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TAC AND DB'S TO BE CONSULTED ON TUNNEL STUDY REPORT

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THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND RELEVANT DISTRICT BOARDS WILL BE CONSULTED ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DRAFT FINAL REPORT OF THE LION ROCK TUNNEL TRAFFIC STUDY.

THE DRAFT FINAL REPORT WAS TABLED EARLIER AT AN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING WHICH NOTED THAT THE RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE COUNCIL FOR ADVICE IN JULY THIS YEAR.

THE LION ROCK TUNNEL TRAFFIC STUDY WAS COMMISSIONED TO IDENTIFY MEANS OF ALLEVIATING TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN THE TUNNEL AND TAI PO ROAD CORRIDOR PRIOR TO THE OPENING OF TATE'S CAIRN TUNNEL.

HAVING CONSIDERED AN INTERIM REPORT ON THE "MAJOR SCHEMES" IN JANUARY THIS YEAR, THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ENDORSED THE RECOMMENDATION THAT THE BEACON HILL TUNNEL PROPOSAL SHOULD NOT BE PURSUED FURTHER AS THE TAI PO ROAD WIDENING SCHEME WOULD PROVIDE EXTRA ROAD CAPACITY TO RELIEVE CONGESTION AT THE LION ROCK TUNNEL.

THE TRAFFIC STUDY HAD ALSO EXAMINED A NUMBER OF OTHER TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEMES, AMONGST WHICH THE MOST IMPORTANT WERE THE OPERATION OF A "TIDAL-FLOW" SCHEME AND THE USE OF TRAFFIC SIGNALS TO CONTROL MERGING MOVEMENTS IN THE MORNING PEAK PERIOD.

BOTH HAD INCREASED PEAK PERIOD TUNNEL CAPACITY BY ABOUT 10 PER CENT, ELIMINATED SOUTHBOUND QUEUES BEFORE 7.30 AM AND REDUCED THEM SUBSTANTIALLY AFTER 7.30 AM.

IN ADDITION, A MAJOR EXTENSION TO THE BUS LANE ON THE TUNNEL APPROACHES WAS ALSO INTRODUCED IN MARCH THIS YEAR TO ALLOW BUSES TO AVOID TRAFFIC QUEUES.

ALL THESE MEASURES HAD RESTORED TRAFFIC DELAYS AT THE PEAK PERIODS TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS.

IN ITS DRAFT FINAL REPORT, THE CONSULTANTS HAD DEVISED A STRATEGY TO MAINTAIN THE TRAFFIC SITUATION IN THE CORRIDOR AT AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL UNTIL THE OPENING OF THE TATE'S CAIRN TUNNEL.

THE REPORT ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT A TOLL INCREASE SHOULD ONLY BE USED AS A LAST RESORT TO SUPPRESS DEMAND IF TRAFFIC GREW AT A MUCH HIGHER RATE THAN EXPECTED, OR IF ROUTE 5 OR TAI PO ROAD WIDENING WORKS WERE SIGNIFICANTLY DELAYED.

IT WAS RECOMMENDED THAT THE "TIDAL-FLOW" AND SIGNAL CONTROLLED MERGING SCHEMES SHOULD CONTINUE. IN ADDITION, TO IMPROVE THE "CONTROLLED MERGING" SCHEME, THE GAZETTED TUNNEL AREA IN KOWLOON SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO FACILITATE OPERATION BY TUNNEL STAFF.

/THE REPORT .....

THE REPORT ALSO POINTED OUT THAT ALTHOUGH THE ONE-WAY TOLL EXPERIMENT HAD SHOWN THAT IT DID NOT HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON TUNNEL THROUGHPUT, IT DID RESULT IN A DIVERSION OF NORTHBOUND TRAFFIC TO TAI PO ROAD.

IN ORDER TO MAXIMISE THE "TIDAL-FLOW" PERIOD, THE REPORT THEREFORE PROPOSED THAT THE ONE-WAY TOLL SCHEME SHOULD BE RE-INTRODUCED EARLY NEXT YEAR WHEN ADDITIONAL NORTHBOUND CAPACITY WOULD BE AVAILABLE ON TAI PO ROAD WITH THE COMPLETION OF THE STAGE II IMPROVEMENT WORKS.

CONCERNING THE SOUTHBOUND BUS LANE, THE REPORT RECOMMENDED THAT ITS OPERATING HOURS SHOULD BE EXTENDED BEYOND 9 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING AND TO THE EVENING PEAK IF NECESSARY.

FURTHERMORE, A BUS PRIORITY SCHEME ON LUNG CHEUNG ROAD FOR NORTHBOUND JOURNEYS SHOULD ALSO BE IMPLEMENTED ONCE THE ROADWORKS ON LUNG CHEUNG ROAD WERE COMPLETED.

THE REPORT HAD ALSO PROPOSED A NUMBER OF CONTINGENCY MEASURES TO SOLVE CONGESTION ALONG THE CORRIDOR.

THESE INCLUDED THE EARLIER INTRODUCTION OF A ONE-WAY TOLL SCHEME IF NECESSARY AND THE DIVERSION OF TRAFFIC TO TAI PO ROAD BY CLOSING THE WESTBOUND SLIP ROAD OF LUNG CHEUNG ROAD TO GENERAL TRAFFIC EXCEPT BUSES.

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PROTECTIONIST MEASURES NOT A LASTING REMEDY

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PROTECTIONIST MEASURES ARE NO LASTING REMEDY FOR ECONOMIC ILLS AND MAY LEAD TO A GENERAL SLOWDOWN OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FROM WHICH ALL WILL ULTIMATELY EMERGE AS LOSERS, THE SECRETARY FOR MONETARY AFFAIRS, MR DAVID NENDICK, SAID TODAY (FRIDAY).

HE WAS SPEAKING AT THE 21ST ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK IN MANILA.

MR NENDICK SAID SUCH MEASURES WOULD BE PARTICULARLY UNFAIR IF APPLIED TO HONG KONG BECAUSE THE TERRITORY HAD NEITHER IMPORT TARIFFS NOR QUOTAS AND OFFERED NO FORM OF SUBSIDY TO INVESTORS, MANUFACTURERS OR EXPORTERS.

/"FURTHERMORE," HE .....

"FURTHERMORE," HE SAID, "WE HAVE NO EXCHANGE CONTROLS OR OTHER CURRENCY RESTRICTIONS AND OUR TRADE ACCOUNT IS IN VIRTUAL BALANCE."

HE SAID THESE DISTINCT FEATURES OF HONG KONG WERE OFTEN IGNORED WHEN COMMENTS WERE MADE ABOUT THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE NEWLY INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES.

"WE DEPLORE ANY TENDENCY TO INDULGE IN GENERALISATIONS AS IF THE ECONOMIES CONCERNED HAD COMMON MONETARY, ECONOMIC AND TRADE POLICIES AND WERE ALL EXPERIENCING SUBSTANTIAL TRADE SURPLUSES," HE SAID.

