



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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NEED FOR MANPOWER PLANNING STRESSED

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THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS IN LOCALISATION STAND IN DANGER OF BEING ERODED UNLESS THERE IS A MORE COHERENT AND BETTER CO-ORDINATED MANPOWER PLANNING AND TRAINING PROGRAMME, DR THE HON HARRY FANG WARNED TODAY.

HE SAID THE RAPID EXPANSION IN MANY FIELDS OF GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES IN RECENT YEARS HAD UNDOUBTEDLY EXACERBATED THE DEMAND FOR QUALIFIED PERSONNEL.

BUT HE THOUGHT THAT THESE SHOULD HAVE BEEN ANTICIPATED, ADDING THAT THE LOCALISATION POLICY IS TOO IMPORTANT A MATTER TO BE LEFT TO A +HIT AND MISS+ CHANCE.

+I DO NOT NEED TO POINT TO THE OBVIOUS SOLUTION OF INCREASING TRAINING CAPACITIES, BOTH IN LOCAL TRAINING INSTITUTIONS, THROUGH DEPARTMENTAL IN-SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND BY ENCOURAGING OVERSEAS TRAINING.

+BUT IT IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO ATTRACT QUALIFIED LOCAL PERSONNEL INTO THE CIVIL SERVICE,+ SAID DR FANG.

HE SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER WHETHER INTERNAL RELATIVITIES MUST BE MAINTAINED AT ALL COSTS OR WHETHER IN SELECTED AREAS OF SERIOUS SHORTAGES, IT SHOULD CONSIDER GRANTING ADDITIONAL INCENTIVE ALLOWANCES IN ORDER TO ATTRACT QUALITY PERSONNEL.

IN ADDITION, HE WENT ON, THE BASIC RECRUITMENT QUALIFICATIONS MIGHT BE REVIEWED TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE REALISTIC, PRACTICABLE AND FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO ATTRACT THE RIGHT PEOPLE.

+I REFER HERE BOTH TO ACADEMIC AND EXPERIENCE QUALIFICATIONS,+ DR FANG EXPLAINED. +FOR EXAMPLE, THE TEN YEARS' EXPERIENCE REQUIRED OF MAGISTRATES MAKES IT PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE TO COMPETE WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR.+

AS REGARDS LONG-TERM MANPOWER PLANNING, DR FANG SAID STEPS MUST BE TAKEN TO MANAGE OUR EXISTING HUMAN RESOURCES BETTER AND TO REDUCE WASTAGE.

ONE OF THE WAYS OF GOING ABOUT THIS, HE SAID, IS TO PROVIDE BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICERS TO ACQUIRE THE NECESSARY MANAGERIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS TO MOVE FORWARD IN THEIR CAREERS.

HOWEVER, HE ADDED, PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR SOME OFFICERS WHO PREFER TO WORK IN THEIR OWN SPECIALITIES RATHER THAN ASSUME ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES TO REMAIN IN THEIR PROFESSIONAL FIELDS WITHOUT SACRIFICING PROMOTION PROSPECTS.

+IN THIS WAY, BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMUNITY STAND TO REAP THE FULL BENEFITS FROM THE CONSIDERABLE INVESTMENTS THAT HAVE GONE INTO TRAINING THESE PERSONNEL,+ HE SAID.

/DR FANG ALSO

DR FANG ALSO CALLED FOR SOME STREAMLINING OF RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE AREAS OF HOUSING AND TRANSPORT FOR THE DISABLED IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT THEY OBTAIN THE REQUIRED SERVICES IN THE MOST SPEEDY AND EFFICIENT MANNER.

HE POINTED OUT THAT AT PRESENT WHEN A DISABLED PERSON HAS ACQUIRED A HOUSING UNIT, IT IS THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT WHICH MAKES THE EXTERNAL MODIFICATIONS TO FACILITATE ACCESS WHILE ALL INTERIOR MODIFICATIONS TO THE DOORWAY AND UTILITY AREAS ARE ORGANISED AND FUNDED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT.

THIS RESULTS IN UNNECESSARY DELAYS, HE SAID.

+I SEE NO REASON WHY HOUSING FOR THE DISABLED SHOULD NOT BE INTEGRATED WITH THE NORMAL HOUSING PROGRAMME AND BE MADE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT AND I SO RECOMMEND,+ DR FANG SAID.

AS FOR TRANSPORT, HE SAID, REHABUS WHICH IS ALSO FUNDED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, IS THE ONLY MEANS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR THE SEVERELY HANDICAPPED FROM THEIR HOMES TO THEIR PLACES OF WORK.

HE THOUGHT THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SHOULD ASSUME THIS RESPONSIBILITY IN THE SAME WAY AS THEY HAVE TAKEN OVER ADMINISTRATION OF THE STUDENT SUBSIDY SCHEME.

COMMENTING ON THE AGING POPULATION IN HONG KONG, DR FANG NOTED THAT DUE TO GREATLY IMPROVED STANDARDS OF HEALTH AND LIVING, MEN NOW HAVE AN AVERAGE LIFE EXPECTANCY OF ABOUT 70 WHILE WOMEN HAVE AN EVEN LONGER EXPECTANCY OF OVER 76.

HE AGREED THAT HONG KONG HAS MADE GREAT STRIDES IN DEVELOPING AND IMPROVING SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY BUT FELT THAT THERE REMAIN LARGE SHORTFALLS, PARTICULARLY IN RESIDENTIAL SERVICES.

+WE MUST EMPHASISE AND RE-EMPHASISE THE CONCEPT OF KEEPING OUR SENIOR CITIZENS IN THE COMMUNITY,+ HE SAID.

+THIS MEANS PROVIDING MORE SUPPORT FOR THE FAMILY TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO LOOK AFTER THEIR ELDERLY MEMBERS.+

TO ACHIEVE THIS AIM, DR FANG SUGGESTED THAT IN ALLOCATING PUBLIC HOUSING, ADDITIONAL POINTS MIGHT BE AWARDED TO THOSE FAMILIES WHO ARE PREPARED TO LIVE WITH AND LOOK AFTER THEIR ELDERLY MEMBERS. ALTERNATIVELY THEY MIGHT BE ALLOWED TO CHOOSE FLATS IN MORE ACCESSIBLE LOCATIONS.

HE ALSO CONSIDERED THAT EXPANSION OF DAY CARE CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY SHOULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY TO PROVIDE RELIEF FOR HARD PRESSED FAMILIES WHO WOULD OTHERWISE CHOOSE THE LESS DESIRABLE ALTERNATIVE OF CONSIGNING THEIR ELDERLY MEMBERS TO RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS.

SPEND MORE ON DEVELOPING MANPOWER RESOURCES

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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER USING FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO DEVELOP MANPOWER RESOURCES IN THE MUCH-NEEDED SOCIAL SERVICES FIELD.

THE SUGGESTION CAME FROM THE HON MARIA TAM TODAY WHEN SHE COMMENTED ON THE SHORTFALL OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN HONG KONG.

MISS TAM NOTED WITH CONCERN THAT THE PERCENTAGE OF EXPENDITURE ON SOCIAL SERVICES - EDUCATION, MEDICAL AND HEALTH, HOUSING, SOCIAL WELFARE, LABOUR AND REHABILITATION - HAD DROPPED FROM 41.6 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL BUDGET FOR 1981-82 TO 39.2 PER CENT FOR 1982-83 DESPITE THE INCREASE IN POPULATION IN THE LATE 1970S.

+I APPRECIATE THAT AT TIMES THE REASON FOR REDUCTION OF SERVICES IS PROBABLY DUE TO THE FACT THAT 'THE TRUE SHORTAGE IS AT PRESENT OF RESOURCES INCLUDING PEOPLE - BUT NOT OF MONEY'.

+AND THIS IS BORNE OUT BY THE SHORTAGE OF BACHELOR DEGREE HOLDERS WITH SOCIAL WORK TRAINING TO FILL THE POSTS OF ASSISTANT SOCIAL WORK OFFICERS,+ SHE SAID.

SHE NOTED THAT THE SHORTFALL OF SOCIAL WORKERS IS FORECAST AT 930 GRADUATES AND 1 060 FOR NON-GRADUATES BY 1989-90.

THE WILLINGNESS OR OTHERWISE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN TAKING UP SOCIAL WORK, IN PARTICULAR IN PERSUADING THEM TO JOIN VOLUNTARY WELFARE AGENCIES, SHE SAID, DEPENDS A LOT ON THE REWARD AND THE SECURITY THE JOB HAS TO OFFER.

SOCIAL WORKERS ENGAGED BY CATEGORY I SERVICE AGENCIES WHICH PROVIDE +FUNDAMENTAL SERVICES+ OR +SERVICES WHICH ARE REQUIRED BY LAW+, APPARENTLY ENJOY PARITY WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS WORKING FOR THE GOVERNMENT, I.E. WHEN GOVERNMENT SOCIAL WORKERS ARE GIVEN A PAY RISE. CATEGORY I SERVICE VOLUNTARY AGENCY WORKERS ALSO GET A +BACK PAY+, SHE NOTED.

BUT THE SITUATION IN A CATEGORY II SERVICE AGENCY - BOY SCOUT, SOCIAL CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED, AND CO-ORDINATING BODY - IS DIFFERENT.

INSTEAD OF GETTING A BACK PAY, SHE SAID, THE AGENCY APPLIES TO THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT FOR A +TOPPED UP+ DISCRETIONARY GRANT WHICH CAN BE USED FOR STAFF SALARY. BUT THE SIZE OF THE FINAL GRANT CANNOT BE PREDICTED WITH CERTAINTY.

+THE WORK OF CATEGORY II SERVICE AGENCIES IS MONITORED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND IT IS STILL POSSIBLE TO DEFINE WHICH POSTS ARE SUBVENTABLE AND WHICH ARE NOT.

+I THINK THAT THERE SHOULD BE A PUBLICISED POLICY GUIDELINE THAT THE HOLDERS OF POSTS WHICH ARE FOUND TO BE SUBVENTABLE ARE TREATED THE SAME WAY AS THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN CATEGORY I SERVICE AGENCIES AND CAN BE SURE OF RECEIVING THE SAME LEVEL OF SALARY INCREASE.

+IT SHOULD BE STATED THAT APPLICATIONS FROM AGENCIES FOR A 'TOPPED UP' SUM BASED ON SUCH SALARY INCREASES WILL BE DEEMED TO BE AN APPLICATION WITH MERIT,+ SHE SAID.

TURNING TO SEPARATE TAXATION FOR MARRIED WOMEN, MISS TAM SAID IT DESERVES SERIOUS CONSIDERATION SO AS TO HELP THE WORKING MEN AND WOMEN TO COPE WITH THE RISING COST OF LIVING.

SUPPORTING THE PROPOSAL, SHE SAID MANY MARRIED WOMEN ARE COMING OUT TO WORK BECAUSE OF THE NEED TO EARN A SECOND WAGE PACKET FOR THE FAMILY, RATHER THAN FOR MERE INTELLECTUAL SATISFACTION.

+THE SAVINGS ON THE TAX EXEMPTION IN A CASE WHERE A WORKING WIFE OPTS FOR SEPERATE ASSESSMENT IS A PRIVILEGE EARNED FOR THE PRACTICAL BENEFIT OF THE FAMILY.

+THIS IS NOT AN ISSUE ARISING OUT OF A BATTLE OF THE SEXES,+ SHE ADDED.

MISS TAM ALSO SPOKE ON LAND AND HOUSING.

SHE SAID THE CONTINUED EXPANSION OF THE LAND SALES PROGRAMME FROM 63 HECTARES IN 1980-81 AND 86 HECTARES IN 1981-82 TO 91 HECTARES IN 1982-83 HELPS TO DISPEL THE MYTH OF THE HIGH LAND PRICE POLICY AND THE APPREHENSION OF THE REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS ON THE COSTS OF THEIR FUTURE STOCKS IN TRADE.

SHE CONSIDERED IT A MATTER OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE THAT EVERY FAMILY SHOULD HAVE A HOME TO CALL THEIR OWN.

