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EFFORT TO CRACK DOWN ON DANGEROUS DRIVERS

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THE ROADS MAY BE MADE SOMEWHAT SAFER IN FUTURE IF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL APPROVES PROPOSALS AIMED AT CRACKING DOWN ON DANGEROUS DRIVERS.

UNDER THE ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING-OFFENCE POINTS) BILL 1981, PUBLISHED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE TODAY, BAD DRIVERS RISK LOSING THEIR LICENCE AFTER HAVING COMMITTED MORE THAN ONE SERIOUS OFFENCE.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN COMMENTED THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS WERE SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM A DEMERIT POINTS SCHEME PROPOSED SOME YEARS AGO.

+THE PREVIOUS EXERCISE INVOLVED MORE THAN 60 OFFENCES, INCLUDING SOME OF A TECHNICAL NATURE,+ THE SPOKESMAN SAID. +IT IS NOW PROPOSED THAT PENALTY POINTS BE IMPOSED IN THE CASE OF JUST FIVE OFFENCES, ONES WHICH HAVE A DIRECT BEARING ON ROAD SAFETY.+

+THE NEW SCHEME IS AIMED NOT AT ANY PARTICULAR CLASS OF DRIVER, BUT SIMPLY DRIVERS WHO PERSISTENTLY USE THE ROADS IN AN UNSAFE MANNER AND ENDANGER HUMAN LIFE,+ THE SPOKESMAN STRESSED.

+THE AIM IS NOT TO DISQUALIFY PEOPLE FOR ITS OWN SAKE BUT RATHER TO PERSUADE PEOPLE NOT TO COMMIT THE OFFENCES.+

PENALTY POINTS HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED AS FOLLOWS:

OFFENCE	POINTS
DANGEROUS DRIVING	10
DANGEROUS DRIVING CAUSING DEATH	10
DANGEROUS DRIVING CAUSING GRIEVOUS BODILY HARM	10
DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRINK OR DRUGS	10
CARELESS DRIVING	5

THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT THE FIRST FOUR OFFENCES WERE THOSE WHERE A MAGISTRATE ALREADY HAD DISCRETIONARY POWER TO SUSPEND A DRIVER'S LICENCE OUTRIGHT ON A FIRST CONVICTION.

EXPLAINING HOW THE PROPOSED SYSTEM WOULD WORK IN PRACTICE, THE SPOKESMAN SAID A DRIVER INCURRING 15 POINTS WITHIN A THREE-YEAR PERIOD WOULD BE LIABLE, ON SUMMONS AND CONVICTION IN A MAGISTRATES COURT, TO SUSPENSION OF HIS DRIVING LICENCE FOR UP TO THREE MONTHS IN THE FIRST INSTANCE. SUBSEQUENT CONVICTIONS WOULD RESULT IN SUSPENSION FOR SIX MONTHS.

WARNING LETTERS WOULD BE ISSUED TO DRIVERS ACCUMULATING MORE THAN TEN, BUT LESS THAN 15 POINTS.

/POINTS ACCUMULATED .....

POINTS ACCUMULATED WOULD NO LONGER COUNT THREE YEARS AFTER THE DATE OF COMMISSION OF THE OFFENCE OR ON SUSPENSION OF A LICENCE.

DRIVING A VEHICLE DURING A PERIOD OF DISQUALIFICATION WOULD BE AN OFFENCE PUNISHABLE BY A FINE OF UP TO $10 000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR ONE YEAR.

FAILURE TO SURRENDER A DRIVING LICENCE AFTER DISQUALIFICATION BY A COURT WILL LEAD TO A MAXIMUM FINE OF $3 000 AND ONE MONTH'S IMPRISONMENT.

THE SPOKESMAN NOTED THAT PROVISION WAS MADE FOR DISCRETIONARY CONSIDERATION BY A MAGISTRATE AND FOR THE REVISION OF PENALTY POINTS UPON A SUCCESSFUL APPEAL AGAINST CONVICTION.

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QUEENSLAND'S PRISON CHIEF VISITS PENAL INSTITUTIONS

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THE VISITING QUEENSLAND'S COMPTROLLER-GENERAL OF PRISONS, MR E.J. COLLINS, TODAY (FRIDAY) VISITED HEI LING CHAU DRUG ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTRE AND NEI KWU CHAU DETENTION CENTRE TO SEE THE PRISONS DEPARTMENT'S CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR CONVICTED DRUG DEPENDANTS AND YOUNG OFFENDERS.

MR COLLINS, WHO IS CURRENTLY HERE TO STUDY HONG KONG'S PRISON SYSTEM, WAS ACCOMPANIED ON THE VISIT BY THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF PRISONS, MR CHAN WA-SHEK.

EARLIER IN THE WEEK, HE HAD VISITED OTHER TYPES OF CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT. THESE INCLUDED LAI CHI KOK RECEPTION CENTRE, LAI KING TRAINING CENTRE AND PIK UK CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS, TAI TAM GAP CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION FOR GIRLS, MAXIMUM SECURITY STANLEY PRISON AND MINIMUM SECURITY PIK UK PRISON. HE ALSO VISITED THE STAFF TRAINING INSTITUTE TO SEE RECRUIT PRISON OFFICERS UNDERGOING TRAINING.