ON THE WORLDWIDE STOCK MARKET CRASH IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR, MR NENDICK SAID HONG KONG, LIKE OTHERS, WAS NOT UNTOUCHED BY THE EVENT; ITS STOCK MARKET FELL SHARPLY ALTHOUGH BASIC ECONOMIC FUNDAMENTALS REMAINED STRONG.

HE SAID THESE EVENTS, THOUGH UNFORTUNATE IN THEMSELVES, HAD PROVIDED A VALUABLE CATALYST FOR CHANGE.

HE SAID A SECURITIES REVIEW COMMITTEE WAS APPOINTED SHORTLY AFTER THE CRASH TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE STOCK AND FUTURES MARKETS AND THEIR REGULATIONS.

"ITS REPORT IS EXPECTED IN ABOUT A MONTH'S TIME AND I BELIEVE THAT, IN ACTING UPON ITS RECOMMENDATIONS, WE SHALL BE ABLE TO ENSURE THAT HONG KONG'S REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND MARKET STRUCTURES ARE FULLY IN LINE WITH THOSE NOW EXPECTED OF A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE," HE SAID.

MR NENDICK SAID THAT DESPITE THIS, 1987 WAS A GOOD YEAR FOR HONG KONG WITH ITS GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT GROWING BY 13.6 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS.

"CAPITAL INVESTMENT INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY AND OUR PROPERTY MARKET REMAINED BUOYANT EVEN AFTER THE CRASH.

"FULL EMPLOYMENT WAS MAINTAINED AND ALTHOUGH THE RATE OF INFLATION MOVED UP TO 5.5 PER CENT, THIS WAS STILL MODERATE IN COMPARISON WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF THE EARLY 1980'S," HE SAID.

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AMENDMENTS TO FOUR ORDINANCES GAZETTED

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROPOSED TO AMEND A NUMBER OF ORDINANCES TO IMPLEMENT CERTAIN OF THE REVENUE PROPOSALS AND TAXATION CONCESSIONS ANNOUNCED BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IN HIS BUDGET SPEECH ON MARCH 2 THIS YEAR.

THEY ARE THE BANKING ORDINANCE, THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE, THE INLAND REVENUE ORDINANCE AND THE STAMP DUTY ORDINANCE, WHOSE AMENDMENTS WERE PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE TODAY (FRIDAY).

UNDER THE AMENDMENTS TO THE BANKING ORDINANCE, BANK AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY FEES WERE INCREASED BY EIGHT PER CENT WITH EFFECT FROM APRIL 1 THIS YEAR.

UNDER THE AMENDMENTS TO THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE, THE ANNUAL LICENCE FEE FOR MOTOR VEHICLES AS WELL AS FEES FOR DRIVING LICENCES, PERMITS AND DRIVING TESTS WERE INCREASED BY SIX PER CENT.

UNDER THE AMENDMENTS TO THE INLAND REVENUE ORDINANCE, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY HAS PROVIDED FOR SIX CONCESSIONS IN THE AREA OF PERSONAL TAXATION, TWO CONCESSIONS IN THE AREA OF PROFITS TAX, AND ONE CONCESSION EACH IN THE AREA OF PROPERTY TAX AND INTEREST TAX.

THESE CONCESSIONS WILL APPLY TO PROVISIONAL AND FINAL ASSESSMENTS FOR THE YEAR OF ASSESSMENT COMMENCING ON APRIL 1 THIS YEAR AND ALSO, WHERE APPROPRIATE, TO 1988-89 PERSONAL ASSESSMENTS.

THE CONCESSIONS INCLUDE A REDUCTION IN THE STANDARD RATE FROM 16.5 PER CENT TO 15.5 PER CENT, REVISION IN THE GRADUATED SCALE OF TAX RATES FOR PERSONAL TAXATION, INCREASE IN ADDITIONAL PERSONAL ALLOWANCE, CHILD ALLOWANCE AND THE ALLOWANCE FOR A DEPENDENT PARENT.

A NEW WORKING WIFE ALLOWANCE OF UP TO $15,000 IS INTRODUCED WHERE THE EMPLOYMENT INCOME OF A MARRIED WOMAN IS AGGREGATED WITH THAT OF HER HUSBAND.

UNDER THE AMENDMENTS TO THE STAMP DUTY ORDINANCE, A REVISED SCALE OF STAMP DUTY PAYABLE IN RESPECT OF CONVEYANCE ON THE SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY IS INTRODUCED.

THE REVISION WILL PROVIDE A GREATER BENEFIT TO DUTY PAYERS, AND HAVE THE EFFECT OF PUSHING THE VARIOUS DUTY RATE THRESHOLD UPWARDS.

THE ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL REVENUE IN 1988-89 ARISING FROM THE INCREASE IN THE FEES IS $73 MILLION WHILE THE COST TO THE REVENUE ARISING FROM THE VARIOUS CONCESSIONS IS ESTIMATED AT $2,080 MILLION IN 1988-89, AND $3,090 MILLION IN A FULL YEAR.

/THE AMENDMENTS .....

THE AMENDMENTS ARE EXPECTED TO BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON MAY 11.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO WISH TO COMMENT ON THE AMENDMENTS CAN WRITE TO THE FINANCE BRANCH, GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT, FIFTH FLOOR, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES (EAST WING), LOWER ALBERT ROAD, HONG KONG OR TO OMELCO, 8 JACKSON ROAD, HONG KONG.

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ASSURANCE ON REVIEW OF PUBLIC ORDER ORDINANCE

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THE SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND INFORMATION, MR PETER TSAO, TODAY (FRIDAY) GAVE A FIRM ASSURANCE THAT THE REVIEW ON THE LAW RELATING TO FALSE NEWS WOULD BE A GENUINE ONE.

NOTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD MADE A PLEDGE THAT SECTION 27 OF THE PUBLIC ORDER ORDINANCE WOULD BE REVIEWED AT THE END OF THIS YEAR, MR TSAO SAID THE ELEMENT OF PUBLIC PERCEPTION WITHIN HONG KONG AND IN OTHER COUNTRIES ON THE PROVISION IN QUESTION WOULD BE CAREFULLY AND FULLY ASSESSED IN THE FORTHCOMING REVIEW.

"IT IS NOT FOR ME TODAY IN ANY WAY TO PREJUDGE THE OUTCOME OF THAT, AND SOUL-SEARCHING, REVIEW. NONETHELESS, I CAN GIVE A FIRM ASSURANCE THAT IT WILL BE A GENUINE REVIEW," MR TSAO SAID WHEN HE ADDRESSED THE SOCIETY OF HONG KONG PUBLISHERS ON FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.

MR TSAO ALSO GAVE A CATEGORICAL ASSURANCE THAT THERE WAS NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER TO INTRODUCE ANY CONTROLS ON OWNERSHIP, FOREIGN OR OTHERWISE, OVER THE PRINT MEDIA IN HONG KONG.