+FOR THIS SAME REASON, I REPEAT MY SUPPORT FOR THE EXCLUSION OF THE VALUE OF LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME,+ SAID MISS TAM.

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CALL FOR ENCOURAGEMENT OF DISTRICT BOARD ACTIVITY
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THE FUTURE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE DISTRICT BOARD SYSTEM DEPENDS AS MUCH ON THE SYMPATHETIC AND ACTIVE COOPERATION OF ALL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND DEPARTMENTS AS ON UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE BOARDS, THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED BUDGET DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR CHEUNG SAID THE RECENT ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE OF NEW TERRITORIES RESIDENTS TO DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS WAS A WELCOME SURPRISE TO MANY.

HOWEVER, SUCH ENTHUSIASM MUST BE ENCOURAGED AND REWARDED IF IT IS TO BE MAINTAINED, HE SAID.

+WE MUST NOW STOP CONGRATULATING OURSELVES ON THE SUCCESS OF THE ELECTIONS, AND CONCENTRATE ON PRODUCING REAL RESULTS - AND THAT MEANS TRULY EFFECTIVE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION,+ HE SAID.

HE HOPED THAT EVERYONE CONCERNED WOULD ACTIVELY SEEK TO PREVENT +THE BUREAUCRACY AND RED TAPE+ THAT MIGHT FOUL UP THE BEST CONCEIVED PLANS.

HE SAID THERE MUST BE MUTUAL RESPECT AND CO-OPERATION AS WELL AS CONTINUOUS ALERT AGAINST APATHY OR DISILLUSIONMENT BECAUSE OF DELAYS OR BREAKDOWNS IN COMMUNICATION.

MR CHEUNG ALSO PAID TRIBUTE TO THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT FOR ITS ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PAST YEAR, AND ITS PLANS FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN HONG KONG.

FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID, THE DEPARTMENT TAKES CARE OF 21 COUNTRY PARKS, COVERING 40 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL LAND AREA OF HONG KONG, WHICH WERE VISITED BY EIGHT MILLION PEOPLE IN THE PAST YEAR.

IN ADDITION TO THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES AND FRIENDS ENJOYING THE GREAT OUTDOORS DURING THE YEAR, THERE WERE ALSO 62 ORGANISED EVENTS, SUCH AS SPONSORED WALKS, CAMPING FESTIVALS AND MARATHON RUNNING. AND 232 000 TREES WERE PLANTED TO MAKE HONG KONG GREENER.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT ONE OF THE DEPARTMENT'S PRINCIPAL DUTIES WAS THE ADMINISTRATION OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES.

THIS SYSTEM HAS BEEN OPERATING SINCE THE MID-1940'S, AND HAS BEEN A KEY FACTOR IN THE MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FARMING AND FISHING.

+HOWEVER, AFTER 40 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE FARMING AND FISHING COMMUNITY, PERHAPS THE TIME HAS COME FOR A REVIEW OF THE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES SYSTEM.

+IT IS LESS WELL-KNOWN THAT THE GOVERNMENT ALSO AIDS INDIVIDUAL FARMERS WITH LOANS AND ADVICE. THIS AID SHOULD BE INCREASED AND THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE WORKING FOR THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES COMMUNITY AT LARGE,+ HE SAID.

DEALING WITH RESUMPTION OF FARM LAND, MR CHEUNG EXPRESSED DOUBT WHETHER IT IS FAIR FOR TENANT FARMERS TO RECEIVE +CROP COMPENSATION+ IN EXCHANGE FOR THE LAND WHICH WAS THEIR LIVELIHOOD.

+I SUGGEST GOVERNMENT MIGHT ADOPT A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH, FOR INSTANCE, TO GRANT EXCHANGE PERMITS TO THESE TENANT FARMERS FOR ALTERNATIVE CROWN LAND SITES WHERE THEY CAN CONTINUE TO FARM, AND WHICH ARE NOT EARMARKED FOR IMMEDIATE DEVELOPMENT,+ HE SAID.

TURNING TO THE NEW LANDS DEPARTMENT, MR CHEUNG SAID HE HOPED THE LAND OFFICERS, IN EXECUTING THEIR DUTIES WILL, LIKE WHAT THE DISTRICT OFFICERS HAVE DONE IN THE PAST, GIVE HEED TO THE CULTURAL, SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND OTHER SENSITIVE CONSIDERATIONS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

+I HOPE GOVERNMENT WILL ENSURE THAT THE 'HANDING OVER' PERIOD OF LAND AUTHORITY WILL NOT DELAY THE PROCESSING OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS RATHER THAN EXPEDITING THEM AS IS THE INTENTION OF SETTING UP THIS NEW DEPARTMENT,+ HE ADDED.

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CURB VEHICLE GROWTH CALL

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THE HON STEPHEN CHEONG TODAY URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO CONTAIN THE GROWTH IN THE NUMBER OF VEHICLES AND VEHICULAR TRAFFIC ON THE ROADS.

GREAT STRIDES HAD BEEN MADE TOWARDS ACHIEVING EFFICIENT AND RAPID MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE AND GOODS THROUGHOUT HONG KONG BY AN INTEGRATED NETWORK OF HIGHWAYS, RAILWAYS AND THE UNDERGROUND RAIL SYSTEM, HE NOTED, +BUT ARE WE AS SATISFIED AS WE SHOULD BE WITH THE PRESENT STATE OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC?+

+ARE WE SATISFIED THAT, AFTER SPENDING SOMETHING LIKE \$10 BILLION ON THE MTR MODIFIED INITIAL SYSTEM AND THE TSUEN WAN EXTENSION WITH A VIEW TO RELIEVING CONGESTION ON OUR URBAN ROAD SYSTEM, WE STILL NEED TO SPEND BETWEEN \$1 BILLION AND \$2 BILLION EVERY YEAR ON THE HIGHWAYS PROGRAMME?+ HE ASKED.

MR CHEONG SAID HE REALISED THAT A GOOD PART OF THIS EXPENDITURE WAS TO PROVIDE ROADS TO OPEN UP NEW AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT. AND A GOOD PART OF THIS EXPENDITURE WAS ALSO ALLOCATED FOR WORKS THAT WOULD IMPROVE THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC ON THE ROAD SYSTEM AS IT EXISTS AND TO ENABLE IT TO ACCOMMODATE THE RAPIDLY INCREASING VOLUME OF TRAFFIC.

+THE QUESTION IS WHETHER SIMPLY BY ALLOCATING AN INCREASING AMOUNT OF OUR RESOURCES ON SUCH ROAD IMPROVEMENTS WOULD PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE LONG-TERM SOLUTION TO OUR CONGESTION PROBLEMS,+ HE SAID.

POINTING OUT THAT SPACE IS +RARE LUXURY+ IN HONG KONG, MR CHEONG WARNED THAT IF THE CURRENT GROWTH OF VEHICLES AT MORE THAN 30 000 ANNUALLY IS NOT CONTAINED, CONGESTION ON OUR ROADS WILL SURELY WORSEN.

+IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THERE MUST BE A LIMIT TO WHICH WE COULD AND SHOULD MAKE FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS TO CATER FOR A GROWING VOLUME OF VEHICULAR TRAFFIC, AND THAT OTHER PERHAPS MORE DRASTIC MEASURES SHOULD BE INTRODUCED.

+IT MAY WELL BE THAT WE SHOULD SEEK TO CONTAIN, RATHER THAN TO ACCOMMODATE, THE GROWTH IN THE NUMBER OF VEHICLES AND VEHICULAR TRAFFIC,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEONG ALSO URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO FURTHER IMPROVE HONG KONG'S TRANSPORT LINKS WITH THE SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE IN SHENZHEN.

HE FELT THAT THE RAPID GROWTH OF OUR TRADE WITH CHINA IN RECENT YEARS HAD ALREADY EXERTED CONSIDERABLE STRAIN ON OUR TRANSPORT LINKS WITH CHINA.

/THE INDUSTRIAL

THE INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT OF THIS AREA, HE SAID, WILL ONE DAY BE SO VAST THAT IT WILL DEMAND MORE EFFICIENT WAYS OF GAINING ACCESS TO HONG KONG +FOR WE ARE SO FAR THE ONLY PRACTICABLE DEEP WATER PORT OF ANY SIZE IN THE REGION.+

THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD THEREFORE EXAMINE NOT ONLY IMPROVEMENTS IN RESPECT OF THE PASSENGER LINKS WITH CHINA BUT ALSO THE IMPLICATIONS THAT THE INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT OF THE AREA WILL HAVE FOR OUR OWN TRANSPORT SYSTEM, HE SAID.

MR CHEONG SPOKE AT LENGTH ON HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC PROSPECTS.

HAVING READ THE +1982 ECONOMIC PROSPECTS+ SEVERAL TIMES, HE SAID HE WAS STILL NOT CONVINCED THAT THE ACTUAL GROWTH RATE IN 1982 WAS LIKELY TO BE CLOSE TO THE FORECAST RATE OF EIGHT PER CENT.

FIRST, UNDERLYING THE FORECAST GROWTH RATE OF 16 PER CENT FOR GROSS DOMESTIC FIXED CAPITAL FORMATION IS AN ASSUMPTION THAT THE GROWTH RATE OF INVESTMENT IN PLANT, MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT WILL BE 14 PER CENT IN 1982.

HOWEVER, HE DISAGREED WITH THIS ASSUMPTION BECAUSE HE FELT THE ADDITIONAL BENEFIT ACCRUING TO THE MANUFACTURER IN THE PROPOSED INCREASE IN THE DEPRECIATION ALLOWANCE IS NOT SIGNIFICANTLY BIG IN ABSOLUTE TERMS.

QUOTING AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID A MANUFACTURER WHO INVESTS \$1 MILLION IN NEW PLANT AND EQUIPMENT WILL, UNDER THE PROPOSED INCREASE IN DEPRECIATION ALLOWANCE, ENJOY AN ACCUMULATED TAX EXEMPTION BENEFIT IN FOUR YEARS OF \$147 173 - ABOUT \$8 000 MORE THAN UNDER THE EXISTING ALLOWANCE, OR ONLY 0.8 PER CENT MORE ON THE CAPITAL INVESTED.

SECONDLY, MR CHEONG EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF AN ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN THE UNITED STATES WHICH ACCOUNTED FOR 36 PER CENT OUR DOMESTIC EXPORTS BY VALUE IN 1981.

HE SAID THE FORECAST OF SEVEN PER CENT GROWTH RATE OF OUR DOMESTIC EXPORTS WOULD BECOME MORE REALISTIC IF THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ANNOUNCE THAT RECENT FIGURES ON RETAINED IMPORTS OF RAW MATERIALS ARE FAVOURABLE TO SUPPORT THE VIEW THAT THE DECLINING TREND IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1981 HAS BEEN ARRESTED.

IT WOULD ALSO BE HELPFUL TO KNOW WHETHER THE FORECAST GROWTH RATE IN RESPECT OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS HAS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THE EFFECT OF A POSSIBLE ATTACK ON OUR TEXTILE ACCESS RIGHTS IN RESPECT OF THE USA AND THE EEC.

+HOWEVER, SHOULD THE DEMAND FOR OUR EXPORTS IN OUR LARGEST OVERSEAS MARKET FAIL TO PICK UP UNTIL TOWARDS THE END OF 1982, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR DOMESTIC EXPORTS TO ACHIEVE THE FORECAST GROWTH RATE OF SEVEN PER CENT.

+GIVEN THE NATURE OF OUR ECONOMY IT MIGHT BE DIFFICULT FOR THE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT TO ACHIEVE A GROWTH RATE OF EIGHT PER CENT.+

HAVING REGARD TO THESE UNCERTAIN PROSPECTS, HE URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO EXERCISE CAUTION AND RESTRAINT DURING THE COMING FINANCIAL YEAR.

HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT, IF AT ANY TIME IT TRANSPIRES THAT THE FORECAST GROWTH RATE FOR THE GDP OF EIGHT PER CENT IS UNLIKELY TO BE ACHIEVED, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER SLOWING DOWN THE GROWTH RATE OF TOTAL PUBLIC SECTOR SPENDING TO A LEVEL THAT WOULD BE IN LINE WITH WHATEVER REVISED FORECAST OF GROWTH THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY MAY SETTLE UPON, WHEN HE REVIEWS THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY IN SEPTEMBER.

TURNING TO THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR CHEONG SAID PERSONNEL EMOLUMENTS ACCOUNTED FOR 35 PER CENT OF THE RECURRENT EXPENDITURE IN THE 1982-83 ESTIMATE.

HE WAS WORRIED BY THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE AUTHORITY DELEGATED TO HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS TO CREATE POSTS COULD HAVE BEEN EXERCISED WITHOUT DUE RESTRAINT.

+SINCE THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY HAS ALREADY SAID THAT 'NONE OF US IS SATISFIED THAT THE MOST EFFECTIVE USE IS BEING MADE OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES', WOULD IT NOT BE REASONABLE FOR THE CREATION OF SOME OF THE 16 500 POSTS FOR 1982-83 TO BE FROZEN, OR AT LEAST NOT FULLY FUNDED, UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE BULK OF THE CURRENT 15 000 VACANCIES HAVE BEEN FILLED?+ HE ASKED.

MR CHEONG ALSO TOUCHED ON THE GENERAL REVENUE ACCOUNT OF 1982-83.

NOTING THAT CAPITAL ACCOUNT AT \$12.6 BILLION REPRESENTS AN INCREASE IN MONEY TERMS OF 21 PER CENT OVER THE REVISED ESTIMATES OF 1981-82, HE DOUBTED WHETHER THE PROJECTED CAPITAL REVENUE OF \$12.5 BILLION TO BE DERIVED FROM LAND TRANSACTION CAN ACTUALLY BE ACHIEVED.

UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, RECURRENT REVENUE ACCOUNT WILL HAVE TO BEAR AN INCREASING SHARE OF THE BURDEN IN FINANCING THE CAPITAL ACCOUNT DEFICITS IN 1982-83.

+WE CAN OF COURSE AFFORD SUCH DISLOCATIONS IF THEY ARE ONLY OF A TEMPORARY NATURE.

+WHAT WE MUST GUARD AGAINST IS THAT SUCH TEMPORARY PHENOMENA SHOULD NOT BECOME PERMANENT.

+OTHERWISE, IN ORDER TO BALANCE OUR BOOKS IN FUTURE WE MAY HAVE TO RESORT TO SUCH IMPALATABLE ALTERNATIVES AS DEFICIT FINANCING, DIG DEEP INTO OUR RESERVES, OR RAISE REVENUES THROUGH TAXATION,+ HE WARNED.

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JSEA +NERVE-WRECKING+
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IN THE RESUMED BUDGET DEBATE TODAY, THE HON MRS SELINA CHOW QUESTIONED THE NECESSITY OF THE JUNIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION ASSESSMENT SCALING TEST WHICH SHE DESCRIBED AS +A NERVE-WRECKING EXERCISE+ FOR 15-YEAR-OLDS.

ALTHOUGH IT HAS ONLY TAKEN PLACE TWICE, SHE SAID, THE STRAIN IS SHOWING.

+ALREADY THERE ARE SIGNS THAT STUDENTS ARE DRILLED FOR THE FORM III SCALING TEST.

+FEW CAN SHARE THE OPTIMISM OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION THAT TEACHERS AND PARENTS CAN BE PERSUADED TO TREAT THE TEST LIGHTLY, AS THEY REGARD IT AS A CRITICAL STAGE IN DETERMINING THE FUTURE OF THEIR CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC CAREERS.+

MRS CHOW ALSO NOTED THE NEGATIVE EFFECT OF THE SCALING TEST ON THE SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION.

AS THE PROJECTED FIGURES SHOW THAT 62 PER CENT OF 15-YEAR-OLDS IN 1982, 68 PER CENT IN 1983 AND 71 PER CENT IN 1984 WILL BE PROVIDED WITH SUBSIDISED PLACES AT FORM IV LEVEL, SHE WONDERED WHY IT IS NECESSARY THEN TO SUBJECT ALL OF THEM TO SUCH A NERVE-WRECKING EXERCISE AS THE JSEA SCALING TEST JUST SO THAT THE MINORITY CAN BE ELIMINATED?

+WHY CANNOT THE DISCRETION BE GIVEN TO THE SCHOOLS AND THE PARENTS?

+WHY IS THE INTERNAL SCHOOL ASSESSMENT NOT ENOUGH?+ SHE ASKED.

MRS CHOW ALSO URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE UP A MORE POSITIVE AND ACTIVE ROLE IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT.

SHE REMARKED THAT +THIS IS AN ON-GOING CREATIVE COMMITMENT WHICH REQUIRES THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN CORRECTNESS, CONSISTENCY AND PRESENTATION+.

HOWEVER, SHE NOTED THAT THE ONLY PROVISION LISTED FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN THIS YEAR'S ESTIMATES IS A SUM OF \$57 000 TO MEET THE EXPENSES OF AN OVERSEAS ADVISER FOR KINDERGARTEN TEACHING.

+DOES THIS REFLECT THE INSIGNIFICANCE GOVERNMENT ATTACHES TO CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AT PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS?

+NONE OF US CAN BE SATISFIED WITH ANY HALF-HEARTED EFFORT IN THIS TASK, AND I HOPE THE PANEL OF ADVISERS WILL HAVE SPECIFIC THINGS TO SAY ON THIS SUBJECT,+ SHE SAID.

ON THE SUBJECT OF HOUSING, MRS CHOW CALLED FOR A REVIEW OF THE EXISTING POLICY OF OFFERING TENANCY IN PERPETUITY.

/SHE PROPOSED

SHE PROPOSED THAT HOUSEHOLDS WHICH HAVE PROSPERED BEYOND THE CEILING OF ELIGIBILITY SHOULD HAVE THEIR TENANCY TERMINATED TO MAKE WAY FOR HOUSEHOLDS MORE IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE.

+WITH THE BACKING OF APPROPRIATE LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES, WE MIGHT NOT ONLY EASE THE QUEUE FOR PUBLIC HOUSING, BUT ALSO HELP FILL UP SOME OF THE 30 000 UNITS OF VACANT FLATS IN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT, THEREBY ELIMINATING WASTAGE AS A WHOLE,+ SHE SAID.

THE SYSTEM OF MAINTAINING TWO SEPARATE APPLICATION LISTS -- ONE FOR TENANTS OF PUBLIC HOUSING AND THE OTHER FOR ELIGIBLE PUBLIC -- IN THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME ALSO DESERVES A SECOND LOOK, SHE ADDED.

ON THE CIVIL SERVICE, MRS CHOW DREW ATTENTION TO THE +UNFAIR+ JOB SECURITY THAT ALL CIVIL SERVANTS SEEM TO ENJOY.

SHE POINTED OUT THAT IT IS GENERALLY BELIEVED, AND HAS YET TO BE PROVEN OTHERWISE, THAT HARDLY EVER ARE CIVIL SERVANTS' EMPLOYMENT TERMINATED ON GROUNDS OF INEFFICIENCY AND INCOMPETENCE.

TO THE CONTRARY, EVERY CIVIL SERVANT IS REWARDED WITH THE ANNUAL INCREMENT REGARDLESS OF PERFORMANCE, OR NON-PERFORMANCE, UNTIL HE REACHES THE TOP OF HIS PAY SCALE, NOT TO MENTION THE REVISION BASED ON RISING COST OF LIVING FROM TIME TO TIME.

+GOVERNMENT'S RELUCTANCE TO RELATE THE EVALUATION OF ITS SERVICE TO A SYSTEM OF MERIT REMAINS TO BE JUSTIFIED.

+OURS IS A WELL-PAID CIVIL SERVICE AND SO IT SHOULD BE. IT IS ONLY FAIR THAT THE SAME DEGREE OF EFFICIENCY BE EXPECTED FROM IT AS THAT OF AN EQUALLY WELL-PAID STAFF IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.+

TURNING TO THE ISSUE OF SEPARATE TAXATION FOR MARRIED WOMEN, MRS CHOW SAID SHE WELCOMED THE MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH IN THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S DELIBERATION ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND LOOKED FORWARD WITH INTEREST TO THE RESULT OF HIS STUDY ON THE SUBJECT NEXT YEAR.

BENEFIT SCHEME FOR WORKERS PROPOSED

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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SET UP A CENTRALLY-ADMINISTERED SEMI-VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTORY BENEFIT SCHEME TO PROTECT WORKERS NOT EMPLOYED BY THE GOVERNMENT OR WELL-ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS AGAINST PROLONGED SICKNESS, INJURY AT WORK AND RETIREMENT.

A NEW BOARD ON SOCIAL SECURITY SHOULD ALSO BE ESTABLISHED TO ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT IN A CONSTRUCTIVE WAY.

THESE SUGGESTIONS WERE MADE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY BY THE HON ANDREW SO, IN A STRONG PLEA FOR A BETTER DEAL FOR HONG KONG'S 2.4 MILLION WORKERS.

CITING STATISTICS TO SHOW THAT HONG KONG IS 'A WORKERS SOCIETY', MR SO SAID THE WIDENING GAP BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR SHOWED THAT THE WORKERS, ON WHOM HONG KONG DEPENDED, WERE NOT GETTING A FAIR SHARE OF THE ECONOMIC CAKE.

WHILE AGREEING THAT STEADY IMPROVEMENTS HAD BEEN MADE TO SOCIAL SECURITY PROVISIONS IN HONG KONG IN RECENT YEARS, HE NEVERTHELESS FELT THEY WERE STILL FAR FROM ADEQUATE.

+BY 'ADEQUATE', I MEAN SUFFICIENT TO GUARANTEE A LIFE COMPATIBLE WITH HUMAN DIGNITY AND TO REDISTRIBUTE INCOME FROM THE HEALTHY TO THE SICK, FROM THE YOUNG TO THE OLD, FROM HIGH INCOME TO LOW INCOME EARNERS, FROM FAMILIES WITH FEW CHILDREN TO FAMILIES WITH MANY, AND FROM THE EMPLOYED TO THE UNEMPLOYED.

+IN OTHER WORDS, WE STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO IN OUR QUEST FOR PROTECTING OUR WORKERS, INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY, REDISTRIBUTING INCOME, PROMOTING SECURITY AND HUMAN DIGNITY,+ HE SAID.

MR SO POINTED OUT THAT A CONTRIBUTORY SCHEME WOULD ENABLE THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM IN HONG KONG TO MOVE TOWARDS ITS TARGET OF HELPING PEOPLE TO HELP THEMSELVES INSTEAD OF PLAYING JUST A RELIEF ROLE.

AND WITH THE HELP OF PROPER PUBLICITY AND EDUCATION AND GIVEN THE INCENTIVES SUCH AS TAX RELIEF, SUCH A SCHEME SHOULD PROVE ATTRACTIVE TO BOTH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES, HE ADDED.

+OUR GOVERNMENT IS ANXIOUS TO PROMOTE LONG-TERM PLANNING, LONG-TERM COMMITMENTS, THE STABILITY OF HONG KONG, COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENTS AND A SENSE OF BELONGING AMONG THE PEOPLE.

+A CONTRIBUTORY SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEME WOULD, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, ENHANCE SUCH ISSUES.

+SO WHY SHOULDN'T WE GO AHEAD WITH THE SCHEME?+ MR SO ASKED.

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CALL FOR BUILDING INDUSTRY ADVISORY BOARD
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SET UP A BUILDING INDUSTRY ADVISORY BOARD TO ADVISE IT ON MATTERS AFFECTING THE BUILDING INDUSTRY AND TO IRON OUT ANY PROBLEM WHICH MAY EXIST OR OCCUR FROM TIME TO TIME, THE HON F.K. HU SAID, AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

AND HE SUGGESTED THAT THE BOARD SHOULD COMPRISE OFFICIALS FROM RELEVANT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, REPRESENTATIVES OF REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS, BUILDING CONTRACTORS, ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS, PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS.