MR COLLINS ALSO HAD TALKS WITH THE COMMISSIONER OF PRISONS, MR THOMAS GARNER, AND SENIOR OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT ON THE PENAL SYSTEM IN HONG KONG.

AFTER THE VISITS, MR COLLINS SAID HE WAS MOST IMPRESSED BY THE QUALITY OF STAFF OF THE DEPARTMENT AND THE HIGH STANDARD OF DISCIPLINE INSIDE ALL INSTITUTIONS.

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AIM TO IMPROVE FIXED TRAFFIC PENALTY SYSTEM

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THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO IMPROVE THE OPERATION OF THE FIXED PENALTY SYSTEM FOR PARKING CONTRAVENTIONS AND MOVING TRAFFIC OFFENCES BY ENSURING THAT IT IS ENFORCED AGAINST THOSE WHO BREAK THE LAW.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN RECALLED THAT AS A RESULT OF THE CONCERN EXPRESSED IN BOTH THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT'S REPORT OF 1978-79 AND THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE'S REPORT OF JANUARY 1980 REGARDING THE NUMBER OF FINES REMAINING UNCOLLECTED AND UNPAID, A WORKING PARTY WAS CONVENED TO EXAMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FIXED PENALTY SYSTEM.

THE WORKING PARTY FOUND THAT WHILE COURT PROCEEDINGS WERE BEING INSTITUTED OF NECESSITY IN ALL CASES OF NON-PAYMENT, AMOUNTING TO SOME 200 000 CASES A YEAR, LIABILITY WAS CONTESTED IN ONLY 0.15 PER CENT OF THE CASES SUBSEQUENT TO THE ISSUE OF SUMMONSES.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THIS HAD RESULTED IN A GREAT WASTAGE OF PUBLIC TIME AND MONEY ON A PURE DEBT-COLLECTING EXERCISE INVOLVING PEOPLE WHO DID NOT DISPUTE LIABILITY BUT SIMPLY NEGLECTED TO PAY THE FIXED PENALTY FOR THE OFFENCE WHICH HAD BEEN COMMITTED.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE WORKING PARTY TO INDUCE EARLIER PAYMENT OF FINES HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED IN THE FIXED PENALTY (TRAFFIC CONTRAVENTIONS)(AMENDMENT) BILL 1981 AND THE FIXED PENALTY (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS)(AMENDMENT) BILL 1981, BOTH OF WHICH WERE PUBLISHED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE TODAY.

IT IS PROPOSED THAT FAILURE TO PAY ON RECEIPT OF A FIXED PENALTY NOTICE SHOULD NOT AUTOMATICALLY LEAD TO THE ISSUE OF A SUMMONS. INSTEAD, THE ONUS SHOULD BE ON THE OFFENDER TO NOTIFY THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE WITHIN 21 DAYS IF HE WISHES TO DISPUTE LIABILITY. ONLY IF THIS IS DONE WOULD A SUMMONS BE ISSUED, AND THE MATTER WOULD PROCEED TO A COURT HEARING IN THE NORMAL WAY.

IF AN OFFENDER NEITHER PAYS THE PENALTY NOR NOTIFIES DISPUTED LIABILITY WITHIN 21 DAYS, HE WOULD BE LIABLE TO AN ADDITIONAL FINE EQUAL TO THE AMOUNT OF THE ORIGINAL PENALTY.

A FURTHER FINE OF BETWEEN $50 AND THE AMOUNT OF THE FIXED PENALTY WOULD BE IMPOSED IF AN OFFENDER FAILS TO PAY WITHIN ONE MONTH OF BEING ORDERED TO DO SO BY A MAGISTRATE AND IT BECOMES NECESSARY TO ISSUE A DISTRESS WARRANT. A PERSON WHO FAILS TO PAY A FINE FOR MOVING TRAFFIC OFFENCE AFTER BEING ORDERED TO DO SO AND IS SUBSEQUENTLY IMPRISONED WOULD BE LIABLE TO A SIMILAR ADDITIONAL FINE.

EXISTING FIXED PENALTY MOVING TRAFFIC OFFENCE LEGISLATION ALREADY PROVIDES FOR A MAGISTRATE TO ORDER THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT TO REFUSE THE ISSUE OR RENEWAL OF DRIVING LICENCES IF THE OFFENDER IGNORES A COURT ORDER TO PAY. UNDER THE FIXED PENALTY (TRAFFIC CONTRAVENTIONS)(AMENDMENT) BILL 1981, THESE SANCTIONS ARE EXTENDED TO THOSE WHO IGNORE COURT ORDERS TO PAY PARKING OFFENCES FINES.

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TIGHTER CONTROL OF MARTIAL ARTS WEAPONS PLANNED

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THE GOVERNMENT TODAY PUBLISHED PROPOSALS TO STRENGTHEN THE LAW ON MISUSE OF ARMS AND IMITATION FIREARMS AND TO TIGHTEN SUPERVISION OVER THE USE OF MARTIAL ARTS WEAPONS.