THE GOVERNMENT RECENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT NEW REGULATIONS INCLUDING SOME RESTRICTIONS ON FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF TELEVISION LICENCEES WOULD APPLY WHEN TELEVISION LICENCES WERE RENEWED LATER THIS YEAR.

"I SHOULD LIKE TO EMPHASISE THAT THIS IS NOT A NEW POLICY AS REGARDS OWNERSHIP OF TELEVISION STATIONS. WE ARE SIMPLY MAINTAINING THE POWER TO EXERCISE A DEGREE OF CONTROL THAT IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN OUR POLICY TO HAVE.

"SECONDLY, EVEN THOUGH WE HAVE BROUGHT IN THESE NEW CONDITIONS, THEY ARE AMONG THE MOST LIBERAL IN THE WORLD.

/"THE CONTROLS .....

"THE CONTROLS OVER TELEVISION OWNERSHIP SHOULD BE RECOGNISED FOR WHAT THEY ARE, THAT IS A UNIQUE RESPONSE TO THE UNIQUE POWER POSSESSED BY THE BROADCAST MEDIUM," HE SAID.

"THIS MEANS," MR TSAO SAID, "THAT FOREIGN PUBLISHING CHAINS WILL CONTINUE TO BE FREE TO INVEST IN HONG KONG PUBLICATIONS OR TO USE HONG KONG AS A BASE FOR REGIONAL OR WORLD PUBLICATIONS WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS.

"THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT DOES NOT OWN NEWSPAPERS, NOR DOES IT CONTROL THOSE WHO DO, NOR DOES IT RESTRICT OWNERSHIP," HE ADDED.

ANOTHER FACTOR BEHIND A FREE PRESS, ACCORDING TO MR TSAO, IS THE GENERAL ATTITUDE OF THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE AND THE GOVERNMENT TOWARDS POLITICAL MATTERS AND TOWARDS PUBLIC COMMENT, THE GENERAL LEVEL OF POLITICAL AWARENESS.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE PUBLIC IN HONG KONG HAD COME TO EXPECT A RIGOROUS SCRUTINY OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES BY THE MEDIA, AND A ROBUST DEFENCE OF THEM BY SENIOR OFFICIALS.

ANOTHER ELEMENT CONSIDERED IMPORTANT TO A FREE PRESS IN HONG KONG WAS THE CALIBRE OF LOCAL JOURNALISTS.

"THE WIDEST OWNERSHIP, THE MOST LIBERAL LAWS, THE MOST RUMBUSTIOUS DEBATING ENVIRONMENT - NONE OF THESE WILL KEEP THE PRESS FREE IF THOSE SITTING BEHIND THE TYPEWRITER OR THE WORD PROCESSOR ARE NOT OF THE UTMOST INTEGRITY WITH THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE ABILITY AND TECHNICAL SKILLS."

HE SAID THAT WHILE THE GOVERNMENT COULD GIVE SOME ASSISTANCE IN THIS AREA ON THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SIDE, HOWEVER, IT WAS BASICALLY A MATTER FOR THE INDUSTRY ITSELF.

"MONEY ALONE IS NOT THE WHOLE ANSWER BECAUSE THE PURE MERCENARY WILL SELL HIMSELF TO ANYBODY.

"BUT A REASONABLE LIVING WAGE IS NOT TOO MUCH TO EXPECT. INDEED IT IS ESSENTIAL IF THE INDUSTRY IS TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN SUFFICIENT STAFF OF THE RIGHT CALIBRE.

"BUT JUST AS IMPORTANT IS THE MORALE OF THOSE CONCERNED.

"THEY MUST BE MADE TO FEEL THAT THEY ARE WANTED AND RESPECTED. THAT THEIR CALLING IS OF THE HIGHEST AND A WORTHY CHANNEL FOR THEIR IDEALISM AND ENERGY.

"A MAJOR INFLUENCE HERE IS SURELY ATTITUDES BY MANAGEMENT - HOW THEY TREAT THEIR STAFF WILL BE A MAJOR FACTOR IN DETERMINING HOW OTHERS TREAT THEM.

"ULTIMATELY, ESTEEM IS NOT GRANTED, IT IS EARNED," HE SAID.

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HK PURSUES OBJECTIVES IN TRADE NEGOTIATIONS
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THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG'S COMMERCIAL RELATIONS WITH MAJOR TRADING PARTNERS WILL BE DETERMINED TO A LARGE EXTENT BY THE RESULTS OF THE URUGUAY ROUND WHICH WILL LAST FOR FOUR YEARS FROM 1986 UNTIL 1990, THE ACTING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF TRADE, MR TIMOTHY TONG, SAID TODAY (FRIDAY).

SPEAKING AT AN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SEMINAR, MR TONG SAID THE INITIAL PHASE OF PREPARATORY WORK OF THE NEW ROUND WAS COMPLETED BY THE END OF LAST YEAR.

"A NEW STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS HAS JUST STARTED AND HONG KONG IS PARTICIPATING ACTIVELY IN THE PROCESS."

MR TONG SAID THAT HONG KONG EXPECTED THE CURRENT TALKS TO GENERATE A LIBERALISING INFLUENCE ON TEXTILES TRADE.

"THE URUGUAY ROUND HAS PROVIDED A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPANTS TO EXPLORE WAYS AND MEANS TO CONVERT THE CURRENT DISCRIMINATORY REGIME UNDER THE MULTI-FIBRE ARRANGEMENT (MFA) INTO A NEW ARRANGEMENT BASED ON STRENGTHENED GATT RULES AND DISCIPLINES.

"CURRENTLY WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER WITH SOME 20 TEXTILE EXPORTING COUNTRIES AND REGIONS IN PURSUIT OF OUR NEGOTIATING OBJECTIVES," HE SAID.

MR TONG ALSO SAID THAT THE GATT SYSTEM MUST BE STRENGTHENED AND THAT HONG KONG SUPPORTED EXTENSION OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE GATT TO INCLUDE MONITORING AND REGULAR REVIEW OF GOVERNMENT TRADE POLICIES.

"WE MAINTAIN THAT THE MOST-FAVOURED-NATION PRINCIPLE OF THE GATT MUST BE OBSERVED, AND THAT THE DISPUTE SETTLEMENT PROCEDURES SHOULD BE MODIFIED TO ENSURE FAIRNESS AND EQUITY FOR ALL," HE SAID.

"WE DEMAND REMOVAL OF GATT-INCONSISTENT TRADE MEASURES AFFECTING US AND SUPPORT A MULTILATERAL APPROACH TO FURTHER REDUCE TARIFFS AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS FOR GENERAL APPLICATION TO ALL SECTORS OF TRADE."

MR TONG BELIEVED THE OBJECTIVES HE MENTIONED COULD BE REALISED ONLY THROUGH INTENSIVE AND LENGTHY NEGOTIATIONS.

