOR INDUSTRIAL AND/OR GODOWN USES BUT EXCLUDING OFFENSIVE TRADES.

ONE OF THE SITES IS LOCATED IN AREA 40 IN TUEN MUN. IT COVERS AN AREA OF ABOUT 4,953 SQUARE METRES.

/BIDDING STARTED .....

BIDDING STARTED AT $20 MILLION AND WAS BOUGHT BY CHU KONG SHIPPING COMPANY LIMITED FOR $30 MILLION.

ACCORDING TO THE BUILDING COVENANT, THE BUYER HAS TO DEVELOP A GROSS FLOOR AREA OF AT LEAST 8,640 SQUARE METRES ON THE SITE BEFORE JUNE 30, 1991.

THE SECOND SITE IS IN AREA 25 IN ON LOK TSUEN, FANLING. THE AREA OF THIS SITE IS ABOUT 1,861 SQUARE METRES.

BIDDING OPENED AT $11 MILLION AND WAS SOLD TO BRIGHT SKY INVESTMENTS LIMITED FOR $21 MILLION.

THE DEVELOPER IS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE AT LEAST 5,583 SQUARE METRES OF GROSS FLOOR AREA BEFORE JUNE 30, 1992.

THE LAST SITE IS AT THE JUNCTION OF FUNG YIP STREET AND SHEUNG ON STREET IN CHAI WAN. IT HAS AN AREA OF ABOUT 4,498 SQUARE METRES.

THE BUILDING COVENANT STIPULATES THAT THE DEVELOPER HAS TO DEVELOP AT LEAST 32,385.6 SQUARE METRES OF GROSS FLOOR AREA BEFORE JUNE 30, 1992.

BIDDING STARTED AT $115 MILLION AND WAS BOUGHT BY WHOLYWING LIMITED FOR $173 MILLION.

THE AUCTION WAS CONDUCTED BY MR JAMES HUGHES, GOVERNMENT LAND AGENT OF THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, IN THE CITY HALL THEATRE.

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1987 SURVEY OF TRANSPORT AND RELATED SERVICES

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THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT IS CONDUCTING A SURVEY OF TRANSPORT AND RELATED SERVICES FOR THE YEAR 1987.

THE SURVEY COVERS LAND, SEA AND AIR TRANSPORT SERVICES, SUCH AS PUBLIC BUSES, TRAMWAYS, TAXIS, PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES, TRUCKS, FERRIES, SHIPPING COMPANIES AND AIRLINES.

IT ALSO COVERS SUCH TRANSPORT-RELATED SERVICES AS THOSE PROVIDED BY CARPARKS, TRAVEL AGENTS AND CARGO FORWARDING AGENTS.

QUESTIONNAIRES ARE BEING SENT TO A SAMPLE OF ABOUT 3,600 ESTABLISHMENTS OUT OF A TOTAL OF SOME 40,000 ESTABLISHMENTS FALLING UNDER THE PURVIEW OF THE SURVEY.

/DATA TO .....

DATA TO BE COLLECTED IN THE SURVEY INCLUDE THE TYPE OF OWNERSHIP, FLOOR AREA, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION OF EMPLOYEES, OPERATING EXPENSES, BUSINESS TURNOVER AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE.

SUCH ECONOMIC DATA WILL PROVIDE BASIC INFORMATION ON THE STRUCTURE AND PERFORMANCE OF THE TRANSPORT SECTOR AND ARE NEEDED FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT OF HONG KONG.

THE SURVEY RESULTS WILL ALSO BE USED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE ESTABLISHMENTS IN FORMULATING POLICIES AND MAKING DECISIONS.

IT IS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT TO RESPOND TO THE SURVEY. A CENSUS AND STATISTICS ORDER AUTHORISING THE CONDUCT OF THE SURVEY WAS MADE BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL UNDER SECTION 11 OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS ORDINANCE AND ISSUED AS LEGAL NOTICE NO. 11 IN THE GAZETTE ON JANUARY 13, 1984.

SELECTED ESTABLISHMENTS ARE REQUIRED TO RETURN THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES BY JULY 31 THIS YEAR.

OFFICERS OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT, WHO CARRY A GOVERNMENT IDENTITY CARD WHILE ON DUTY, WILL VISIT THE ESTABLISHMENTS CONCERNED TO ASSIST THEM IN COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRES, IF REQUIRED.

THE COMMISSIONER FOR CENSUS AND STATISTICS STRESSES THAT INFORMATION RELATING TO INDIVIDUAL ESTABLISHMENTS WILL BE TREATED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE AND THAT ONLY AGGREGATE INFORMATION, WHICH DOES NOT REVEAL DETAILS OF INDIVIDUAL ESTABLISHMENTS, WILL BE RELEASED.