MR HU POINTED OUT THAT THIS WOULD ENABLE THE VARIOUS SECTORS TO KEEP THE GOVERNMENT DIRECTLY INFORMED OF THE IMPACT OF EXISTING POLICY OR CHANGE OF POLICY.

+WITH BETTER COMMUNICATION AND UNDERSTANDING ESTABLISHED AND UNCERTAINTY REMOVED, I AM SURE THAT DEVELOPERS WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE GREATER CONTRIBUTIONS TO HONG KONG BY INTENSIFYING THEIR INVESTMENT IN HONG KONG INSTEAD OF DIVERSIFYING THEIR RESOURCES OUTSIDE THE COLONY AS ONE WILL HAVE NOTICED TO BE AN INCREASING TREND OF SUCH DEVELOPMENT LATELY.

+CONTINUED OUTFLOW OF FUNDS AND REDUCED INTEREST IN PROPERTY INVESTMENT IN HONG KONG WILL LEAD TO A CHAIN REACTION WHICH MAY HAVE SERIOUS EFFECTS ON OUR POSITION SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY,+ HE WARNED.

MR HU NOTED THAT THROUGH THE PRIVATE SECTOR'S INVESTMENT, HONG KONG HAS BEEN ABLE TO COPE WITH THE GROWING DEMAND FOR FACTORY BUILDINGS AND COMMERCIAL PREMISES, TO PROVIDE MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, AND TO HELP INTRODUCE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY INTO OUR BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SECTOR WHICH NOW EMPLOYS MORE THAN 80 000 PEOPLE.

OBVIOUSLY EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO ENCOURAGE DEVELOPERS TO INVEST ENTHUSIASTICALLY IN HONG KONG WITH A REASONABLE RATE OF RETURN OVER THE SHORTEST POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT PERIOD.

BUT MR HU SAID THERE IS QUITE A STRONG IMPRESSION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR THAT MANY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS TEND TO TAKE A RATHER NEGATIVE ATTITUDE OR EVEN CREATE ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS AND OBSTACLES FOR DEVELOPERS, THUS DELAYING THE PROCESSING OR APPROVING OF APPLICATIONS AND PROJECTS.

QUOTING EXAMPLES, HE SAID THE GEOTECHNICAL CONTROL OFFICE, WHICH PROVIDES STAFF AND SPECIALIST SUPPORT FOR THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE IN DEALING WITH SLOPES AND FOUNDATION PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BUILDING PROGRAMMES, SEEMS TO BE LACKING IN CLEARLY DEFINED STANDARDS AND ITS APPROACH COULD BE OVER CAUTIOUS AND CONSEQUENTLY EXTRAVAGANTLY EXPENSIVE.

/NUMEROUS FRUSTRATING

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NUMEROUS FRUSTRATING CASES ALSO EXIST IN THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE AND THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT WHERE DEVELOPERS ARE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT AMENDMENTS TO THEIR PLANS WHICH ARE ONLY TO BE FOLLOWED BY FURTHER AMENDMENTS.

WITH THE MODERN DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY, MANY OF THE EXISTING RULES, REGULATIONS AND CODES OF PRACTICE BECOME OUTDATED AND CAN NO LONGER BE BASED UPON TO MAKE DECISIONS, MR HU REMARKED.

INCONSISTENCY IN THE INTERPRETATION OF REGULATIONS POSES ANOTHER PROBLEM AS A DIFFERENT OFFICER MAY INTERPRET THE SAME PIECE OF REGULATION IN A DIFFERENT WAY WHICH MAY NECESSITATE MAJOR RE-DESIGNING OR AMENDMENT WITH CONSEQUENTIAL DELAY OR INCREASE IN COST.

+I WOULD SUGGEST THAT WHERE CHANGES IN POLICIES OR INTERPRETATIONS MAY CAUSE MAJOR MODIFICATIONS IN BUILDING PLANS, A GRACE PERIOD SHOULD BE ALLOWED.

+PLANS ALREADY APPROVED SHOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO DISAPPROVAL ON THESE GROUNDS WHEN THEY ARE RESUBMITTED FOR MINOR AMENDMENTS,+ HE ADDED.

MR HU ALSO COMMENTED ON THE GOVERNMENT'S LAND RESUMPTION POLICIES.

HE REITERATED HIS EARLIER SUGGESTION IN THE COUNCIL THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION SCHEME AND THE LETTER B EXCHANGE SCHEME SHOULD BE COMBINED IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE PUBLIC HOUSING STOCK AND TO SPEED UP THE DISCHARGE OF LETTER B COMMITMENTS.

+I WOULD SUGGEST THAT THIS SCHEME BE PURSUED AGAIN,+ SAID MR HU. +BESIDES THE COMMERCIAL PREMISES, 30 TO 40 PER CENT OF THE RESIDENTIAL AREA AT ATTRACTIVE LOCATIONS SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDERS TO DEVELOP AND SELL AT THEIR OWN PRICE, WHILE 60 TO 70 PER CENT OF THE RESIDENTIAL AREA SHOULD BE BUILT AND HANDED BACK TO THE GOVERNMENT AT AN AGREED PRICE FOR THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME OR EVEN FOR RENTAL PUBLIC HOUSING DEPENDING ON THE EXTENT OF DEMAND.

+INTEGRATION OF ACCOMMODATION FOR DIFFERENT INCOME GROUPS IN A PRIME SITE OR ANY SITE IS SOCIALLY AN IDEA WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE,+ HE SAID.

HE ALSO URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER TYING UP THE LETTER B ENTITLEMENT EXCHANGE SCHEME WITH SEABED RECLAMATION AND LAND EXCAVATION PROJECTS ON ACCEPTABLE LOCATIONS AND TO EXTEND THE LETTER B EXCHANGE SCHEME TO THE URBAN AREA.

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HELP INDUSTRIALISTS AND WORKERS, GOVT TOLD
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE MORE POSITIVE MEASURES TO FOSTER A FAVOURABLE CLIMATE FOR THE MANUFACTURING AND TRADING SECTORS IN HONG KONG, THE HON WONG PO-YAN SAID TODAY.

IN A STRONG PLEA FOR ASSISTANCE FOR LOCAL INDUSTRIALISTS AND WORKERS, MR WONG SAID HONG KONG MANUFACTURERS, APART FROM SUFFERING SPIRALLING COSTS OF RAW MATERIALS, HIGH INTEREST RATES AND INFLATION, ALSO FACED RISING PROTECTIONIST SENTIMENTS IN OUR MAJOR EXPORT MARKETS AND INCREASING COMPETITION FROM OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

+THE PROPOSALS TO HELP INDUSTRIALISTS BY INCREASING ALLOWANCES FOR NEW CAPITAL EQUIPMENT, PLANT AND INDUSTRIAL BUILDING, THOUGH STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, ARE BUT SMALL STEPS AND ARE CLEARLY NOT ENOUGH,+ HE SAID.

HE URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE EFFECTIVE USE OF INTEREST RATES WHICH HE SAID, IS AN EFFECTIVE MEANS TO STIMULATE AND REGULATE INVESTMENT.

STEPS SHOULD ALSO BE TAKEN TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES OF INCREASING THE EXPORT OF DOMESTIC PRODUCTS AND SERVICE.

+THE REALISATION OF THE LONG ADVOCATED AND LONG AWAITED EXHIBITION CENTRE, FOR EXAMPLE, WILL ADD CONSIDERABLY TO OUR EXPORT OF SERVICE, NOT TO MENTION THE CONTRIBUTION THAT THE HONG KONG INDUSTRIALISTS ANXIOUSLY EXPECT,+ MR WONG SAID.

IN ADDITION, HE CALLED FOR A CONSISTENT AND EFFECTIVE POLICY TO CURB INFLATION, BOTH IMPORTED AND DOMESTIC.

WHILE CONCEDING THAT THE INHERENT ABSENCE OF RAW MATERIALS TO SUPPORT LOCAL MANUFACTURING ACTIVITIES WILL NECESSARILY RENDER IMPORTED INFLATION DIFFICULT TO CONTROL, MR WONG ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO ADAPT STRINGENT STEPS TO RESTRAIN FORCES OF INFLATION DUE TO INTERNAL ELEMENTS.

+WE SHOULD, FOR EXAMPLE, TAKE MEASURES TO ENABLE INDUSTRY AND CONSUMERS TO HAVE THEIR BURDEN ON THE COST OF ENERGY, INCLUDING POWER, FUEL AND LIGHT, TO BE ADJUSTED DOWNWARD TO REFLECT THE RECENT EASING OF OIL PRICES IN THE WORLD.+

ON THE SUPPLY OF SKILLED WORKERS, MR WONG WAS HOPEFUL THAT THE RECENTLY-ESTABLISHED VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL WOULD PROVIDE POTENTIAL WORKERS WITH THE REQUISITE TECHNICAL EDUCATION, AND WORKERS WITH APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR OPTIMAL TRAINING TO UPGRADE THEIR WORK SKILLS AND EFFICIENCY.

THE WORK AND SUCCESS OF THE COUNCIL HE SAID, HAVE THEREFORE A DIRECT BEARING ON ENCOURAGING GROWTH IN OUTPUT PER HEAD WHICH WILL BE VITAL, FOR INDUSTRIALISTS AND WORKERS ALIKE, IN MEETING FUTURE CHALLENGES.

MR WONG ALSO DREW MEMBERS' ATTENTION TO THE HEALTHY AND GROWING ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA.

HE SAID TRADE STATISTICS FOR 1981 REVEALED THAT CHINA RANKED SECOND AS HONG KONG'S MAJOR SUPPLIER AND THE FIFTH BUYER, ADDING THAT THE POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER EXPANSION IS ENORMOUS.

AS THERE IS A DISTURBING ABSENCE OF AGGRESSIVE PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES IN CHINA, MR WONG SAID A PLANNED AND SYSTEMATIC POLICY OF PROMOTING OUR PRODUCTS, OUR SERVICE AND OUR EXPERTISE IN CHINA IS URGENTLY NEEDED.

IN FORMULATING THIS POLICY, WE SHOULD CONCENTRATE OUR EFFORTS ON INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES.

+AS REGARDS TRADE AND COMMERCE, WE SHOULD REACH OUT TO THE DEVELOPING INDUSTRIAL CENTRES AND CITIES IN THE NORTHEAST, THE LIGHT INDUSTRIAL ZONES IN THE SOUTHWEST AND NORTHWEST, AND THE COASTAL PROVINCES,+ HE ADDED.

TURNING TO HOUSING, MR WONG WAS CONCERNED THAT DESPITE A SERIES OF MEASURES IMPLEMENTED LAST YEAR TO ACCELERATE THE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMMES, THE HOUSING AUTHORITY'S WAITING LIST HAS REMAINED DISAPPOINTINGLY STATIC.

HOWEVER, THE NUMBER OF PRIVATE DOMESTIC UNITS FOUND VACANT IN 1981 STOOD AT 29 700.

+THIS GIVES RISE TO THE HIGHLY UNSATISFACTORY SITUATION WHERE COMPLETED FLATS, INTO WHICH LABOUR, MATERIAL AND OTHER VALUABLE RESOURCES HAVE BEEN PUT TO USE, STAND VACANT WHILE THE PRESSURE ON HOUSING CONTINUES TO SURGE,+ HE REMARKED.

TO RECTIFY THIS SITUATION, HE SUGGESTED THAT INTEREST PAYABLE ON THE PURCHASE OF SMALL DOMESTIC PREMISES BY THE SANDWICHED CLASS SHOULD BE EXEMPTED FROM TAXATION.

AND TO QUALIFY FOR SUCH DEDUCTION OR ALLOWANCE, A POTENTIAL PURCHASER MUST BE THE INTENDED OWNER-OCCUPIER OF HIS FIRST PURCHASED FLAT DIRECT FROM THE REAL ESTATE DEVELOPER.