"SUCCESS MAY BE ACHIEVED ONLY THROUGH CONSTRUCTIVE CO-OPERATION WITH OUR TRADING PARTNERS BEARING IN MIND OUR COMMON INTERESTS IN THE LONG TERM," HE ADDED.

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FIGHT AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS SUCCESSFUL

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THE YEAR 1987 MARKED ANOTHER YEAR OF SUCCESS IN THE CONTINUING BATTLE AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS AND THORACIC DISEASES, THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR K.L. THONG, SAID TODAY (FRIDAY).

SPEAKING IN HIS CAPACITY AS PRESIDENT OF THE HONG KONG TUBERCULOSIS, CHEST AND HEART DISEASES ASSOCIATION AT ITS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, DR THONG SAID TUBERCULOSIS, WHICH WAS AT ONE TIME THE NO. 1 KILLER DISEASE IN HONG KONG, HAD BEEN EFFECTIVELY CONTAINED IN THE LAST 10 YEARS AND ITS INCIDENCE CONTINUED TO DROP IN 1987.

DURING THE YEAR, A TOTAL OF 7,269 NEW NOTIFICATIONS WERE RECORDED, HE SAID.

COMPARED TO THE CORRESPONDING FIGURE IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR, THIS REPRESENTED A SIGNIFICANT DROP IN THE NOTIFICATION RATE, FROM 134.3 CASES PER 100,000 POPULATION IN 1986 TO 129.5 IN 1987.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE DEATH RATE REMAINED LOW AND WAS STILL DECLINING, FROM 7.4 PER 100,000 POPULATION IN 1986 TO 7.2 PER 100,000 POPULATION IN 1987.

DESPITE THE ENCOURAGING SIGNS OF SUCCESS, DR THONG SAW NO ROOM FOR COMPLACENCY, NOTING THAT ALL THE PREVENTIVE AND CONTROL PROGRAMMES WERE STILL ACTIVELY MAINTAINED.

RESEARCH WORK ON THE PREVENTION AND CURE OF TUBERCULOSIS CONTINUES TO BE PURSUED VIGOROUSLY IN COLLABORATION WITH THE CARDIO-THORACIC EPIDEMIOLOGY GROUP OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL.

"AN IMPORTANT STUDY WAS UNDERWAY TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICACY OF CERTAIN NEW DRUGS IN THE TREATMENT OF BOTH NEW AND OLD CASES OF TUBERCULOSIS," HE SAID.

TURNING TO LUNG CANCER, DR THONG SAID THAT THERE WERE 2,465 DEATHS REPORTED IN 1987, 117 MORE THAN IN 1986.

HE NOTED THAT SMOKING HAD BEEN WELL ACCEPTED BY THE MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS AND HEALTH AUTHORITIES ALL OVER THE WORLD AS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT CAUSE OF PREMATURE DEATH DUE TO LUNG CANCER, CORONARY HEART DISEASE AND CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE.

THE GOVERNMENT PLACED HEAVY EMPHASIS ON HEALTH EDUCATION AND ANTI-SMOKING PROGRAMMES, DR THONG SAID.

WITH THE SUSTAINED EFFORTS IN EDUCATION AND CONTROL, HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT HONG KONG COULD LOOK FORWARD TO A CLEANER AND HEALTHIER LIVING ENVIRONMENT IN THE FUTURE.

/REFERRING TO .....

REFERRING TO HEART DISEASES, WHICH REMAINED THE NO.2 LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN HONG KONG, DR THONG SAID IT HAD CLAIMED 4,337 LIVES IN 1986.

LAST YEAR, 867 CARDIAC OPERATIONS WERE PERFORMED WITH A HIGH SUCCESS RATE IN GRANTHAM HOSPITAL.

IN ADDITION, TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR LOCAL MEDICAL STUDENTS AND MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS FROM NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES WERE CONDUCTED IN THE CENTRE.

LOOKING AHEAD, DR THONG REPORTED THAT THE NEW RUTTONJEE HOSPITAL PROJECT WAS PROGRESSING SMOOTHLY.

THE GOVERNMENT HAD APPROVED AN INCREASED PROVISION OF $33.81 MILLION FOR THE PROJECT, BRINGING THE TOTAL PROVISION TO $279.95 MILLION.

HE SAID THIS WOULD PROVIDE A NEW AND BIGGER HOSPITAL OF 614 BEDS, INSTEAD OF THE ORIGINALLY PLANNED 432.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE SUPERSTRUCTURE HAD BEGUN AND OTHER CONTRACTS FOR THE MECHANICAL AND ENGINEERING WORK OF THE PROJECT WERE ALSO AWARDED LAST YEAR.

THE TARGET COMPLETION DATE OF THE NEW RUTTONJEE HOSPITAL IS THE END OF 1989.

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FIGURES SHOW DECREASE IN OVERALL CRIME

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OVERALL CRIME IN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR DECLINED BY 2.5 PER CENT WHEN COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS QUARTER.

RELEASING THE CRIME STATISTICS AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY (FRIDAY), MR PETER LEE, THE POLICE DEPUTY DIRECTOR (CRIME), SAID CRIME REPORTS MADE TO THE POLICE IN THE QUARTER TOTALLED 20,320 AVERAGING 223.3 CASES PER DAY.

SIGNIFICANT DECREASES WERE RECORDED IN SNATCHING (DOWN 37.6 PER CENT), INDECENT ASSAULT ON FEMALE (DOWN 28.3 PER CENT) AND WOUNDING AND SERIOUS ASSAULT (DOWN 13.2 PER CENT).

/HOWEVER, INCREASES .....

HOWEVER, INCREASES AGAINST THE PREVIOUS QUARTER WERE RECORDED IN TAKING CONVEYANCE AND THEFT OF VEHICLES (UP 13.4 PER CENT) AND THEFT FROM VEHICLES (UP 10 PER CENT).

ON VIOLENT CRIME, MR LEE SAID THERE WERE 39.7 CASES REPORTED PER DAY, REPRESENTING A DROP OF 5.7 PER CENT OVER THE LAST QUARTER IN 1987.

NOTING THAT PUBLIC AREAS REMAINED THE PRIME AREAS WHERE ROBBERIES OCCURRED, MR LEE CALLED ON RESIDENTS TO BE MORE CAUTIOUS WHEN ENTERING BUILDINGS, ESPECIALLY IN DARK ENTRANCES AND LIFTS.

DURING THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR, THERE WERE 15.8 ROBBERIES REPORTED PER DAY, AN INCREASE OF FIVE PER CENT OVER THE PREVIOUS QUARTER.

WEAPONS WERE USED IN NEARLY HALF OF ALL CASES AND ABOUT ONE QUARTER OF THE VICTIMS RECEIVED INJURIES OF SOME KIND, MR LEE SAID.