THESE MEASURES WILL REVAMP THE EXISTING CONTROL LEGISLATION TO BETTER SUIT IT TO PRESENT DAY ARMS CONTROL REQUIREMENTS.

THE PROPOSALS ARE CONTAINED IN THE ARMS AND AMMUNITION BILL 1981, WHICH IF PASSED WILL REPLACE THE EXISTING ORDINANCE, AND A NEW WEAPONS BILL.

THE ARMS AND AMMUNITION BILL PROVIDES FOR SUBSTANTIAL PENALTIES FOR OFFENCES AND MORE STRINGENT LICENSING CONTROL.

THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR SOME OF THE NEW OR REVISED OFFENCES ARE:

* CONVERTING AN IMITATION FIREARM INTO A FIREARM (FIVE YEARS)-

* USING ARMS OR AMMUNITION OR IMITATION FIREARMS TO RESIST ARREST (14 YEARS IN ADDITION TO ANY PENALTY FOR THE OFFENCE TO WHICH THE ARREST RELATES), POSSESSION WITH INTENT TO COMMIT AN ARRESTABLE OFFENCE OR TO RESIST OR PREVENT ARREST (14 YEARS), TRESPASSING WITH ARMS OR AMMUNITION OR IMITATION FIREARMS (14 YEARS)-

* GIVING ARMS OR AMMUNITION TO AN UNLICENSED PERSON (FIVE YEARS' IMPRISONMENT), OBTAINING POSSESSION BY FALSE PRETENCES (TWO YEARS), POSSESSION WITH INTENT TO ENDANGER LIFE (14 YEARS)-

* DISCHARGING OR DEALING WITH ARMS AND AMMUNITION IN DANGEROUS OR RECKLESS WAY (SEVEN YEARS).

THE PENALTY FOR POSSESSING AN IMITATION FIREARM IS RAISED FROM THE EXISTING MAXIMUM FINE OF $2 000 OR SIX MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT TO IMPRISONMENT FOR TWO YEARS.

HOWEVER, THERE WILL BE NO OFFENCE IF THE PERSON COULD SATISFY THE MAGISTRATE THAT HE WAS UNDER 15 YEARS OF AGE, WAS A DEALER IN IMITATION FIREARMS, OR HAD NO INTENTION TO ENDANGER PUBLIC PEACE.

/FOR SOMEONE .....

FOR SOMEONE WHO HAD BEEN CONVICTED FOR A CRIME SPECIFIED IN THE BILL (RAPE OR ROBBERY, FOR EXAMPLE), IT WILL BE AN OFFENCE TO POSSESS AN IMITATION FIREARM AT ANY TIME WITHIN TEN YEARS OF THE CONVICTION. THE OFFENCE IS PUNISHABLE BY UP TO SEVEN YEARS' IMPRISONMENT.

THE BILL ALSO SPECIFIES CONDITIONS FOR HOLDING ARMS AND AMMUNITION LICENCES :

* ONLY INDIVIDUALS CAN BE LICENSED SO THAT RESPONSIBILITY CAN BE MORE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED-

* INDIVIDUAL WATCHMEN OR SECURITY GUARDS WILL REQUIRE LICENCES ENTITLING THEM TO CARRY A PARTICULAR CLASS OF WEAPON WHEN ON DUTY AND WILL HAVE TO SATISFY THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE THAT THEY ARE PROFICIENT WITH THE WEAPON'S USE-

* A DEALER'S LICENCE MAY BE RESTRICTED TO CERTAIN CLASSES OR DESCRIPTIONS OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION ONLY.

THERE ARE OTHER PROPOSALS PRESCRIBING POWERS OF ENTRY AND SEARCH WHERE IT IS SUSPECTED THAT AN OFFENCE HAS BEEN COMMITTED UNDER THE BILL- THE STORAGE OF ARMS, AMMUNITION AND IMITATION FIREARMS- AND THE PROCEDURE FOR CARRYING ARMS FOR THE PROTECTION OF PASSENGERS ON CIVIL AIRLINES.

THE DEFINITION OF ARMS IS ALSO REVISED TO EXCLUDE REFERENCE TO BLADED WEAPONS (SUCH AS SWORDS) AND CARTRIDGE-OPERATED FIXING TOOLS USED FOR THEIR LEGITIMATE PURPOSE, AND TO INCLUDE ELECTRICAL STUNNING DEVICES AND WEAPONS FOR DISCHARGING NOXIOUS SUBSTANCES.

IT IS THE INTENTION THAT IF THE BILL IS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AN UPDATED SET OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION REGULATIONS WILL BE MADE TO REFLECT THE NEW LICENSING REQUIREMENTS, AND TO INCREASE LICENSING FEES WHICH WERE LAST REVISED IN 1961.

THE WEAPONS BILL, ALSO GAZETTED TODAY, SETS OUT THE MEANS OF CONTROL OVER OTHER WEAPONS, INCLUDING SOME BLADED WEAPONS WHICH ARE NOW PROPOSED TO BE TAKEN OUT OF THE ARMS AND AMMUNITION ORDINANCE.