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LOCAL PUBLIC WORKS HELP IMPROVE RURAL LIFE

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OVER THE PAST SEVEN DECADES, THE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE CONTINUOUS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT OF VILLAGES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES THROUGH THE LOCAL PUBLIC WORKS (LPW) SCHEME.

ACCORDING TO THE PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY (DEVELOPMENT) NEW TERRITORIES OF THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION (CNTA), MR MIKE WATERS, THE LPW SCHEME WAS INITIATED BY THE GOVERNMENT IN 1919 WITH THE AIM OF PROVIDING BASIC FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RURAL AREAS AND VILLAGES.

/"AT THAT .....

"AT THAT TIME, THE SCHEME WAS BASICALLY A SELF-HELP PROGRAMME WHEREBY MATERIALS SUCH AS CEMENT, AGGREGATES, BARS AND PIPES WERE SUPPLIED TO THE VILLAGERS FOR THEM TO UNDERTAKE MINOR CONSTRUCTION WORK, SUCH AS FENCING, FOOTPATHS AND DRAINAGE CHANNELS," MR WATERS SAID.

NOTING THAT OVER THE YEARS, THE SCOPE AND COMPLEXITY OF LPW PROJECTS HAD GRADUALLY INCREASED BEYOND THE VILLAGES' ABILITY TO CARRY THEM OUT, HE SAID MOST OF THE PROJECTS WERE NOW DONE BY LPW CONTRACTORS.

"TO COPE WITH THIS CHANGE, A WORKS SECTION WAS SET UP IN EACH OF THE NEW TERRITORIES DISTRICT OFFICES WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PLANNING, CO-ORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LPW PROJECTS," HE SAID.

NOWADAYS, THE WORKS SECTIONS DEALT WITH A GREAT VARIETY OF PROJECTS, SUCH AS VAN TRACKS, REFUSE COLLECTION POINTS, AQUA PRIVIES, PLAYGROUNDS, SITTING-OUT AREAS, PIERS, SEAWALLS, INCINERATORS, VEHICULAR BRIDGES, PAVILIONS, AND EARTH RETAINING WALLS.

NORMALLY, LPW PROJECTS WERE CARRIED OUT AT THE REQUEST OF VILLAGERS, CHANNELLED THROUGH THEIR VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVES OR RURAL COMMITTEES.

HOWEVER, SOME WERE IDENTIFIED BY STAFF OF THE DISTRICT OFFICES DURING THEIR VISITS TO VILLAGES OR IN THE COURSE OF THEIR CONTACTS WITH THE RURAL COMMUNITY.

MR WATERS SAID THAT AN IMPORTANT FEATURE OF THE LPW SCHEME WAS THAT IT WAS DESIGNED TO RESPOND QUICKLY TO VILLAGERS' REQUESTS. AS A RESULT THERE WAS NO NEED TO GO THROUGH SOME OF THE MORE COMPLICATED PROCEDURES NORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH GOVERNMENT WORKS PROJECTS. THESE GENERALLY RELATED TO GAZETTING AND TENDERING FOR PROJECTS.

STAFF OF THE WORKS SECTIONS IN DISTRICT OFFICES WOULD DRAW UP SPECIFICATIONS FOR A PROJECT IN CONSULTATION WITH THE ENGINEERS IN THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION. THEY WOULD ALSO MONITOR THE WORK OF CONTRACTORS.

"THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS BEEN CONCERNED WITH THE LIFE OF VILLAGERS," MR WATERS SAID.

"THERE HAS BEEN A MARKED EXPANSION OF THE LPW SCHEME OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS.

"FOR 1988-89, $23 MILLION HAS BEEN EARMARKED FOR LPW PROJECTS, COMPARED WITH $20.5 MILLION IN 1987-88, $14.25 MILLION IN 1986-87 AND $13.57 MILLION IN 1985-86."

/AS THERE .....

AS THERE WAS A PRESSING NEED TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE RURAL NEW TERRITORIES MR WATERS ANTICIPATED FURTHER INCREASES IN FUNDS AND STAFF RESOURCES FOR THE LPW SCHEME IN FUTURE.

HE POINTED OUT THAT WITH THE RAPID INCREASE IN POPULATION IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, AND CONSEQUENT URBANISATION IN AREAS SURROUNDING THE NEW TOWNS, THE CNTA HAD ALSO IDENTIFIED A NEED TO RATIONALISE AND EXTEND EXISTING PROGRAMMES FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING STANDARDS IN SUCH AREAS.

TO HELP ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE, THE TERRITORY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT HAD INTRODUCED THE URBAN FRINGE IMPROVEMENT (UFI) SCHEME ABOUT A YEAR AGO, HE SAID.