THE SIZE OF THE FLAT SHOULD NOT EXCEED A CERTAIN LIMIT, SAY 90 SQUARE METRES, AND THE DEDUCTIBLE SUM COULD BE RESTRICTED TO A CERTAIN CEILING OF THE OWNER-OCCUPIER'S FAMILY INCOME IN ORDER TO LIMIT THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND COST, HE SAID.

+GRANTED THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROPOSAL WOULD ENTAIL AN INTENSIVE IRONING OUT OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS, IT COULD SERVE TO SOLVE, WITHIN A RELATIVELY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, THE PRESSING TWIN PROBLEMS OF ENABLING THE SANDWICHED CLASS, WHO ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR GOVERNMENT HOUSING OR SUBSIDIES, TO PURCHASE THEIR OWN HOMES AND, AT THE SAME TIME, OF REDUCING THE ACCUMULATED STOCK OF SMALL FLATS IN A SLUGGISH PROPERTY MARKET TO ENCOURAGE NEW DEVELOPMENTS,+ MR WONG SAID.

ON TRANSPORT, MR WONG URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO ACCORD TOP PRIORITY TO THE EXAMINATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF A SECOND VEHICULAR CROSS HARBOUR LINK, BE IT ANOTHER TUNNEL OR A BRIDGE.

HE SAID THE APPROACH ROADS TO THE EXISTING CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL HAVE LONG BEEN RECOGNISED TO BE INADEQUATE AND ARE TOTALLY CONGESTED, PARTICULARLY DURING RUSH HOURS.

AS REGARDS PARKING FOR LORRIES AND HEAVY-DUTY INDUSTRIAL TRAILERS, HE SAID THE APPARENT LACK OF PLANNING AND DIRECTION IN THIS RESPECT HAS RESULTED IN SERIOUS TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN MANY INDUSTRIAL AREAS, NOTABLY TSUEN WAN AND KWUN TONG.

TOP PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN, HE SAID, TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF MULTI-STOREY LORRY CAR PARKS IN SELECTED INDUSTRIAL AND OTHER AREAS, WHERE THE LOADING AND UNLOADING OF CARGOES AND A HIGH CONCENTRATION OF GOODS VEHICLES ARE PLANNED OR ANTICIPATED.

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SUPPORT SOUGHT FOR INDUSTRY

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THE INCREASING CALLS FROM INDUSTRIALISTS RECENTLY FOR GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE SHOULD NOT BE SUMMARILY DISMISSED AS SELF-INTERESTED CALLS FOR SPECIAL TREATMENT OR HANDOUTS, THE HON ALLEN LEE SAID TODAY.

HE TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT THESE APPEALS FORM AN ACCURATE REFLECTION OF SEVERE STRAINS AS WELL AS A GENUINE EFFORT TO IDENTIFY POSSIBLE AREAS WHERE GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE MIGHT BE HELPFUL NOT ONLY TO THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR BUT THE CONTINUED SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE.

ALTHOUGH HE BELIEVED IN FREE TRADE AND COMPETITION, MR LEE SAID HE DID NOT FOR ONE MOMENT BELIEVE THAT THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE HAD BEEN THE SECRET OF THE SUCCESS OF LOCAL INDUSTRY OVER THE YEARS.

+GOVERNMENT MOST CERTAINLY PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THIS SUCCESS THROUGH SUPPORT FOR VOCATIONAL, TECHNICAL AND TERTIARY EDUCATION- INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT PROMOTION, TRAINING SCHEMES, INDUSTRIAL DIVERSIFICATION AND MANY MORE.

+WHAT IS BEING SOUGHT IS INCREASED SUPPORT IN AREAS SUPPLEMENTARY TO THESE AND WHAT IS STRONGLY FELT TO BE ESSENTIAL TO PRESERVING AS WELL AS IMPROVING AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCTIVE TO THE CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF OUR MANUFACTURING SECTOR SO THAT THE GOVERNMENT COFFERS MAY BE ADEQUATELY REPLENISHED THROUGH TAX ON PROFITS TO ENABLE IT TO ACHIEVE AN IMPROVING STANDARD OF LIVING FOR OUR CITIZENS, AN AIM UPON WHICH THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY HAS SO RIGHTLY PLACED EMPHASIS.

+THE LOW LEVEL OF TAXATION REINFORCES THE NEED TO CONSIDER WHETHER ITS SOURCES SHOULD BE CAREFULLY GUARDED AND NURTURED,+ HE SAID.

MR LEE POINTED OUT THAT INDUSTRIALISTS WERE NOT CALLING FOR SUBSIDIES FOR BUSINESSES WHICH COULD NO LONGER SURVIVE IN A COMPETITIVE WORLD.

GIVEN THE INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURE OF HONG KONG, HE SAID, IT WAS A QUESTION OF WHETHER WE COULD AFFORD TO LOSE OUR ESSENTIAL INDUSTRIES, SUCH AS THE TEXTILE AND GARMENT INDUSTRIES THAT THE MOST ADVANCED COUNTRIES HAD SO FIERCELY DEFENDED AGAINST.

+AS INDUSTRIALISTS, WE SEE A DECLINE NOT ONLY IN THESE SECTORS BUT ALSO IN OTHERS.

+CAN WE AFFORD NOT TO HAVE A GROWING MANUFACTURING SECTOR? IF NOT, SHOULD SOMETHING BE DONE TO STRENGTHEN THIS BACKBONE OF OUR ECONOMY? WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR OTHER SECTORS AND FOR EMPLOYMENT IF OUR MANUFACTURING SECTOR DECLINES?

+THESE QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ON THE MINDS OF INDUSTRIALISTS IN MAKING THEIR PROPOSALS, CERTAINLY NOT IN SELF-INTEREST BUT RATHER FOR THE PROSPERITY TOGETHER WITH EVERYONE IN THE COMMUNITY,+ MR LEE SAID.

HE SPELLED OUT THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC AREAS WHERE INDUSTRIALISTS HAD MADE THEIR APPEALS KNOWN:

- * LAND AND RENT: INCREASE THE PRODUCTION AND SALE OF LAND AND RELAX THE CRITERIA FOR QUALIFYING FOR THE HONG KONG INDUSTRIAL ESTATES TO ALLOW FURTHER UTILISATION.
- * INTEREST RATES: CALL FOR ASSISTANCE IN THE FORMATION OF A FINANCIAL BODY PROPOSED BY THE FEDERATION OF HONG KONG INDUSTRIES WHICH WILL POOL LOANS SO THAT THE AGGREGATE AMOUNT WILL BE SUFFICIENT FOR IT TO BORROW FROM CHEAPER SOURCES WHICH DO EXIST OVERSEAS.
- * ELECTRICITY: CALL FOR AN ASSURANCE THAT A FAIR PRICE IS BEING PAID AND THAT AN EFFECTIVE MONITORING MACHINERY IS IN OPERATION.
- * WATER CHARGES: CAUTION AGAINST INCREASES TO WATER CHARGES BECAUSE IT AFFECTS IN PARTICULAR THE BLEACHING, DYEING AND FINISHING INDUSTRY WHICH PROVIDES AN ESSENTIAL LINK IN THE TEXTILE AND GARMENT CHAIN.

ALL THESE RISING COSTS ARE ERODING PROFIT MARGIN, MR LEE SAID.

+I BELIEVE MY VERBOSITY ON THIS SUBJECT IS VALID AND I FEEL IT NEEDS TO BE SAID THAT INDUSTRIALISTS ARE NOT SEEKING SPECIAL TREATMENT BUT ARE SINCERELY TRYING TO SEEK WAYS IN CO-OPERATION AND CO-ORDINATION WITH GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THE FUTURE WELL-BEING OF OUR ECONOMY,+ HE SAID.

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MORE TAX CUTS FOR HIGH TECHNOLOGY URGED
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THE HON CHAN KAM-CHUEN CALLED FOR FURTHER TAX CONCESSIONS TO BE MADE FOR HIGH-LEVEL TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRIES.

AND HE SUGGESTED THAT THE MINIMUM QUALIFYING CRITERIA FOR SUCH CONCESSIONS SHOULD BE SIMILAR TO THOSE SET BY THE INDUSTRIAL ESTATES CORPORATION FOR OPERATIONS IN ITS ESTATES.

MR CHAN WELCOMED THE PROPOSED TAX CONCESSIONS FOR NEW PLANT, EQUIPMENT AND INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS.

+HOWEVER, I FEEL THAT FURTHER CONCESSIONS SHOULD BE MADE FOR A FIXED PERIOD FOR NEW CAPITAL-INTENSIVE EQUIPMENT FOR NEW, RELATIVELY HIGH-LEVEL TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRIES WHICH HONG KONG REQUIRES FOR ITS DIVERSIFICATION PROGRAMME.+

THE TRANSFER OF NEW TECHNOLOGY, HE SAID, PROVIDES NOT ONLY PROFITS FOR THE INVESTORS, BUT ALSO MORE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL WORKERS.

+THESE LONG-TERM BENEFITS ARE BY FAR MORE IMPORTANT TO THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG THAN THE SHORT TERM LOSS IN TAX REVENUE,+ HE SAID.

ON SEPARATE TAXATION FOR MARRIED WOMEN, MR CHAN URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO GIVE THE SUBJECT THE MOST SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION AGAIN NEXT YEAR.

THE PRESENT COMBINED ASSESSMENT OF WORKING COUPLES HAS, TOGETHER WITH OTHER FACTORS, COMPELLED MANY TO CHOOSE CO-HABITATION INSTEAD OF FORMAL MARRIAGE, HE SAID.

+THERE IS IN FACT A VERY HIGH SOCIAL COST TO PAY,+HE SAID. +OTHER THAN SERIOUSLY UNDERMINING THE TRADITIONAL CHINESE VALUE OF THE FAMILY AS A UNIT, THERE WOULD BE UNWANTED CHILDREN AND OTHER ASSOCIATED PROBLEMS.+

AS REGARDS EXEMPTION OF FOREIGN CURRENCY DEPOSITS FROM INTEREST TAX, HE SAID IT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO OUR MONEY MARKET IN THAT IT +REMOVES ONE OF THE MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCKS WHICH PREVENT HONG KONG FROM COMPETING WITH OTHER FINANCIAL CENTRES+.

THE REDUCTION OF INTEREST TAX ON HONG KONG DOLLAR DEPOSITS TO 10 PER CENT IS ANOTHER STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, HE ADDED.

+IT IS ONLY APPROPRIATE THAT CONCESSIONS IN SALARIES TAX SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY A LOWERING OF INTEREST TAX AS THIS WOULD ENCOURAGE MORE PRUDENT PEOPLE TO PUT THEIR MONEY INTO SAVINGS FOR FURTHER INVESTMENTS, RATHER THAN TO OVERSPEND TO FUEL IMPORTED INFLATION.+

TURNING TO THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR CHAN WARNED AGAINST THE EXCESSIVE OVERLAPPING OF DUTIES.

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CITING THE ISSUE OF TRAFFIC OFFENCE TICKETS AS AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID THE CONSTABLE ON THE BEAT, THE TRAFFIC POLICEMAN AND THE TRAFFIC WARDEN ARE ALL DOING THE SAME JOB.

HE THOUGHT THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB OF THE POLICE IS CRIME PREVENTION AND DETECTION AND THAT THEY SHOULD NOT BE OVERLOADED WITH THIS AND OTHER SUNDRY JOBS.

+AS WE NOW HAVE A SEPARATE POLICY TRANSPORT BRANCH AND A CORRESPONDING OPERATIONS TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, I PROPOSE THAT ALL OPERATIONAL JOBS INVOLVING LAND TRAFFIC MATTERS AND THE GRADE OF TRAFFIC WARDEN BE TRANSFERRED TO THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT,+ HE SAID.

MR CHAN ALSO COMMENTED ON THE COVERED ELEVATED WALKWAYS WITH ESCALATORS IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT.