UNDER THE BILL, WEAPONS LISTED AS +PROHIBITED+ WILL BE BANNED. THE ONLY OTHER WEAPONS TO BE CONTROLLED ARE THOSE USED BY MARTIAL ARTS ASSOCIATIONS AND THEIR MEMBERS.

+PROHIBITED WEAPONS+ AS LISTED ARE CHINESE-STYLE THROWING DART, FLICK-KNIFE, GRAVITY KNIFE, GRAVITY-OPERATED STEEL BATON, KNUCKLE-DUSTER, CHINESE-STYLE FIGHTING IRON, AND SPRING-LOADED STEEL BATON.

POSSESSION OF ANY OF THESE WILL INCUR A FINE OF $10 000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR THREE YEARS.

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IN INCLUDING THEM IN THE LIST, CONSIDERATION WAS GIVEN TO THE FACT THAT:

* THEY CAN BE EASILY CONCEALED-

* THEY ARE SPECIFICALLY MANUFACTURED AS OFFENSIVE WEAPONS-

* THEY HAVE A BACKGROUND OF BEING USED IN THE COMMISSION OF CRIMES- AND

* NO GOOD REASON EXISTS FOR ANY PERSON TO POSSESS THEM.

IF THE BILL IS PASSED, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO ARE IN POSSESSION OF SUCH +PROHIBITED WEAPONS+ WILL BE GIVEN A PERIOD OF GRACE TO SURRENDER THEM.

AS FOR MARTIAL ARTS WEAPONS, THE OBTAINING OF POSSESSION OF SUCH WEAPONS BY A MARTIAL ARTS ASSOCIATION OR A MEMBER OF SUCH ASSOCIATION WILL HAVE TO BE NOTIFIED TO THE POLICE WITHIN 48 HOURS. HOWEVER, PERSONS WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF SUCH ASSOCIATIONS NEED NOT NOTIFY THE POLICE IF THEY HAVE THEM.

DISPOSAL OF THE WEAPONS MUST ALSO BE NOTIFIED, AND A PERMIT WILL BE REQUIRED FOR THEIR REMOVAL FROM THEIR NOTIFIED PLACE OF STORAGE. THE POLICE WILL CONTACT EXISTING MARTIAL ARTS ASSOCIATIONS WHO ARE KNOWN TO POSSESS SUCH WEAPONS TO EXPLAIN THE PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED.

UNDER THE BILL, THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE MAY ORDER THE SURRENDER OR SEIZURE OF MARTIAL ARTS WEAPONS IF HE SUSPECTS TRIAD CONNECTIONS OR WHERE THERE IS A CONVICTION INVOLVING VIOLENT CRIME OR POSSESSION OF AN OFFENSIVE WEAPON.

THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR AN OFFENCE COMMITTED IN CONTRAVENTION OF ANY OF THESE REQUIREMENTS IS A FINE OF $5 000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR TWO YEARS.

A HEAVIER FINE OF $10 000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR THREE YEARS MAY BE IMPOSED IF THE ASSOCIATION OR PERSON, HAVING ALREADY BEEN THE SUBJECT OF A SEIZURE OR DELIVERY ORDER, LATER POSSESS OTHER MARTIAL ARTS WEAPONS WITHOUT NOTIFYING THE POLICE.

IN ORDER TO MINIMISE INCONVENIENCE TO THOSE COMPLYING WITH THE EXISTING LAW, MARTIAL ARTS ASSOCIATIONS OR THEIR MEMBERS WHO ARE ALREADY HOLDERS OF LICENCES OR EXEMPTION PERMITS UNDER THE EXISTING ARMS AND AMMUNITION ORDINANCE WILL BE DEEMED TO HAVE NOTIFIED POSSESSION OF THE WEAPONS.

IN ADDITION, IF THE BILL IS PASSED, MARTIAL ARTS ASSOCIATIONS OR THEIR MEMBERS WHO POSSESS MARTIAL ARTS WEAPONS WITHOUT LICENCES OR EXEMPTION PERMITS WILL BE GIVEN A PERIOD OF GRACE TO NOTIFY THEIR OWNERSHIP OF SUCH WEAPONS.

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BILL TO KEEP DRUGS CASES CONFIDENTIAL

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THE DANGEROUS DRUGS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1981, WHICH SEEKS TO PROTECT THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS ON DRUG ADDICTS KEPT BY THE CENTRAL REGISTRY OF DRUG ADDICTS (CRDA) AND ITS REPORTING AGENCIES, WAS PUBLISHED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE TODAY.

THE BILL, IF ENACTED, WILL PROTECT THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY DRUG ADDICTS TO THE REPORTING AGENCIES AND SUBSEQUENTLY RECEIVED BY THE CRDA AND SUCH INFORMATION WILL NOT BE DISCLOSED EXCEPT WITH THE CONSENT OF THE ADDICT CONCERNED OR UNDER OTHER PRESCRIBED CIRCUMSTANCES.