ON GOLDSMITH AND WATCH SHOP ROBBERIES, HE SAID POLICE HAD ENHANCED COVERAGE OF HIGH RISK AREAS, AND URGED SHOP OWNERS TO HEED THE PRECAUTIONARY ADVICES GIVEN BY POLICE CRIME PREVENTION BUREAU.

TURNING TO BURGLARIES, MR LEE SAID ALTHOUGH THE DAILY AVERAGE FIGURES SHOWED A DECREASE OF 2.2 PER CENT OVER THE PREVIOUS QUARTER, ABOUT ONE QUARTER OF THE CASES DID NOT ENTAIL THE BURGLARS HAVING TO BREAK IN.

HE SAID: "WITH THE ONSET OF THE WARMER WEATHER, HOUSEHOLDERS ARE WELL ADVISED TO LOCK BALCONY DOORS AND WINDOWS AT NIGHT IN ADDITION TO SECURING THEIR HOMES PROPERLY AT ALL TIME."

AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE, MR LEE ALSO CALLED ON PARENTS AND SCHOOLS TO REMIND YOUNGSTERS ABOUT THE SERIOUSNESS OF SHOP THEFT.

"SHOP THEFT IS A CRIME AND CAN SERIOUSLY AFFECT A PERSON'S LIFE BY LIMITING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND POSSIBLY THE RIGHT TO EMIGRATE," HE SAID.

"AVERAGING 19.7 CASES PER DAY, SHOP THEFT REMAINS A SERIOUS PROBLEM, ESPECIALLY AMONGST JUVENILES.

"POLICE AND STORE OWNERS ARE LIAISING CLOSELY TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE, THROUGH PUBLICITY AND VIGILANCE."

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GOOD RESPONSE TO HOS MORTGAGE FINANCE
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FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AGAIN PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY IN THE MORTGAGE FINANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME THIS YEAR.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (FRIDAY) THAT THE RESPONSE OF THE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TOWARDS THIS YEAR'S MORTGAGE EXERCISE WAS EXCELLENT. THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TOTALLED 61.

THEIR COMMITMENT OF FUNDS SUBSTANTIALLY EXCEEDED THE ESTIMATED MORTGAGE FINANCE REQUIREMENT OF $5 BILLION, FOR AROUND 17,000 FLATS FOR SALE IN 1988 UNDER THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME (HOS) AND PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION SCHEME (PSPS).

"THE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS' FAVOURABLE RESPONSE REFLECTS THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THIS WORTHY SCHEME," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

BY THE END OF 1987, A TOTAL OF AROUND 90,000 FLATS HAD BEEN SOLD UNDER THE HOME OWNERSHIP AND PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION SCHEMES.

HOS AND PSPS FLAT PURCHASERS WHO REQUIRE MORTGAGE FINANCE CAN APPROACH ANY ONE OF THE PARTICIPATING FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS FOR ASSISTANCE.

A COMPLETE LIST OF THE PARTICIPATING FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS IS AVAILABLE AT THE HOME OWNERSHIP CENTRE, THIRD FLOOR, LOK FU SHOPPING CENTRE, JUNCTION ROAD, KOWLOON.

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PRAISE FOR CLUBS IN PROMOTING RECREATION AND SPORT
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PRIVATE RECREATION CLUBS MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS IN PROMOTING RECREATION AND SPORT IN THE COMMUNITY, THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, SAID TODAY (FRIDAY).

THE GOVERNOR WAS SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE NEW SPORTS COMPLEX OF THE SOUTH CHINA ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION.

"THE GOVERNMENT'S AIM IS TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG BY PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL, BUT PARTICULARLY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, TO TAKE PART IN A WIDE VARIETY OF RECREATION AND SPORTS PROGRAMMES," SIR DAVID SAID.

/"PRIVATE RECREATION .....

"PRIVATE RECREATION CLUBS MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THIS OBJECTIVE," HE ADDED, CITING THE ASSOCIATION'S NEW 17-STOREY MULTI PURPOSE SPORTS COMPLEX.

SIR DAVID SAID THE ASSOCIATION'S ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS DEMONSTRATED THE BENEFITS WHICH COULD BE OBTAINED THROUGH THE RECREATIONAL AND SPORTING FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY WELL ORGANISED PRIVATE RECREATION CLUBS.

ON THE NEW SPORTS COMPLEX, HE SAID WITH A WIDE RANGE OF INDOOR AND OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES IT WOULD PROVIDE ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ASSOCIATION'S MORE THAN 50,000 MEMBERS TO IMRROVE THEIR FITNESS AND SKILLS.

SIR DAVID NOTED THAT RAISING THE $85 MILLION REQUIRED, WITHOUT ANY ASSISTANCE FROM THE GOVERNMENT, WAS IN ITSELF A MAJOR AND PRAISEWORTHY ACHIEVEMENT.

"I COMMEND THE ASSOCIATION ON PROVIDING THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WITH SUCH AN EXCELLENT FACILITY," HE ADDED.

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HOTLINE ON MEASLES PREVENTION
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A HOTLINE PROVIDING INFORMATION ON MEASLES WILL GO INTO OPERATION ON MONDAY, MAY 2, THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (FRIDAY).

THE 24-HOUR HOTLINE ON MEASLES - 5-8383232 - PROVIDES A TAPED MESSAGE IN CHINESE ON THE SYMPTOMS OF THE DISEASE, ITS MODE OF TRANSMISSION, METHOD OF PREVENTION, AND THE MEDICAL CENTRES WHERE PARENTS MAY TAKE THEIR CHILDREN TO FOR MEASLES INOCULATION.

PEOPLE CALLING THE HOTLINE MAY, AT THE END OF THE SEVEN-MINUTE MESSAGE, ASK QUESTIONS OR EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS ON THE ISSUE.

MEANWHILE, THE ENGLISH HOTLINE ON HEPATITIS A WILL CEASE TO OPERATE WHEN THE HOTLINE ON MEASLES STARTS ON MONDAY.

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KOWLOON CITY DB COMMITTEES ELECT CHAIRMEN
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MEMBERS OF KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD'S THREE COMMITTEES MET TODAY (FRIDAY) TO ELECT THEIR CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN.

THE RESULTS ARE: MR WONG CHI-KEUNG AND MR MAK KING-LUN WERE ELECTED AS CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE; MR TANG PO-HONG AND MR FONG PUI-SHEUNG AS CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMUNITY BUILDING COMMITTEE; AND MR CHAN CHI-KWAN AND MR CHIANG SAI-CHEONG AS THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE.

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MULTIPLE RE-ENTRY PERMITS FOR CHILDREN
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WITH EFFECT FROM MONDAY (MAY 2), CHILDREN AGED BETWEEN THREE AND SIX MAY BE ISSUED WITH MULTIPLE HONG KONG RE-ENTRY PERMITS ON A ONE-PERSON-ONE-PERMIT BASIS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY (FRIDAY) THAT THE VALIDITY OF SUCH MULTIPLE RE-ENTRY PERMITS WILL BE RESTRICTED TO TWO YEARS IN THE FIRST INSTANCE AND RENEWABLE, AN APPLICATION TO BE MADE NO EARLIER THAN SIX MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF EXPIRY, FOR ANOTHER THREE YEARS.