WHILE THE TERRITORY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT WAS THE VOTE CONTROLLING DEPARTMENT, THE CNTA ACTED AS AN AGENCY FOR CARRYING OUT SOME OF THE WORKS FOR THE UFI PROJECTS.

FOR 1987-88, THE CNTA MAINLY HELPED OUT IN PROJECTS IN SHA TIN AND NORTH DISTRICT AND THE DEPARTMENT WAS EXPECTED TO BE CALLED TO DO MORE IN THE FUTURE.

APART FROM THE LPW AND UFI PROJECTS, THERE WERE OTHER SCHEMES DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE LIFE OF RESIDENTS IN THE RURAL AREAS, SUCH AS ON-GOING PROGRAMMES TO EXTEND MAINS WATER SUPPLY TO REMOTE VILLAGES AND TO PROVIDE STREET LIGHTING IN VILLAGES.

MR WATERS STRESSED THAT ALL THESE MEASURES WERE NOT DESIGNED TO CHANGE THE FACE OF RURAL AREAS, BUT TO PROVIDE BASIC FACILITIES FOR VILLAGERS.

"ALTHOUGH A GOOD DEAL WAS BEING DONE IN RURAL AREAS, THERE WAS A NEED TO DO MUCH MORE TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND ENVIRONMENT THERE," HE SAID.

NOTING THAT BILLIONS OF DOLLARS HAD BEEN SPENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOWNS, MR WATERS SAID THE GOVERNMENT AT THE SAME TIME WOULD NOT OVERLOOK THE NEEDS OF THE RURAL NEW TERRITORIES.

"AS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, A RURAL PLANNING AND IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY (RPIS) IS BEING DRAWM UP TO PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR THE RURAL NEW TERRITORIES OUTSIDE THE NEW TOWNS," HE SAID.

/THE WORK .....

THIS WORK INVOLVED INPUT FROM MANY DEPARTMENTS AND THE CNTA NEW TERRITORIES REGION HAD AN IMPORTANT ROLE FORMULATING LOCAL WORKS PROGRAMMES AND IN LIAISON AND CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE HEUNG YEE KUK, RURAL COMMITTEES AND DISTRICT BOARDS, MR WATERS ADDED.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY (NEW TERRITORIES), MR MICHAEL SUEN; DIRECTOR OF REGIONAL SERVICES, MR HAIDER BARMA; DIRECTOR OF TERRITORY DEVELOPMENT, MR KENNETH KWOK; AND THE HEUNG YEE KUK'S CHAIRMAN, MR LAU WONG-FAT, AND VICE-CHAIRMEN MR LIU CHING-LEUNG AND MR CHAN TIN-SUNG WILL VISIT THE NEW TERRITORIES (WEST) NEXT MONDAY (JUNE 6) TO SEE DEVELOPMENTS THERE.

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE VISIT. TRANSPORT FOR MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES WILL DEPART THE KOWLOON PUBLIC PIER IN TSIM SHA TSUI AT 9.15 AM.

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SAI KUNG AREA COMMITTEES FORMED

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THE GOVERNMENT IS PLANNING TO FORM AREA COMMITTEES IN ALL DISTRICT BOARD CONSTITUENCIES THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY SO AS TO STRENGTHEN THE CHANNELS FOR REFLECTING PUBLIC OPINIONS, SAI KUNG DISTRICT OFFICER, MR CHRISTOPHER MUNN, SAID TODAY (MONDAY).

WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE ROLE OF DISTRICT BOARDS, MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES AND AREA COMMITTEES HAS PROVED TO BE AN IMPORTANT CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL RESIDENTS, HE SAID.

SPEAKING AT A BRIEFING FOR MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT'S TWO NEWLY FORMED AREA COMMITTEES AT THE SAI KUNG JOCKEY CLUB TOWN HALL, MR MUNN NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH THIS KIND OF COMMITTEE MIGHT SEEM NEW TO SAI KUNG RESIDENTS, THE FIRST AREA COMMITTEE IN HONG KONG WAS IN FACT FORMED IN 1972.

IN ADDITION TO THE FORMATION OF AREA COMMITTEES IN THE SAI KUNG CENTRAL AND HANG HAU CONSTITUENCIES THIS YEAR, THE DISTRICT OFFICE WAS ALSO PLANNING TO SET UP AREA COMMITTEES IN THE JUNK BAY, SAI KUNG ISLANDS AND PAK SHA WAN CONSTITUENCIES IN 1989, HE SAID.

/"WE HOPE .....

"WE HOPE MEMBERS OF AREA COMMITTEES WOULD HELP TO REFLECT RESIDENTS' OPINIONS AND PROBLEMS TO THE GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEES," MR MUNN SAID.