THE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION TO BE PROTECTED UNDER THE BILL COVERS ALL INFORMATION IN THE RECORDS OF THE CRDA OR ITS REPORTING AGENCIES WHICH RELATES TO :

* THE USE BY ANY PERSON OF DANGEROUS DRUGS=

* THE CARE, TREATMENT OR REHABILITATION OF ANY SUCH PERSON= AND

* CONVICTIONS FOR OFFENCES INVOLVING DANGEROUS DRUGS.

+UNDER THE BILL,+ A NARCOTICS DIVISION SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED, +SUCH RECORDS WILL BE IMMUNE FROM SEARCH AND FROM PRODUCTION IN COURT EXCEPT IN A PROSECUTION FOR AN OFFENCE CREATED BY THE BILL OR WHERE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL HAS EXERCISED THE POWER GIVEN TO HIM BY THE BILL TO ORDER THEIR DISCLOSURE.+

+THE ATTORNEY GENERAL CAN ORDER DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION IN SERIOUS AND COMPELLING CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE THIS IS REQUIRED BY THE PUBLIC INTEREST,+ HE POINTED OUT.

ON THE NEED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY, THE SPOKESMAN SAID DRUG ADDICTION WAS REGARDED AS A SOCIAL STIGMA AND MOST ADDICTS WOULD NOT LIKE TO BE IDENTIFIED, MUCH LESS SO TO BE RECORDED IN A GOVERNMENT REGISTER.

HE POINTED OUT THAT CONFIDENTIALITY WAS PROMISED WHEN METHADONE TREATMENT WAS FIRST INTRODUCED AND +IT IS A CONTINUING NECESSITY TO INSPIRE CONFIDENCE IN THE ADDICTS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO HAVE PREVIOUSLY COMMITTED CRIMES, AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO COME FORWARD FOR TREATMENT, WHICH IS THE FIRST STEP TO GETTING THEM OUT OF CRIMINAL INVOLVEMENT.+

+IF ANONYMITY IS NOT MAINTAINED,+ THE SPOKESMAN STRESSED, +ADDICTS MAY BE DISCOURAGED FROM SEEKING TREATMENT, THUS THWARTING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EXISTING VOLUNTARY TREATMENT PROGRAMMES.+

IN ADDITION, THE RELIABILITY OF INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE ADDICTS MAY BE AFFECTED AND THIS WOULD DEFEAT THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF SETTING UP THE CRDA, HE ADDED.

/MOREOVER, THE .....

MOREOVER, THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT THE SUCCESS OF THE CRDA ALSO DEPENDED ON THE WILLINGNESS OF REPORTING AGENCIES TO COOPERATE BY SENDING IN TIMELY AND ACCURATE REPORTS.

+HOWEVER,+ HE SAID, +THE MAJORITY OF SUCH AGENCIES HAVE INDICATED THAT THEIR COOPERATION WILL CONTINUE ONLY IF THE CRDA IS ABLE TO ENSURE THE INTEGRITY OF INDIVIDUAL INFORMATION KEPT.+

THERE IS, HE ADDED, NO LEGAL OBLIGATION ON THE PART OF REPORTING AGENCIES TO SEND IN SUCH REPORTS AND SO THE CONFIDENCE OF THESE AGENCIES IN THE CRDA IS VITAL TO ITS SUCCESS.

THE BILL WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON JULY 8.

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POWER TO WAIVE STATUTORY FIRST CHARGE

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PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE TODAY IS A LEGAL AID (AMENDMENT) BILL 1981 WHICH GIVES THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AID POWER TO WAIVE HIS STATUTORY FIRST CHARGE ON DAMAGES OR PROPERTY RECOVERED FOR A LEGALLY-AIDED PERSON UP TO $10 000, IF HE IS SATISFIED IT IS A CASE OF SERIOUS HARDSHIP.

AT PRESENT ONLY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OR HIS DEPUTY HAS THE POWER TO WAIVE THIS STATUTORY CHARGE AND THE PROCEDURE INVOLVED IN GETTING SUCH APPROVAL IS TIME-CONSUMING.

THE BILL EXEMPTS FROM THE STATUTORY CHARGE IN FAVOUR OF THE DIRECTOR PERIODICAL MAINTENANCE PAYABLE TO A LEGALLY-AIDED SPOUSE TO THE EXTENT OF $1 500 PER MONTH.

IT ALSO CLARIFIES THE LEGAL POSITION WHERE THE AIDED PERSON RECOVERS A SUM OF MONEY IN AN OUT-OF-COURT SETTLEMENT RATHER THAN BY A JUDGEMENT OF THE COURT. SUCH MONEY WILL ALSO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN MEETING THE DIRECTOR'S STATUTORY FIRST CHARGE.

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OLD $5 COIN BEING WITHDRAWN

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TEN-SIDED $5 CUPRO-NICKEL COINS WILL CEASE TO BE LEGAL TENDER FROM OCTOBER 8, 1981, IT IS ANNOUNCED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE TODAY.

THIS MEANS THAT AS FROM OCTOBER 8, 1981 THE LEGAL OBLIGATION TO ACCEPT THESE COINS IN SATISFACTION OF DEBTS FOR AMOUNTS NOT EXCEEDING $100, THE LEGAL TENDER LIMIT FOR $5 COINS, IS REMOVED.