THE FEE FOR THE PERMIT IS $35, AND THERE WILL BE NO CHARGE WHEN IT IS RENEWED.

"AT THE TIME OF RENEWAL THE PHOTOGRAPH OF THE CHILD ON THE PERMIT WILL NEED TO BE UPDATED, BUT THIS SERVICE IS FREE OF CHARGE," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

FOR CHILDREN AGED BETWEEN SEVEN AND 17, MULTIPLE RE-ENTRY PERMITS VALID FOR FIVE YEARS ARE ISSUED AT THE STANDARD FEE OF $35.

SINGLE JOURNEY RE-ENTRY PERMITS VALID FOR SIX MONTHS REMAIN AVAILABLE FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN UPON REQUEST. THE FEE FOR A SINGLE RE-ENTRY PERMIT IS $10.

"HOWEVER, CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 16 ALREADY INCLUDED IN THE HONG KONG RE-ENTRY PERMITS OF THEIR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS MAY STILL TRAVEL ON THOSE PERMITS WITH THE PRINCIPAL HOLDERS," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

/"THEY NEED .....

"THEY NEED NOT APPLY FOR SEPARATE RE-ENTRY PERMITS UNLESS THEY WISH TO TRAVEL ALONE OR UNLESS THEY ARE OVER 16."

FOR DETAILS OF THE PROCEDURES, APPLICANTS ARE REQUESTED TO OBTAIN A LEAFLET, "HOW TO APPLY FOR A RE-ENTRY PERMIT", FROM ANY IMMIGRATION OR CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION OFFICE.

ENQUIRIES CAN ALSO BE MADE TO THE INFORMATION OFFICE OF THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT ON 3-7333111.

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INSURANCE MANPOWER DEMAND EXPECTED TO GROW

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THE MANPOWER OF THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY INCREASED ALMOST BY ONE-THIRD WITHIN TWO YEARS - TO 12,200 IN JUNE LAST YEAR FROM 9,400 IN 1985, ACCORDING TO A VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL SURVEY.

THE SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH IN MANPOWER REFLECTS THE RAPID EXPANSION OF THE INSURANCE BUSINESS IN RESPONSE TO THE OVERALL GROWTH OF THE HONG KONG ECONOMY OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE COUNCIL SAID TODAY (FRIDAY).

IT IS ALSO NOTED IN THE SURVEY REPORT BY THE INSURANCE TRAINING BOARD THAT EMPLOYERS IN THE INDUSTRY HAD FORECAST THE WORKFORCE WOULD CONTINUE TO GROW BY 14 PER CENT - THAT IS ABOUT 1,400 ADDITIONAL STAFF - IN THE FOLLOWING 12 MONTHS.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THESE NEW EMPLOYEES WOULD NEED TRAINING RELEVANT TO THEIR JOB LEVELS AND AREAS OF SPECIALISATION.

EMPLOYERS WERE, THEREFORE, URGED TO MAKE USE OF THE INSURANCE TRAINEESHIP SCHEME AS WELL AS THE PROVISIONS OF THE COUNCIL'S INSURANCE TRAINING CENTRE TO TRAIN NEW RECRUITS, AND TO UPDATE OR UPGRADE THE SKILLS OF THE EXISTING WORKFORCE.

THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY MUST BE STAFFED BY HIGHLY TRAINED PEOPLE IN ORDER TO RETAIN ITS EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY.

THE 1987 MANPOWER SURVEY REPORT ON THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY IS NOW AVAILABLE AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, CENTRAL, AT $15.50 A COPY.

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TRADE STATISTICS AVAILABLE ON COMPUTER OUTPUT MICROFICHE

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THE MONTHLY HONG KONG TRADE STATISTICS (HKTS) AND ITS ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT ARE NOW AVAILABLE FOR THE FIRST TIME ON COMPUTER OUTPUT MICROFICHE (COM) IN ADDITION TO THE REPORTS IN BOOK FORM.

THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (FRIDAY) THAT COM COPIES OF THE JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 1988 ISSUES OF THE HKTS HAVE BEEN PUT ON SALE AND ARE AVAILABLE FOR SUBSCRIPTION.

SUBSEQUENT ISSUES WILL BE PUBLISHED REGULARLY ON A MONTHLY BASIS.

THE TIME OF PUBLICATION FOR BOTH THE MONTHLY HKTS AND ITS ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT IN COM WILL GENERALLY BE ABOUT 40 DAYS AFTER THE REFERENCE PERIOD. FOR EXAMPLE, THE MARCH ISSUE WILL BE AVAILABLE AROUND MAY 10, AND THE ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT FOR 1988 AROUND FEBRUARY 10, 1989, WHICH ARE CONSIDERABLY EARLIER THAN THE REPORTS IN BOOK FORM.

THE PUBLICATION OF THE REPORTS IN COM REPRESENTS ANOTHER EFFORT OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT IN EXPEDITING THE DISSEMINATION OF TRADE STATISTICS AND IN DIVERSIFYING THE MEANS OF DISSEMINATION FOR MEETING THE NEEDS OF USERS.

COM COPIES OF THE HKTS AND ITS ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT ARE PUBLISHED IN THREE SEPARATE SERIES FOR IMPORTS, DOMESTIC EXPORTS AND RE-EXPORTS, GIVING FLEXIBILITY TO USERS OF STATISTICS IN ACQUIRING THE SERIES OF THEIR CHOICE.

THE PRICES OF THE COM COPIES ARE:

	PRICE PER COPY (HK$)		
COM	IMPORT	DOMESTIC EXPORTS	RE-EXPORTS
HKTS	25	25	35
HKTS ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT	40	45	60

FOR COMPARISON, THE PRICES OF THE REPORTS IN BOOK FORM (WITH TWO SEPARATE SERIES, ONE FOR IMPORTS, AND THE OTHER FOR DOMESTIC EXPORTS AND RE-EXPORTS) ARE $80 PER COPY.

/COM COPIES .....

COM COPIES ARE AVAILABLE AT THE PUBLICATIONS SALES COUNTER OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ON THE 19TH FLOOR, WAN CHAI TOWER I, 12 HARBOUR ROAD, WAN CHAI, HONG KONG. REGULAR SUBSCRIPTION CAN BE ARRANGED.

BESIDES BEING MORE TIMELY AND CHEAPER, COM VERSION OF THE HKTS HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF REQUIRING VERY LITTLE STORAGE SPACE.

WITH A MICROFICHE READER AND PRINTER, THE DATA ON COM CAN EASILY BE RETRIEVED AND REPRODUCED IN HARDCOPY FORM.