TODAY'S BRIEFING WAS FOR THE SAI KUNG CENTRAL AND THE HANG HAU AREA COMMITTEES. EACH COMMITTEE HAS 21 MEMBERS, COMING FROM DIFFERENT WALKS OF LIFE AND REPRESENTING VARIOUS PROFESSIONS.

AS THE ELECTED DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS ARE EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE AREA COMMITTEES IN THE RESPECTIVE CONSTITUENCIES THEY REPRESENT, THEY SERVE AS A LINK BETWEEN THE DISTRICT BOARD AND RESIDENTS OF THE AREA.

IN THE FIRST YEAR OF FORMATION OF AN AREA COMMITTEE, THE ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER WILL CHAIR THE COMMITTEE MEETINGS WHICH ARE SCHEDULED TO BE HELD EVERY SIX WEEKS.

REPRESENTATIVES FROM VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS ARE ALSO INVITED TO ATTEND THE MEETINGS TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH MEMBERS ON LOCAL MATTERS.

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TWO STATIONS DELETED FROM SIGNAL STATIONS LIST

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DAY AND NIGHT SIGNALS WILL NO LONGER BE DISPLAYED AT THE TROPICAL CYCLONE AND STRONG MONSOON SIGNAL STATIONS AT WAGLAN ISLAND AND THE MARINE DEPARTMENT PORT COMMUNICATION CENTRE WITH EFFECT FROM JUNE 30 THIS YEAR, THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY ANNOUNCED TODAY (MONDAY).

THESE TWO STATIONS ARE DELETED FROM THE EXISTING NETWORK OF SIGNAL STATIONS.

HOWEVER, VISUAL SIGNALS WILL CONTINUE TO BE DISPLAYED AT THE REMAINING 13 STATIONS AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN HONG KONG.

AS SIGNAL STATIONS CONVEY VERY LITTLE INFORMATION AND ARE FREQUENTLY OBSCURED BY HIGH RISE BUILDINGS OR DURING ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS, RESIDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO LISTEN TO THE RADIO OR WATCH TELEVISION FOR DETAILED INFORMATION ON TROPICAL CYCLONES AND WEATHER.

INFORMATION ON TROPICAL CYCLONES AND SIGNAL STATUS CAN ALSO BE OBTAINED FROM THE PUBLIC ENQUIRY SERVICE CENTRE OF THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION HEADQUARTERS ON 3-692255.

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WATER STORAGE FIGURE

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STORAGE IN HONG KONG'S RESERVOIRS AT 9 AM TODAY (MONDAY) STOOD AT 28 PER CENT OF CAPACITY OR 163.951 MILLION CUBIC METRES.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR THE RESERVOIRS CONTAINED 337.377 MILLION CUBIC METRES OF WATER, REPRESENTING 57.6 PER CENT OF CAPACITY.

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WATER CUTS IN TSUEN WAN AND EAST KOWLOON

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FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO CERTAIN PREMISES IN TSUEN WAN WILL BE TURNED OFF FROM 9 PM ON (TUESDAY) TOMORROW TO 6 AM THE NEXT DAY FOR MAINS WORK.

THE AREA AFFECTED WILL BE SHAM TSENG DISTRICT; TSING LUNG TAU DISTRICT; CASTLE PEAK ROAD FROM SHAM TSZ STREET IN SHAM TSENG TO 95 CASTLE PEAK ROAD; AND TSING LUNG TAU.

ALSO FOR MAINS WORK, SALT WATER SUPPLY TO ALL PREMISES IN EAST KOWLOON WILL BE CUT OFF FROM 3 PM TOMORROW (MAY 31) TO 3 PM THE NEXT DAY.

THE SUSPENSION WILL AFFECT HUNG HOM, TO KWA WAN, KOWLOON CITY, SAN PO KONG, WONG TAI SIN, CHUK YUEN, WANG TAU HOM, LOK FU, KOWLOON TONG, KAI TAK AIRPORT, TUNG TAU, HO MAN TIN HILL, FUNG WONG SAN TSUEN, TSZ WAN SHAN, KOWLOON BAY, CHOI WAN, CHOI HUNG, PING SHEK, NGAU TAU KOK AND JORDAN VALLEY.

FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO CERTAIN PREMISES IN SAU MAU PING WILL BE TURNED OFF FROM 11 PM ON WEDNESDAY (JUNE 1) TO 6 AM THE NEXT DAY FOR LEAKAGE TESTS.

THE SUSPENSION WILL AFFECT BLOCKS NO. 19 TO 30, 42 TO 45, SAU MAU PING ESTATE AND SAU MING HOUSE.

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