HOLDERS OF TEN-SIDED COINS WILL, PROVIDED THESE COINS HAVE NOT BEEN DEALT WITH IN ANY MANNER PROHIBITED BY LAW, BE ABLE TO EXCHANGE THEM FOR CURRENT COINS OR NOTES AT A BANK BEFORE OR AFTER OCTOBER 8, 1981.

A NEW ROUND, $5 COIN, ALSO MADE OF CUPRO-NICKEL, WAS INTRODUCED ON MAY 11, 1981.

OLD TEN-SIDED $5 COINS HAVE NOT BEEN ISSUED SINCE MAY 11, 1981, AND ALL SUCH COINS WHICH HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO THE HONGKONG AND SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM CIRCULATION. REQUISITIONS FOR $5 PIECES HAVE SINCE THAT DATE BEEN FILLED BY THE ISSUE OF THE NEW ROUND COIN.

THE DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS OF THE TWO COINS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

	ALLOY	DIAMETER (MM)	WEIGHT (GRAMMES)	EDGE THICKNESS (MM)	SHAPE	TYPE OF EDGE
NEW COIN	CUPRO-NICKEL	27	13.50	2.90	ROUND	RAISED LETTERED INSCRIPTION WITH THE WORDS HONG KONG FIVE DOLLARS IN ENGLISH AND CHINESE SET INSIDE A CHANNEL AROUND THE EDGE WHICH IS OTHERWISE MILLED.
OLD COIN	CUPRO-NICKEL	31 ACROSS CORNERS	10.76	2.08	TEN-SIDED	PLAIN

AS AT JUNE 30, 1981, 44 MILLION $5 COINS WERE IN CIRCULATION, AND OF THIS NUMBER 38 MILLION WERE OF THE SPECIFICATION WHICH IS TO BE DEMONETISED.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS INITIALLY ORDERED 60 MILLION NEW ROUND $5 COINS TO MEET PUBLIC DEMAND AND ADDITIONAL ORDERS WILL BE PLACED SHOULD IT BE NECESSARY.

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+CONTROL OF HAWKERS NECESSARY+
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THERE IS GREATER PUBLIC AWARENESS THAT HAWKERS NEED TO BE CONTROLLED IF ADEQUATE HYGIENE AND HEALTH ARE TO BE MAINTAINED.

THIS WAS WHAT THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (NORTH REGION) OF NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES, MR BOWEN LEUNG SAID AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY OF MEMBERS OF GENERAL DUTIES TEAM OF THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AT THE CITY HALL THEATRE TODAY (FRIDAY).

HE TOLD THE 256 GRADUATES THAT THEIR WORK WAS TO HELP PROTECT THE HEALTH OF THE PUBLIC AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THEY LIVE.

+THIS CEREMONY WITNESSES THE FACT THAT YOU ARE NOW FULLY TRAINED TO PERFORM THE SERVICE EXPECTED TO YOU,+ MR LEUNG TOLD THE GDT MEMBERS WHO HAD JUST COMPLETED THEIR FIVE WEEK-LONG BASIC TRAINING COURSE.

HE TOLD THEM THAT THEY MUST BEAR IN MIND THE FACT THAT THEY ARE +ALWAYS IN THE PUBLIC EYE+.

+HOWEVER VALUABLE AND IMPORTANT THE WORK THAT YOU DO, YOU WILL NOT GAIN RESPECT FOR IT UNLESS YOUR CONDUCT IS WORTHY OF THAT RESPECT,+ HE SAID.

+IF YOU WORK WELL, AND ARE SEEN TO BE WORKING WELL, YOU WILL EARN THE RESPECT OF THE PUBLIC,+ MR LEUNG SAID.

+IF YOU ARE FIRM, FAIR AND POLITE IN DEALING WITH HAWKERS, ALTHOUGH THEY MAY NOT LIKE YOU, THEY MAY BEGIN TO RESPECT YOU.

+SUCH RESPECT WILL NOT BE UNMERITED. FOR THE SERVICE WHICH YOU GIVE TO THE COMMUNITY IS A MOST IMPORTANT ONE, AND ONE WHOSE IMPORTANCE WILL GROW EVEN MORE DURING THE COMING CLEAN HONG KONG CAMPAIGN, AND IN THE YEARS AHEAD AS HONG KONG DEVELOPS FURTHER,+ HE ADDED.

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ANTI-LITTER DRIVE EFFORT EXPANDED

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AS PART OF THE EFFORT TO GEAR ITSELF UP FOR THE FORTHCOMING KEEP HONG KONG CLEAN CAMPAIGN, THE GOVERNMENT HAS EXPANDED THE LIST OF OFFICERS EMPOWERED TO SERVE NOTICE ON SUSPECTED LITTER OFFENDERS.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THIS WAS AN INDICATION OF THE DETERMINATION OF THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE THE CAMPAIGN A SUCCESS.

MANY CATEGORIES OF STAFF OF THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, HOUSING, IMMIGRATION, LABOUR, TRANSPORT AND URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN GIVEN THE POWER TO SERVE NOTICES, WHICH REQUIRE THE SUSPECTED OFFENDERS TO APPEAR BEFORE A MAGISTRATE.