HE NOTED THAT THIS TYPE OF ELEVATED WALKWAY WHICH, PROVIDES AMONG OTHER THINGS, A SMOOTH PEDESTRIAN FLOW, IS VERY POPULAR AMONG THE PUBLIC.

+I THEREFORE URGE THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER EXTENDING THE PRESENT NETWORK OF COVERED ELEVATED WALKWAYS SERVICED BY ESCALATORS TO SUITABLY SELECTED AREAS OUTSIDE THE CENTRAL DISTRICT,+ HE SAID.

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RETHINK URGED ON RELIANCE ON LAND SALES REVENUE

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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION AS TO THE EXTENT THAT IT IS NOW RELIANT ON LAND SALES TO PAY FOR THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME, THE HON WILLIAM BROWN SAID TODAY.

IN MAKING THIS COMMENT, MR BROWN SAID HE WAS CONSCIOUS OF VIEWS EASILY EXPRESSED BY THE GOVERNMENT WHICH WARNED AGAINST GETTING LOCKED INTO A LEVEL OF EXPENDITURE ON CAPITAL ACCOUNT WHICH WOULD NOT BE SUSTAINABLE AS AND WHEN THE LEVEL OF CAPITAL REVENUE SETTLED DOWN AND THE FINANCING OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AGAIN BECAME DEPENDENT ON THE SURPLUS ON RECURRENT ACCOUNT.

HE CITED STATISTICS TO SHOW THAT THE SURPLUS ON RECURRENT ACCOUNT, EXPRESSED AS A PROPORTION OF ACTUAL TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE, IS PROJECTED TO FALL TO 44 PER CENT IN 1982-83 — A SHARP DROP FROM THE ESTIMATED 74 PER CENT IN THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR, AND FROM THE AVERAGE OF 100 PER CENT IN THE PREVIOUS DECADE.

+THE 44 PER CENT MUST BE VIEWED AGAINST OUR TRADITIONAL GUIDELINE OF AT LEAST 60 PER CENT, ALTHOUGH IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED TENTATIVELY SINCE LAST YEAR THAT THIS LATTER RATIO COULD PERHAPS BE LOWERED TO AT LEAST 33 PER CENT,+ HE POINTED OUT.

WHILE HE SHARED THE CONFIDENCE OF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IN THE LONG-TERM PROSPECTS OF LOCAL REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS, HE SAID THE STATISTICS HE HAD QUOTED ARE +INDICATIVE OF A TREND WHICH SEEMS TO BE ACCELERATING+.

+THE RATIOS ARE THERE TO SERVE AS AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM AND WE SHOULD NOT IGNORE THEIR SIGNALS, PARTICULARLY WHEN ONE BEARS IN MIND THAT QUITE APART FROM THE ON-GOING PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMME WE ARE CONTEMPLATING A LARGE NUMBER OF MAJOR PROJECTS IN THE PERIOD AHEAD.

+HERE I AM THINKING OF THE POSSIBLE NEW AIRPORT AND RELATED CROSSINGS TO LANTAU, THE POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF A CROSSING AT LEI YUE MUN, MAJOR ROAD DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES AND HONG KONG TO NAME BUT JUST A FEW,+ HE REMARKED.

LAND SALES WERE INHERENTLY THE LEAST STABLE COMPONENT OF OUR PUBLIC ACCOUNTS, HE SAID, AND TO SOME EXTENT, TOO MUCH RELIANCE ON LAND SALES REVENUE MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO CONVINCE ITS CRITICS THAT IT HAS NO INTEREST IN THE OUTCOME OF LAND SALES OR THAT THE RESULTANT FINANCING DOES NOT HAVE SERIOUS INFLATIONARY CONSEQUENCES.

TURNING TO THE CONTINUED GROWTH OF THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR BROWN CALLED FOR MORE EFFICIENT CONTROL ON THE COSTS OF GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION.

HE SAID: +ALTHOUGH CONTROLLING STAFF NUMBERS IS IMPORTANT IT IS EQUALLY NECESSARY TO GET PAY RATES RIGHT AND THAT INCLUDES TAKING DUE COGNIZANCE OF THE PROPER VALUE OF FRINGE BENEFITS WHEN REVIEWING SALARY SCALES.

+PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL IS THE NEED TO MAXIMISE PRODUCTIVITY, AND I AM ENCOURAGED THAT THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SHARES THE VIEW THAT MORE EFFECTIVE USE COULD BE MADE OF THE AVAILABLE STAFF RESOURCES.+

HOWEVER, MR BROWN WOULD HAVE BEEN HAPPIER HAD THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY BEEN A LITTLE MORE SPECIFIC AND UNDERTAKEN TO ENSURE THAT ADDITIONAL RESOURCES WOULD BE DIRECTED TO EXISTING PROGRAMMES DESIGNED TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY.

MR BROWN ALSO PAID TRIBUTE TO THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR INTRODUCING MEASURES DESIGNED TO ADVANCE HONG KONG AS A FINANCIAL CENTRE.

THE REVENUE MEASURES AND CHANGES TO THE INTEREST WITHHOLDING TAX MAKE HONG KONG EVEN MORE ATTRACTIVE TO PROSPECTIVE INVESTORS AND USERS OF OUR FINANCIAL SERVICES, HE SAID.

+I HAVE COMPLETE CONFIDENCE THAT OUR FREE MARKETS WILL FULLY VINDICATE THESE MEASURES AND THAT OUR GROWTH WILL BE RAPID,+ HE SAID.

THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 1982

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ANALYSIS OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS STATISTICS FOR MERCHANDISE,
RECLASSIFIED BY INDUSTRIAL ORIGIN FOR THE WHOLE YEAR OF 1981
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THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT TODAY RELEASED
DOMESTIC EXPORTS STATISTICS ANALYSED BY INDUSTRIAL ORIGIN FOR
THE WHOLE YEAR OF 1981.

THIS SERIES IS DERIVED BY RE-GROUPING ALL SIX-DIGIT COMMODITY
EXPORT ITEMS UNDER THE PRESENT EXTERNAL TRADE CLASSIFICATION
SYSTEM, ACCORDING TO THE INDUSTRIES IN WHICH THESE COMMODITY
ITEMS ARE NORMALLY PRODUCED.

SINCE ITS SCOPE IS CONFINED TO MERCHANDISE TRADE,
TRANSACTIONS IN GOLD AND SPECIE ARE NOT INCLUDED.

THE CLASSIFICATION OF COMMODITY EXPORT ITEMS BY INDUSTRIAL
ORIGIN IS STRUCTURED UPON THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD CLASSIFICATION OF ALL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES (ISIC), AS
DISTINCT FROM THE UNITED NATIONS STANDARD INTERNATIONAL TRADE
CLASSIFICATION (SITC) WHICH IS ADOPTED IN THE REGULAR TRADE
STATISTICS REPORTS.

WHEN INTERPRETING THESE RE-CLASSIFIED FIGURES, IT SHOULD BE
NOTED THAT AN EXPORTED COMMODITY REQUIRING SEVERAL INTERMEDIATE
PROCESSING STAGES IS WHOLLY ALLOCATED TO THE INDUSTRY IN WHICH
IT IS FINALLY PRODUCED, BUT THAT INDUSTRY WILL NOT NORMALLY
BE THE SOLE CONTRIBUTOR TO ITS OVERALL EXPORT VALUE.

FURTHERMORE, THE CLASSIFICATION OF AN EXPORTED COMMODITY TO A
PARTICULAR INDUSTRY DOES NOT IMPLY THAT THE ENTIRE LOT OF SUCH
COMMODITY IS ACTUALLY PRODUCED BY ESTABLISHMENTS OF THAT INDUSTRY,
SINCE SOME MAY BE SECONDARY PRODUCTS PRODUCED BY ESTABLISHMENTS
CLASSIFIED ELSEWHERE.

IN TERMS OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS, THE SIX MOST IMPORTANT
INDUSTRY GROUPS WERE WEARING APPAREL, ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES AND
ELECTRONICS, TEXTILES, PROFESSIONAL AND OPTICAL EQUIPMENT, PLASTIC
PRODUCTS AND METAL PRODUCTS.

THEY TOGETHER ACCOUNTED FOR 87 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL VALUE
OF MERCHANDISE DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN 1981.

THE LARGEST INCREASES BY ABSOLUTE VALUE OVER 1980 OCCURRED
IN WEARING APPAREL (\$3 486 MILLION), ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES AND
ELECTRONICS (\$3 440 MILLION), TEXTILES (\$2 425 MILLION),
PROFESSIONAL AND OPTICAL EQUIPMENT (\$980 MILLION), AND PLASTIC
PRODUCTS (\$591 MILLION).

IN PERCENTAGE TERMS, THE HIGHEST INCREASES WERE : BEVERAGES
(164 PER CENT), TOBACCO (57 PER CENT), FOOTWEAR (55 PER CENT),
RUBBER PRODUCTS (36 PER CENT), CHEMICAL PRODUCTS (32 PER CENT),
FOOD (29 PER CENT), AND ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES AND ELECTRONICS
(27 PER CENT).

/A DECREASE OF

A DECREASE OF \$219 MILLION (-31 PER CENT FROM \$711 MILLION) BETWEEN 1980 AND 1981 WAS OBSERVED IN THE DOMESTIC EXPORTS OF MISCELLANEOUS MERCHANDISE ITEMS INCLUDING POSTAL PACKAGES, DEVELOPED FILM AND WORKS OF ART.

FURTHER DETAILS OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS STATISTICS FOR MERCHANDISE RECLASSIFIED BY INDUSTRIAL ORIGIN MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION STATISTICS SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT (AT 3-7221914).

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MP STUNNED BY RAPID NEW TOWN GROWTH

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A BRITISH MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, MR ARTHUR BOTTOMLEY, SAID TODAY THAT HE WAS STUNNED BY THE RAPID PACE OF DEVELOPMENTS IN SHA TIN NEW TOWN.

AFTER A TOUR OF THE WO CHE PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATE AND A VISIT TO A FAMILY LIVING THERE, MR BOTTOMLEY, WHO IS IN HONG KONG FOR THE SECOND TIME, ADDED: +NEW ACCOMMODATION BEING PROVIDED IS OF A VERY GOOD STANDARD AND THE PEOPLE SEEM TO BE HAPPY AND CONTENT.+

MR BOTTOMLEY, TOGETHER WITH THREE OTHER MP'S -- MR FREDERICK WILLELY, LORD ORAM AND LORD GISBOROUGH -- SPENT THIS (THURSDAY) MORNING IN SHA TIN SEEING VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

THEY ARE PART OF AN EIGHT-MAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION DELEGATION WHICH HAD JUST VISITED CHINA.

TODAY'S VISIT BEGAN WITH A BRIEFING BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR IAN MACPHERSON- DIRECTOR OF NEW TERRITORIES DEVELOPMENT, MR JOHN DON- AND AN ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, MR CHAN PAK, AT THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION HEADQUARTERS.

THE MP'S ALSO TOURED THE EXHIBITION HALL OF THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT BEFORE GOING TO A LOOKOUT POINT IN SHA TIN FOR A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE NEW TOWN.

THE DISTRICT OFFICER, DR PATRICK HASE, AND THE PROJECT MANAGER, MR KENNETH KWOK, SHOWED THEM VARIOUS PROJECTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION AND BEING PLANNED FOR THE NEW TOWN, WHICH WILL BE ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE 750 000 PEOPLE BY THE END OF 1990'S.

THE VISIT ENDED AT ISLAND HOUSE WHERE THE MP'S WERE GUESTS OF A LUNCH GIVEN BY THE SECRETARY FOR CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES, MR DAVID AKERS-JONES, AND MRS AKERS-JONES.

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NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR RTHK

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MR HAROLD KWOK WAI-HONG HAS BEEN APPOINTED DEPUTY DIRECTOR AT RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG WITH EFFECT FROM MAY 1.