USERS THAT REGULARLY REQUIRE THE COM COPIES OF HKTS ARE RECOMMENDED TO MAKE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION AS ONLY LIMITED COPIES ARE AVAILABLE FOR SALE OVER-THE-COUNTER.

ENQUIRIES REGARDING FURTHER DETAILS OF THE HONG KONG TRADE STATISTICS, WHETHER THE NEWLY AVAILABLE COM VERSION OR THE USUAL BOOK FORM REPORTS, MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ON 5-8234914 AND 5-8234736.

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DRAFT MONG KOK OUTLINE ZONING PLAN AMENDED

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THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD TODAY (FRIDAY) ANNOUNCED THE REZONING OF AN AREA OF ABOUT ONE HECTARE IN MONG KOK AS "COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT AREA" UNDER AN AMENDMENT TO THE DRAFT MONG KOK OUTLINE ZONING PLAN.

THE AREA, BOUNDED BY ARGYLE STREET, PORTLAND STREET, SHANTUNG STREET AND RECLAMATION STREET, WAS ORIGINALLY ZONED FOR "RESIDENTIAL (GROUP A)", "GOVERNMENT/INSTITUTION/COMMUNITY", "OPEN SPACE" AND "ROAD".

IT IS MADE UP PREDOMINANTLY OF LOW-RISE BUILDINGS BUILT BEFORE THE 1960'S WITH GENERALLY POOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE BOARD SAID THE PROPOSED "COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT AREA" ZONING WOULD ENSURE THAT THE AREA WOULD BE COMPREHENSIVELY REDEVELOPED TO INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF BETTER QUALITY HOUSING, COMMERCIAL ACCOMMODATION, PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES.

/"ANY PERSON .....

"ANY PERSON WHO WISHES TO UNDERTAKE DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT WITHIN THAT ZONE WOULD REQUIRE PLANNING PERMISSION FROM THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD," HE SAID.

IN APPLYING FOR PLANNING PERMISSION, A MASTER LAYOUT PLAN ACCOMPANIED BY AN EXPLANATORY STATEMENT SPECIFYING DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT WOULD BE REQUIRED.

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION COULD BE A POSSIBLE AGENCY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT AREA.

THE AMENDMENT TO THE DRAFT PLAN WAS PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE TODAY.

IT CAN ALSO BE SEEN AT:

* THE TOWN PLANNING OFFICE, BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, FOURTH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG;

* THE PUBLIC ENQUIRY SUB-OFFICE OF THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, WEST WING ENTRANCE, HONG KONG; AND

* THE MONG KOK DISTRICT OFFICE, TUNG PING BUILDING, 157 PRINCE EDWARD ROAD WEST, GROUND FLOOR, KOWLOON.

ANY PERSON AFFECTED BY THE AMENDMENT PLAN MAY SUBMIT HIS OBJECTION IN WRITING TO THE SECRETARY OF THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD, C/O BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, FOURTH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, BEFORE MAY 20 THIS YEAR.

COPIES OF THE AMENDMENT PLAN ARE AVAILABLE AT THE MAP SALES COUNTER, BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, OR 382 NATHAN ROAD, KOWLOON, AT $10 PER UNCOLOURED COPY AND $60 PER COLOURED COPY.

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WORKS AREA PROPOSED FOR BORDER BRIDGE PROJECT

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THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSES TO CARRY OUT AMENDMENT WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH CONSTRUCTION OF THE SECOND OF TWO VEHICULAR BRIDGES TO BE BUILT ACROSS THE SHENZHEN RIVER AT LOK MA CHAU.

THE WORKS INVOLVE FORMATION OF A WORKS AREA FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE SECOND BRIDGE. IT IS INTENDED THAT ABOUT 3,736 SQUARE METRES OF LAND IN DEMARCATION DISTRICT 102 WILL BE RESUMED FOR THIS PURPOSE.

/A NOTICE .....

A NOTICE ON THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT WORKS WAS PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE TODAY (FRIDAY).

PLANS SHOWING THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT WORKS MAY BE SEEN AT THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, CENTRAL ENQUIRY SUB-OFFICE, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, WEST WING MAIN ENTRANCE LOBBY, HONG KONG.

THEY MAY ALSO BE SEEN AT THE YUEN LONG DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, NINTH FLOOR, 2 KIU LOK SQUARE, YUEN LONG, NEW TERRITORIES; AND AT THE YUEN LONG DISTRICT OFFICE, ENQUIRY OFFICE, MAIN ENTRANCE LOBBY, YUEN LONG DISTRICT BRANCH OFFICE, 269 CASTLE PEAK ROAD, YUEN LONG.

ANY PERSON OBJECTING TO THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS MUST SEND HIS OBJECTION IN WRITING TO THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, EAST WING, SECOND FLOOR, LOWER ALBERT ROAD, HONG KONG, BY JUNE 28 THIS YEAR.

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SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURES FOR 'SEVEN-DAY VISIT PERMIT' APPLICATIONS

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THE SPONSORSHIP ARRANGEMENT FOR 'SEVEN-DAY VISIT PERMIT' APPLICATIONS FROM TAIWAN RESIDENTS WILL BE SIMPLIFIED WITH EFFECT FROM MONDAY (MAY 2), THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (FRIDAY).

THE NEW ARRANGEMENT REQUIRES THE APPLICANT TO COMPLETE, TOGETHER WITH THE APPLICATION, A SEPARATE FORM KNOWN AS "PARTICULARS OF SPONSOR".

IT WILL SUPERSEDE THE CURRENT PRACTICE OF THE APPLICANT MAILING THE SPONSORSHIP FORM TO THE SPONSOR IN HONG KONG WHO SUBSEQUENTLY RETURNS THE COMPLETED FORM TO THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT.

"WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE NEW ARRANGEMENT WILL HELP REDUCE THE PROCESSING TIME FOR APPLICATIONS FOR 'SEVEN-DAY VISIT PERMITS' FROM TAIWAN RESIDENTS," A SPOKESMAN FOR THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT SAID.

"REGULAR CHECKS WILL BE CONDUCTED BY THIS DEPARTMENT TO PREVENT ABUSE OF THIS SCHEME.

"THIS ARRANGEMENT WILL ONLY APPLY TO APPLICATIONS FOR A VISIT OF NOT MORE THAN SEVEN DAYS IN HONG KONG AND WILL BE REVIEWED AFTER SIX MONTHS.

"THE PROCEDURES FOR OTHER TYPES OF APPLICATIONS REMAIN UNCHANGED," HE STRESSED.

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GOVERNMENT SITES FOR SALE BY TENDER
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THREE GOVERNMENT SITES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES ARE BEING OFFERED FOR SALE BY TENDER BY THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT.

THE FIRST SITE, AT PAK SHE FIRST LANE, CHEUNG CHAU, MEASURES ABOUT 145 SQUARE METRES AND IS FOR INDUSTRIAL AND/OR GODOWN PURPOSES.