NEWLY-INCLUDED IN THE LIST ARE RAILWAY OFFICERS, AND ASSISTANT AIRPORT MANAGERS, APRON SUPERVISORS AND FOREMEN OF THE CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT.

IN ADDITION, CERTAIN DIRECTORATE OFFICERS OF THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE CO-ORDINATOR OF THE KEEP HONG KONG CLEAN CAMPAIGN ARE SIMILARLY EMPOWERED.

THE LIST IS AMENDED UNDER THE MAGISTRATES ORDINANCE (AMENDMENT OF FOURTH SCHEDULE) ORDER. THERE ARE ALSO CHANGES TO REFLECT NEW TITLES OF SOME OFFICERS.

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FREQUENCY OF MAXICAB ROUTE NO. 23 INCREASED

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THE FREQUENCY OF HONG KONG ISLAND MAXICAB ROUTE NO. 23 WILL BE INCREASED TO ONE MAXICAB EVERY 10 MINUTES INSTEAD OF 12 MINUTES FROM SUNDAY, JULY 5.

A TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THE HOURS OF SERVICE WOULD ALSO BE EXTENDED TO 9.30 PM ON WEEKDAYS AND TO 9 PM ON SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT THE SINGLE-JOURNEY FARE WOULD BE RAISED FROM 70 CENTS TO $1, WITH A SECTIONAL FARE OF 70 CENTS FOR TRAVEL BETWEEN QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL AND KENNEDY TOWN.

ROUTE NO. 23 RUNS BETWEEN KENNEDY TOWN AND POK FU LAM.

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JOINT VENTURE FOR FLATS SOUGHT

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TENDERS ARE BEING INVITED BY THE CROWN LANDS AND SURVEY OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT FOR JOINT VENTURE DEVELOPMENT OF A RESIDENTIAL SITE.

THE 55 510 SQUARE METRE SITE IS IN TAI TAM RESERVOIR ROAD.

UNDER THE SALE CONDITIONS, THE SUCCESSFUL TENDERER MUST BUILD FOR THE GOVERNMENT, FREE OF CHARGE, FOUR RESIDENTIAL BLOCKS, HAVING A TOTAL OF ABOUT 160 FLATS.

THE SIZE OF THE FLATS IN THE BLOCKS MUST BE EITHER 200 OR 240 SQUARE METRES.

THE REMAINING BLOCKS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO THE SUCCESSFUL TENDERER FOR DISPOSAL IN THE OPEN MARKET IN THE USUAL WAY.

CLOSING DATE FOR TENDERS WILL BE NOON ON SEPTEMBER 25.

TENDER FORMS, TOGETHER WITH NOTICES AND CONDITIONS OF SALE MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE CROWN LANDS AND SURVEY OFFICE ON THE 19TH FLOOR OF MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, AND ON THE 10TH FLOOR OF KOWLOON GOVERNMENT OFFICES, 405 NATHAN ROAD.

TENDER PLANS MAY BE INSPECTED AT THESE PLACES.

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RADIO CAR RACING TO BE HELD AT TAI PO

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THE 1981 HONG KONG RADIO CONTROLLED RACING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP WILL BE HELD AT TAI PO RECREATION GROUND AT PLOVER COVE ROAD ON SUNDAY (JULY 5).

THE EVENT, ORGANISED BY THE NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES DEPARTMENT, HAS DRAWN 70 COMPETITORS AND WILL START AT 11 AM.

THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (NORTH REGION) OF NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES, MR BOWEN LEUNG, WILL OFFICIATE AT THE PRIZE-GIVING CEREMONY AT ABOUT 4.30 PM.

ALSO JOINING MR LEUNG AT THE FUNCTION WILL BE THE DISTRICT OFFICER OF TAI PO, MR LO KA-CHUN- THE CHAIRMAN OF TAI PO RURAL COMMITTEE, MR WONG YUEN-CHEUNG- THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF TAI PO SPORTS ASSOCIATION, MR HUNG CHEUNG-HO, AND THE RECREATION AND SPORT OFFICER OF TAI PO, MR TAM PAK-HANG.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO COVER THE EVENT.

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ASIANS GATHER HERE FOR LABOUR RELATIONS COURSE

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FOURTEEN REPRESENTATIVES FROM COUNTRIES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION WILL ATTEND AN ASIAN REGIONAL TRAINING COURSE IN LABOUR RESEARCH AND STATISTICS AT THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG ON MONDAY, JULY 6.

THE REPRESENTATIVES ARE MOSTLY SENIOR RESEARCH OFFICERS FROM THE LABOUR MINISTRIES OR DEPARTMENTS OF BANGLADESH, FIJI, INDIA, INDONESIA, NEPAL, PAKISTAN, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, THE PHILIPPINES, SINGAPORE, SRI LANKA AND THAILAND. THEY WILL BE JOINED BY A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT IN HONG KONG.