HE SUCCEEDS MR STUART WILKINSON WHO BECOMES DIRECTOR OF BROADCASTING WHEN MR JOHN TISDALL'S SECONDMENT TO THIS POST FROM THE BBC ENDS NEXT MONTH.

MR KWOK HAS BEEN IN GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION SINCE 1966 AND HIS LAST POSTING WAS MANAGING THE SCHEME TO ASSIST INDEBTED CIVIL SERVANTS.

HE WILL TAKE OVER THE ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES AT RTHK PERFORMED BY THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, MISS ELAINE CHUNG, WHO WILL TAKE UP A NEW POSTING ELSEWHERE IN GOVERNMENT AT THE END OF MAY.

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+THE ART OF SINGING+ - FREE MASTER CLASSES

* * * *

A SERIES OF THREE LECTURES ON VOICE PRODUCTION AND OPERATIC REPERTOIRE WILL BE PRESENTED BY THE MUSIC OFFICE OF THE RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT OVER THE NEXT THREE DAYS STARTING FROM TOMORROW (FRIDAY) AT 7 PM.

ALL THE LECTURES WILL BE GIVEN AT THE BAROQUE SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS, 292A AND B, PRINCE EDWARD ROAD, SECOND FLOOR, KOWLOON.

THE FIRST OF THE LECTURES WILL BE GIVEN AS AN INTRODUCTION TO NATURAL SINGING WHILE THE SECOND TO BE GIVEN ON SATURDAY (MARCH 27) WILL BE ON +GERMAN LIEDER AND ITALIAN CHAMBER WORKS+. THE FINAL LECTURE WILL BE GIVEN ON SUNDAY (MARCH 28) ON THE TOPIC OF FRENCH, ITALIAN AND GERMAN OPERATIC ARIAS.

THE LECTURES WILL BE GIVEN BY THE WELL-KNOWN LOCAL TENOR, MAK CHEE-SING. MR MAK STUDIED AT THE WORLD FAMOUS SANTA CECILIA CONSERVATORY IN ROME FROM 1971 TO 1974, WITH FURTHER STUDIES AT THE ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC IN 1976.

MR MAK LATER JOINED THE WEST-GERMAN BASED HAGEN CITY THEATRE WHERE HE PERFORMED FOR TWO YEARS. FOLLOWING HIS RETURN TO HONG KONG, MR MAK HAS GIVEN A SOLO RECITAL UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE URBAN COUNCIL.

ALL THE LECTURES, GIVEN IN CANTONESE, ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND FREE TICKETS ARE NOW AVAILABLE FROM THE EAST KOWLOON MUSIC CENTRE, AT 100 TING FUNG STREET, SECOND FLOOR, NGAU TAU KOK, KOWLOON.

FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL 3-7561328.

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CENTRAL REGISTRY FOR THE DISABLED TO BE SET UP
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WORK HAS BEGUN ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CENTRAL REGISTRY FOR THE DISABLED IN THE SOCIAL SERVICES BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT.

THE MAIN PURPOSE OF SETTING UP A CENTRAL REGISTRY, WHICH WAS RECOMMENDED IN THE WHITE PAPER ON REHABILITATION, IS TO PROVIDE THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES AND NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS WITH COMPREHENSIVE AND RELIABLE DATA ABOUT THE DISABLED POPULATION SO AS TO HELP THEM IN THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF REHABILITATION SERVICES IN HONG KONG.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE OF THE CENTRAL REGISTRY IS TO SPEED UP THE PROVISION OF SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO THEIR CLIENTS BY ENABLING THEM TO HAVE ACCESS TO THE PERSONAL PARTICULARS, MEDICAL HISTORY AND OTHER DETAILS OF A DISABLED PERSON.

SUCH INFORMATION WILL ALSO BE USEFUL FOR RESEARCH WORK SUCH AS INTO THE CAUSES OF DISABILITIES, SO THAT MORE EFFECTIVE PREVENTIVE AND REHABILITATIVE MEASURES COULD BE DEvised.

ALL INFORMATION STORED IN THE CENTRAL REGISTRY WILL BE TREATED AS STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND WILL ONLY BE DIVULGED TO AUTHORISED PERSONNEL WORKING IN THE REHABILITATION FIELD WHETHER IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS OR VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF MORE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SERVICES TO THE DISABLED, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN STRESSED.

INCLUDED IN THE CENTRAL REGISTRY WILL BE INFORMATION ABOUT PEOPLE SUFFERING FROM ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF DISABILITIES:

- * THE BLIND AND PARTIALLY-SIGHTED=
- * THE DEAF AND PARTIALLY-HEARING=
- * THE MENTALLY ILL=
- * THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED=
- * SLOW LEARNING AND MALADJUSTED CHILDREN=
- * THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED.

THE CENTRAL REGISTRY WILL BE DEVELOPED IN THREE STAGES.

THE FIRST IS THE +CONVERSION STAGE+, WHICH INVOLVES THE TRANSFER OF RECORDS OF DISABLED PERSONS NOW STORED IN THE FILES OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO THE CENTRAL REGISTRY. THE SECOND STAGE WILL INVOLVE THE MATCHING AND COLLATION OF DATA WHICH WILL BE DONE CENTRALLY. THE THIRD AND FINAL STAGE WILL BE THE CREATION OF PERMANENT RECORDS FOR THE CENTRAL REGISTRY.

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THE WHOLE PROCESS IS EXPECTED TO TAKE TWELVE MONTHS TO COMPLETE.

PERMANENT RECORDS WILL ALSO BE CREATED FOR NEW CASES COMING TO THE NOTICE OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS OR VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AFTER APRIL 1.

A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE COMPUTERISATION OF THE REGISTRY IS BEING CARRIED OUT BY THE GOVERNMENT'S DATA PROCESSING DIVISION, THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

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TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN NGAU CHI WAN AND SO KON PO
* * *

A SECTION OF SHUN ON ROAD NEAR ITS JUNCTION WITH LEE ON ROAD IN NGAU CHI WAN WILL BE CLOSED TO TRAFFIC BETWEEN 1 AM AND 5 AM TOMORROW (FRIDAY) AND ON SATURDAY (MARCH 27) FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FOOTBRIDGE.

DURING THE CLOSURE, NORTHBOUND TRAFFIC ALONG SHUN LEE TSUEN ROAD HEADING FOR SHUN TIN ESTATE AND SHUN ON ESTATE WILL BE DIVERTED VIA NEW CLEAR WATER BAY ROAD AND LEE ON ROAD.

TRAFFIC FROM SHUN TIN ESTATE, SHUN ON ESTATE AND SHUN LEE ESTATE HEADING FOR KWUN TONG AREA MAY USE LEE ON ROAD, SAN LEE STREET, SHUN CHING STREET AND SHUN LEE TSUEN ROAD.

MEANWHILE, ON HONG KONG ISLAND, TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE INTRODUCED IN A NUMBER OF ROADS LEADING TO THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT STADIUM IN SO KON PO FROM 8 AM TO 10 PM ON SATURDAY (MARCH 27) AND FROM 8 AM TO 7 PM ON SUNDAY (MARCH 28) FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RUGBY FOOTBALL MATCHES.

THEY ARE :

- * A SECTION OF CAROLINE HILL ROAD FROM ITS SOUTHERN JUNCTION WITH LEIGHTON ROAD TO EASTERN HOSPITAL ROAD WILL BE ROUTED ONE WAY SOUTHBOUND.
- * A SECTION OF CAROLINE HILL ROAD FROM ITS NORTHERN JUNCTION WITH LEIGHTON ROAD TO EASTERN HOSPITAL ROAD WILL BE CLOSED TO TRAFFIC EXCEPT FOR THOSE REQUIRING ACCESS TO PREMISES IN THE AREA.
- * EASTERN HOSPITAL ROAD WILL BE ROUTED ONE WAY FROM CAROLINE HILL ROAD TO THE ENTRANCE OF ST. PAUL'S HOSPITAL.
- * COTTON PATH WILL BE CLOSED TO TRAFFIC EXCEPT FOR THOSE REQUIRING ACCESS TO PREMISES IN THE AREA.

A TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN REMINDED MOTORISTS THAT PARKING SPACES IN THE AREA WILL BE EXTREMELY LIMITED DURING THE TWO DAYS.

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MORE MEDICAL FACILITIES FOR TUEN MUN
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TUEN MUN RESIDENTS WILL HAVE MORE AND BETTER MEDICAL FACILITIES WHEN THE OUT-PATIENT DEPARTMENT AND THE FAMILY HEALTH CENTRE OF THE NEW YAN OI POLYCLINIC BEGIN TO OPERATE ON APRIL 1.

THE NEW POLYCLINIC, SITUATED NORTH OF CASTLE PEAK POLICE STATION IN CASTLE PEAK ROAD, WILL REINFORCE THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE EXISTING GOVERNMENT CLINIC IN TUEN MUN.

THE \$20-MILLION PROJECT HAS BEEN BUILT WITH THE HELP OF A \$4-MILLION DONATION FROM A NEW TERRITORIES CHARITY ORGANISATION, YAN OI TONG.

THE BUILDING CONSISTS OF A SIX-STOREY BLOCK AND A TWO-STOREY LOW BLOCK, PROVIDING ACCOMMODATION FOR A CHEST CLINIC, A DENTAL CLINIC, A RADIODIAGNOSTIC DEPARTMENT AND A PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY WHICH WILL BE IN OPERATION AT A LATER DATE.

THESE SERVICES, TOGETHER WITH THE OUT-PATIENT CLINIC AND THE FAMILY HEALTH CENTRE, REPRESENT THE FIRST PHASE OF THE TUEN MUN POLYCLINIC PROJECT.

BY 1984, THE SECOND PHASE WILL BE COMPLETED WITH MODERN FACILITIES FOR VARIOUS SPECIALITIES, INCLUDING A RENAL DIALYSIS CENTRE.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT SAID THAT THE PROJECT IS REQUIRED FOR THE GROWING NEW TOWN WITH A POPULATION ESTIMATED TO BE OVER 400 000 BY THE MID 1980'S.

AT PRESENT TUEN MUN IS SERVED BY A GENERAL CLINIC WHICH PROVIDES AN OUT-PATIENT DEPARTMENT, A FAMILY HEALTH SERVICE CENTRE, A MATERNITY HOME, A CHEST CLINIC AND A METHADONE CLINIC.

IN VIEW OF THE EXPECTED INCREASE IN POPULATION, A 1 300 BED DISTRICT HOSPITAL IS BEING BUILT AND WILL BE COMPLETED BY 1985 - 86 TO SERVE THE WESTERN PART OF THE NEW TERRITORIES.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

THE YAN OI POLYCLINIC WILL BE OFFICIALLY OPENED BY THE CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE AT 2.30 PM ON MONDAY (MARCH 29). ADDRESSING THE CEREMONY ALSO WILL BE THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR K.L. THONG AND THE CHAIRMAN OF YAN OI TONG, MR LAU WONG-FAT.

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE EVENT.

TRANSPORT WILL BE PROVIDED TO THE CLINIC. MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES WISHING TO TAKE THE TRANSPORT SHOULD ASSEMBLE AT THE KOWLOON PUBLIC PIER AT 1 PM SHARP ON MONDAY. MR PAUL WAI, SENIOR INFORMATION OFFICER, WILL ASSIST THE PRESS.

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TSUEN WAN -- A PLACE TO BE PROUD OF
* * * *

IN THREE YEARS OR SO TSUEN WAN WILL BECOME A NEW TOWN THAT PEOPLE CAN REALLY BE PROUD OF, ITS TOWN MANAGER, MR HAMISH MACLEOD, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

HE WAS SPEAKING AT THE ANNUAL LUNCHEON GIVEN BY THE DISTRICT OFFICE TO LOCAL LEADERS AT THE HILLTOP COUNTRY CLUB.

MR MACLEOD SAID HE WAS THINKING MAINLY OF TWO DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WOULD TRANSFORM THE CENTRE OF TSUEN WAN, NAMELY THE HIGH-CLASS COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AROUND THE NEW MTR STATION AND THE CULTURAL AND SPORTING FACILITIES WHICH WOULD BE BUILT ON THE RECLAMATION IN FRONT OF THE EXISTING TOWN HALL.

+BUT I ALSO HAVE IN MIND THE FACILITIES SUCH AS SWIMMING POOLS AND GAMES HALLS, AND ABOVE ALL OPEN SPACE, BEING PROVIDED OUTSIDE THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF TSUEN WAN.

+WE ARE FORTUNATE IN HAVING TWO VERY LARGE AREAS SOON TO BE DEVELOPED AS PARKS: INDEED THEY -- TSO KUNG TAM AND GIN DRINKER'S BAY -- WILL EACH BE LARGER THAN ANY OTHER EXISTING URBAN PARK IN HONG KONG.+

MR MACLEOD SAID CHANGES IN TSUEN WAN'S PHYSICAL SURROUNDINGS WERE ACCOMPANIED BY CHANGES IN ITS INSTITUTIONAL OR POLITICAL LIFE.

+THE TWO CHANGES WHICH ARE PROBABLY OF MOST INTEREST TO US HERE IN TSUEN WAN ARE THE EXPANSION OF THE DISTRICT BOARD AND THE CREATION OF THE NEW LANDS DEPARTMENT, BOTH EFFECTIVE FROM NEXT MONTH.+

TOUCHING ON THE RECENT DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS, HE SAID: +WHAT MATTERS NOW IS TO ENSURE THAT THE ADDITION OF 10 ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE BOARD REALLY WILL HELP TO MAKE US EVEN MORE RESPONSIVE TO PUBLIC OPINION, AND TO DEEPEN THE DIALOGUE WITH THE PEOPLE OF TSUEN WAN WHICH ALREADY EXISTS THROUGH A VARIETY OF CHANNELS, MOST NOTABLY OF COURSE THE 13 APPOINTED MEMBERS ALREADY ON THE BOARD, WHO REPRESENT A VERY WIDE RANGE OF INTERESTS AND ASSOCIATIONS.+

TURNING TO THE LANDS DEPARTMENT, MR MACLEOD THOUGHT THAT THE HIVING OFF FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE OF ITS MAIN LAND RESPONSIBILITIES WOULD PROBABLY BE A HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT -- +ALTHOUGH WE WILL OF COURSE RETAIN AN INTEREST AND ROLE IN LAND-RELATED MATTERS+.

+IT IS ALREADY FORCING US TO RE-EVALUATE THE OVERALL ROLE OF THE DISTRICT OFFICE AND WE SHALL CLEARLY FIND OURSELVES ABLE TO CONCENTRATE MORE ON THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TYPE OF ACTIVITY,+ HE SAID.

+TO SUM UP, THE CLICHE THAT HONG KONG IS DYNAMIC AND FAST CHANGING PLACE APPLIES WITH PARTICULAR FORCE TO TSUEN WAN AT THIS TIME.

/+THE PHYSICAL

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+THE PHYSICAL CHANGES WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE IN TSUEN WAN OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS WILL BE LARGELY BENEFICIAL, BUT WE DO NEED TO FACE THE FACT THAT WE CANNOT EXPECT TO GROW - AS WE SHALL - FROM OVER 600 000 NOW TO NEARLY A MILLION BY THE END OF THE DECADE WITHOUT SOME 'GROWING PAINS'.

+ALL OF US HERE ARE INVOLVED IN HELPING TO KEEP THESE 'GROWING PAINS' AS MILD AS POSSIBLE, AND I AM MOST GRATEFUL TO YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP IN THIS DIFFICULT BUT VITAL TASK,+ HE SAID.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

GOVERNOR TO OFFICIATE AT CEREMONY
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THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, WILL OFFICIATE AT THE FOUNDATION STONE LAYING CEREMONY OF THE TSO KUNG TAM RECREATION AND SPORTS SERVICE CENTRE, TSUEN WAN, AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

THE PROJECT FORMS PART OF THE TSUEN WAN NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME WHICH IS BEING IMPLEMENTED BY THE NEW TERRITORIES DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE EVENT.

OFFICIAL TRANSPORT WILL BE PROVIDED. THOSE WISHING TO USE THE FACILITY SHOULD ASSEMBLE AT THE OPEN CAR PARK OUTSIDE THE RECEPTION OFFICE, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, NOT LATER THAN 1.15 PM.

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PLB PROHIBITED ZONES IN SHA TIN
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BOTH HUNG MUI KUK ROAD AND THE ACCESS ROAD TO WORLDWIDE GARDENS IN SHA TIN WILL BE DESIGNATED AS PLB PROHIBITED ZONES FROM 10 AM ON SATURDAY (MARCH 27).

UNDER THIS ARRANGEMENT, ALL PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THESE ROADS.

SIGNS WILL BE PUT UP TO MARK THE EXTENT OF THE PROHIBITED ZONES.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

OVERALL REVIEW OF EDUCATION
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THE PANEL OF VISITORS CONDUCTING THE OVERALL REVIEW OF THE HONG KONG EDUCATION SYSTEM WILL HOLD TWO PLENARY SESSIONS NEXT WEEK TO DISCUSS THEIR INITIAL VIEWS WITH A WIDE RANGE OF LOCAL PARTICIPANTS.

THE PLENARY SESSIONS WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER ON MONDAY (MARCH 29) AT 2 PM AND ON WEDNESDAY (MARCH 31) AT 9 AM.

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND BOTH SESSIONS.

THE NORMAL PRESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WILL APPLY, THE ONLY EXCEPTION BEING THAT SOME SEATS IN THE PUBLIC GALLERY WILL BE RESERVED FOR THE PRESS.

PHOTOGRAPHS (WITHOUT FLASH) OF THE ASSEMBLY CAN BE TAKEN FROM THE PUBLIC GALLERY BEFORE EACH SESSION BEGINS.

GIS OFFICERS WILL BE ON HAND TO ASSIST.

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CAREER PROSPECTS AT RCD

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PROMOTION PROSPECTS IN THE NEWLY-ESTABLISHED RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT +ARE EXPECTED TO BE GREAT+, THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR THE DEPARTMENT, MRS ELIZABETH WONG SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AT A LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF ISLAND NORTH, MRS WONG SAID YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN JOINING THE DEPARTMENT AT THE LOWEST PROFESSIONAL RANKS HAVE GOOD PROSPECTS OF REACHING VERY SENIOR POSITIONS.

WITH THE RECENT ESTABLISHMENT OF PROFESSIONAL GRADES, SHE CONTINUED, THE DEPARTMENT WILL BE STAFFED BY TWO STREAMS OF CIVIL SERVANTS : THE GENERAL GRADE STAFF WHICH INCLUDES ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS, EXECUTIVE OFFICERS, CLERICAL OFFICERS, AND PROFESSIONAL GRADES FOR THE RECREATION AND SPORT SERVICE AND THE MUSIC OFFICE.

THE GENERAL GRADE STAFF ARE DRAWN FROM THE CENTRAL POOL WHILE THE PROFESSIONALS ARE DEPARTMENTAL GRADES RECENTLY CREATED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

THE NEW GRADES ARE : RECREATION AND SPORT OFFICER AND MUSIC OFFICER.

THE NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS NEEDED TO START AT THE BASIC LEVEL IN THE RECREATION AND SPORT OFFICER GRADE ARE DIPLOMAS FROM THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION AND/OR OTHER RECOGNISED POST SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS WITH PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND/OR RECREATION AS ONE OF THE ELECTIVE SUBJECTS.

THE ENTRY AT THE BASIC RANK QUALIFICATION FOR THE MUSIC OFFICE IS EITHER A RECOGNISED DIPLOMA IN MUSIC OR A DEGREE IN MUSIC EDUCATION FOR WESTERN MUSIC- OR RECOGNISED TRAINING IN AN ACCEPTABLE INSTITUTION OR AT LEAST FIVE YEARS RELEVANT PERFORMING OR TEACHING EXPERIENCE FOR CHINESE MUSIC.

+AFTER JOINING THE RECREATION AND SPORT SERVICE AND THE MUSIC OFFICE, ONE HAS THE OPPORTUNITY OF WORKING HIS OR HER WAY GRADUALLY UP THE CORPORATE LADDER IN VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE SERVICE,+ THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SAID.

+THERE EXIST NO PROMOTION BARS IN BETWEEN VARIOUS RANKS IN BOTH THE MUSIC OFFICE AND THE RSS THROUGH-SCALE STRUCTURE.

+THEREFORE A CAPABLE YOUNG OFFICER WHO JOINS THE SERVICE AT THE STARTING POINT OF 17 ON THE MASTER PAY SCALE HAS THE PROSPECT OF GOING UP THE RANKS AND PROMOTION PROSPECTS ARE GOOD DUE TO THE EXPANSION OF THE DEPARTMENT TO MEET THE EVER-BURGEONING DEMAND,+ SHE SAID.

+PROMOTION PROSPECTS COMPARE FAVOURABLY WITH OTHER GRADES IN THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE AND PROMISING OFFICERS HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP A CAREER FOR THEIR OWN INTEREST AS WELL AS IN THE INTEREST OF THE SERVICE,+ SHE SAID.

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NEW MAXICAB ROUTE

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A NEW KOWLOON PLB MAXICAB ROUTE - NO. 4 - FROM TSIM SHA TSUI TO YAU YAT CHUEN, WILL COMMENCE OPERATION FROM SUNDAY (MARCH 28).

THIS IS TO REPLACE AN EXISTING SERVICE PROVIDED BY KOWLOON URBAN EXPRESS COACH ROUTE NO. 202, WHICH WILL SUSPEND OPERATION AFTER ITS LAST DEPARTURE ON SATURDAY (MARCH 27).

THE MAXICAB WILL OPERATE FROM HANKOW ROAD AND TRAVEL VIA PEKING ROAD, KOWLOON PARK DRIVE, CANTON ROAD, FERRY STREET, WATERLOO ROAD, PEACE AVENUE, ARGYLE STREET, SAI YEE STREET, BOUNDARY STREET, TAI HANG TUNG ROAD, TAT CHEE AVENUE, PEONY ROAD AND BEGONIA ROAD ON JOURNEYS TO YAU YAT CHUEN.

ON RETURN JOURNEYS, THEY WILL USE BEGONIA ROAD, TAT CHEE AVENUE, TAI HANG TUNG ROAD, BOUNDARY STREET, WATERLOO ROAD, PRINCESS MARGARET ROAD, PERTH STREET, GULLANE ROAD, ARGYLE STREET, FERRY STREET, CANTON ROAD, SALISBURY ROAD AND HANKOW ROAD.

THE PERIOD OF OPERATION WILL BE FROM 7 AM TO 11.50 PM ON WEEKDAYS AND FROM 7 AM TO 10.50 PM ON SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS, AT 15-MINUTE FREQUENCIES DURING PEAK PERIODS. FARES WILL RANGE FROM \$1 TO \$1.50.

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SENIOR CITIZENS LOOK AT PRISON LIFE

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A GROUP OF 25 SENIOR CITIZENS, ALL OVER 60 YEARS OLD, FROM RENNIE'S MILL VILLAGE IN KOWLOON TODAY (THURSDAY) VISITED THE MINIMUM SECURITY MA HANG PRISON AT STANLEY.

THEY ARE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF OLD PEOPLE FROM THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF OUR LADY OF ASSUMPTION CHURCH IN RENNIE'S MILL.

THE GROUP, LED BY REV PATRICK MASSCHELEIN, WAS SHOWN ROUND THE INSTITUTION BY THE SUPERINTENDENT IN CHARGE, MR G.A. EBRAHIM AND SAW FOR THEMSELVES THE VARIOUS FACILITIES PROVIDED INCLUDING THE GERIATRIC UNIT.

THE VISIT WAS ARRANGED FOR THE GROUP OF SENIOR CITIZENS WHO HAD EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN WIDENING THEIR HORIZON BY VISITING A PRISON AND SEEING HONG KONG'S PENAL SYSTEM.

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