THE COURSE, ORGANISED BY THE ASIAN REGIONAL PROJECT FOR STRENGTHENING LABOUR/MANPOWER ADMINISTRATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION IN COLLABORATION WITH THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT, WILL BE OPENED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, MR J.N. HENDERSON, AT 10.30 AM AT THE UNIVERSITY'S Y.C. LIANG HALL.

THE COURSE DIRECTOR, MR MANOLOA ABELLA, ILO EXPERT IN LABOUR ECONOMICS AND LABOUR STUDIES, SAID THAT THE OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING COURSE ARE TO GIVE LABOUR RESEARCH OFFICERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARPEN THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF FUNDAMENTAL METHODS IN STATISTICS AND RESEARCH, TO INCREASE THEIR PROFICIENCY IN THE APPLICATION OF THESE METHODS, AND TO INSTILL GREATER AWARENESS OF THE POTENTIALS, AS WELL AS THE LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH AS A TOOL FOR ANALYSIS OF LABOUR POLICY ISSUES.

SPEAKERS OF THE COURSE INCLUDE LECTURERS FROM BOTH UNIVERSITIES IN HONG KONG, ILO EXPERTS IN ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS AND OFFICERS FROM THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT AND THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT.

THE COURSE IS SCHEDULED TO RUN FOR TWO WEEKS, ENDING ON JULY 18.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE TRAINING COURSE AT THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG, AT 10.30 AM ON MONDAY (JULY 6). TRANSPORT WILL LEAVE LEE GARDENS, HYSAN AVENUE, AT 9.15 AM THAT DAY. TONY AUYEUNG FROM THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WILL ASSIST THE MEDIA.

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SURVEY OF NORTH DISTRICT TEMPORARY INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES

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NORTH DISTRICT OFFICE IS TO CONDUCT A SURVEY OF TEMPORARY INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES IN KWAN TEI, ON LOK TSUEN, KWU TUNG AND PING CHE STARTING TODAY (FRIDAY).

A TOTAL OF 150 FACTORY OPERATORS WILL BE INTERVIEWED BY STUDENTS WORKING CLOSELY WITH DISTRICT OFFICE LAND STAFF.

+THE AIM OF THE SURVEY IS TO COLLECT UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON THE NATURE OF INDUSTRIAL OPERATIONS, THEIR SCALE AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS,+ A NORTH DISTRICT OFFICE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE SAID LETTERS HAD BEEN SENT TO THE FACTORY OPERATORS, ASKING FOR THEIR CO-OPERATION.

+ALL INFORMATION COLLECTED WILL BE TREATED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE,+ HE SAID.

QUESTIONS WILL INCLUDE WHY OPERATORS CHOSE THEIR PARTICULAR LOCATION, WHEN AND UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES THEY SET UP BUSINESS.

THEY WILL ALSO BE ASKED ABOUT ACTION THEY TAKE TO CONTROL POLLUTION.

THE INFORMATION WILL BE USED TO ASSESS THE NATURE OF THE EXISTING TEMPORARY INDUSTRIES, THEIR NEEDS AND PROBLEMS AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF PRESSURE ON LAND FOR THE FUTURE, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE SURVEY WILL BE COMPLETED BY THE MIDDLE OF NEXT MONTH. THE FINDINGS WILL BE COMPILED AND ANALYSED.

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HAWKER CLEARANCE AT SHEK YAM ROAD

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HAWKER CLEARANCE AT SHEK YAM ROAD AND SEVERAL SIDE STREETS IN KWAI CHUNG WAS CARRIED OUT SMOOTHLY TODAY BY THE NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES DEPARTMENT.

THE OPERATION WAS FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT AND TRAFFIC FLOW AND FREEING SHEK YAM ROAD AND THE SIDE STREETS SURROUNDING TWO REST GARDENS FROM HAWKER OBSTRUCTION, SAID A SPOKESMAN FOR THE NTSD.

MORE THAN 200 UNLICENSED AND LICENSED HAWKERS WERE ALLOCATED STALL SITES AT BOTH THE NEWLY-COMPLETED SHEK YAM ROAD AND TAI LOONG STREET TEMPORARY MARKETS.

SHEK YAM ROAD TEMPORARY MARKET HOUSES 66 MARKET STALLS FOR COOKED FOOD, FISH, MEAT, VEGETABLE AND SUNDRY GOODS, WHILE TAI LOONG STREET MARKET ACCOMMODATES 176 FISH, MEAT VEGETABLE AND SUNDRY GOODS STALLS.

DURING TODAY'S EXERCISE, MORE THAN 140 WORKERS FROM THE KWAI CHUNG URBAN SERVICES OFFICE CLEARED AWAY SOME 20 LORRY LOADS OF REFUSE AND JUNK LEFT BEHIND BY THE HAWKERS. STREET WASHING VEHICLES WERE ALSO USED IN THE CLEAN UP.

MEANWHILE, THE NTSD HANDED OVER THE SITE OF THE SHEK YAM ROAD HAWKER BAZAAR TO THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT TO MAKE WAY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FOUR-STOREY MARKET COMPLEX WITH 250 STALLS FOR DIFFERENT TRADES AND A PUBLIC LIBRARY.

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