THE SECOND SITE, AT CHUNG SUM LANE, CHEUNG CHAU, HAS AN AREA OF ABOUT 130 SQUARE METRES AND IS FOR NON-INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES.

THE THIRD SITE IS AT SHA TAU KOK ROAD, FANLING, AND HAS AN AREA OF ABOUT 712.4 SQUARE METRES. IT IS FOR A PETROL FILLING STATION, EXCLUDING ANY LUBRICATING OR SERVICING FACILITIES.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMITTING TENDERS IS NOON ON MAY 27.

TENDER FORMS AND NOTICES MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG, AND FROM THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE KOWLOON, YAU MA TEI CARPARK BUILDING, 10TH FLOOR, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, KOWLOON.

TENDER DOCUMENTS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES IN SHA TIN, TAI PO, NORTH, YUEN LONG, TSUEN WAN, KWAI TSING, TUEN MUN, SAI KUNG AND ISLANDS.

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CSD GIRL GUIDE UNIT TO CELEBRATE ANNIVERSARY
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THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT WILL CELEBRATE THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF ITS GIRL GUIDE UNIT FOR TRAINING CENTRE INMATES TOMORROW (SATURDAY) AFTERNOON AT THE TAI TAM GAP CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION (TGCI).

THE HONG KONG 141ST RANGER GUIDE SERVICE UNIT AND UNIT BAND COMPRISES 37 MEMBERS, AGED BETWEEN 15 AND 21, ALL FEMALE INMATES OF TGCI.

A CSD SPOKESMAN SAID GIRL GUIDE ACTIVITIES, WHICH FORMED PART OF THE TRAINING CENTRE PROGRAMME, WOULD ENHANCE THE ALL-ROUND DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG INMATES AND PREPARE THEM FOR SUCCESSFUL REINTEGRATION INTO SOCIETY.

/"THE TRAINING .....

"THE TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE GAINED THROUGH THESE ACTIVITIES WILL ALSO HELP INMATES TO BETTER COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES IN LIFE," HE SAID.

THE 141ST RANGER GUIDE SERVICE UNIT HAD GIVEN A GOOD PERFORMANCE LAST YEAR AND HAD WON THE BEST WEAVING AWARD IN A COMPETITION ORGANISED BY THE GIRL GUIDE HONG KONG REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS.

MEMBERS PAID REGULAR VISITS AND PROVIDED SERVICES TO THE ELDERLY OF A HOME FOR THE AGED IN HING WAH ESTATE, CHAI WAN, AND THE BAND HAD PERFORMED IN VARIOUS SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY FUNCTIONS IN THE PAST YEAR.

THE PROGRAMME OF THE ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY TOMORROW INCLUDES TELEMATCHES AND A TALENT COMPETITION BETWEEN THE 141ST UNIT AND TWO VISITING GROUPS - THE 56TH AND 74TH UNITS.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES, MR CHAN WA-SHEK, AND THE SPONSOR OF THE 141ST UNIT, MRS DONNA HUI, WILL OFFICIATE AT THE CEREMONY.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT'S RANGER GUIDE SERVICE UNIT AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW (SATURDAY) AT THE TAI TAM GAP CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION, SHEK O ROAD, HONG KONG.

TRANSPORT HAS BEEN ARRANGED. MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES WISHING TO USE THE SERVICE SHOULD ASSEMBLE AT THE ENTRANCE TO WAN CHAI TOWER I, 12 HARBOUR ROAD, WAN CHAI, AT 1.30 PM.

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132 TEAMS JOIN SHA TIN DRAGON BOAT RACES

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WITH 132 TEAMS PARTICIPATING, THE DRAGON BOAT RACES IN SHA TIN THIS YEAR WILL BE THE BIGGEST EVER IN ITS FIVE-YEAR HISTORY.

THE RACES WILL BE DIVIDED INTO EIGHT DIVISIONS: MEDIUM-SIZE DRAGON BOAT OPEN, MEDIUM-SIZE DRAGON BOAT FRIENDLY, MEDIUM-SIZE DRAGON BOAT INVITATION, SMALL-SIZE DRAGON BOAT OPEN, WOMEN'S DRAGON BOAT OPEN, AND AIRPORT INVITATION, BANKS INVITATION AND TV INVITATION RACES.

/A SPOKESMAN .....

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE SHA TIN DRAGON BOAT RACE ORGANISING COMMITTEE SAID TODAY (FRIDAY) THAT THREE NEW DRAGON BOATS - COSTING MORE THAN $80,000 - FOR MEDIUM-SIZE, SMALL-SIZE AND WOMEN'S DRAGON BOAT RACES, HAD BEEN BOUGHT THIS YEAR.

"STARTING FROM MAY 1 (SUNDAY), THE TEAMS WILL PRACTISE ON EVERY SATURDAY AND SUNDAY FROM 8.30 AM TO 5.30 PM ALONG A SECTION OF SHING MUN RIVER BETWEEN SAND MARTIN BRIDGE AND BANYAN BRIDGE," HE SAID.

"WE WILL STRIVE TO MAKE THE RACES ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR EVENTS IN THE YEAR, NOT ONLY IN THE DISTRICT, BUT ALSO TERRITORY-WIDE," HE ADDED.

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SHAU KEI WAN STREET TO BE EXTENDED
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A STREET IN SHAU KEI WAN WILL BE WIDENED AND EXTENDED UNDER ROADWORKS THAT THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSES TO CARRY OUT.

THE EXISTING PORTION OF HING MAN STREET WILL BE WIDENED TO 7.5 METRES, WITH A LAYBY AND FOOTPATH ON THE NORTHERN SIDE.

IN ADDITION, THE STREET WILL BE EXTENDED EASTWARDS BY 70 METRES TO CONNECT WITH HOI FOO STREET.

A NOTICE CONCERNING THE PROPOSED WORKS WAS PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE TODAY (FRIDAY).

A PLAN SHOWING THE WORKS CAN BE SEEN DURING NORMAL OFFICE HOURS AT THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, CENTRAL ENQUIRY SUB-OFFICE, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, WEST WING, MAIN ENTRANCE LOBBY, HONG KONG.

IT CAN ALSO BE SEEN AT THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, HONG KONG EAST, 12TH FLOOR, HARBOUR CENTRE, HARBOUR ROAD, HONG KONG; AND AT THE EASTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, GROUND FLOOR, 880-886 KING'S ROAD, HONG KONG.

ANY PERSON OBJECTING TO THE PROPOSAL MUST SEND HIS OBJECTION IN WRITING TO THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, EAST WING, SECOND FLOOR, LOWER ALBERT ROAD, HONG KONG, BEFORE JUNE 28 THIS YEAR.

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FIRING PRACTICE IN MAY

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FIRING PRACTICE WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE HA TSUEN-CASTLE PEAK RANGE ON 20 DAYS DURING THE MONTH OF MAY.

THE PUBLIC IS WARNED NOT TO ENTER THE AREA WHEN RED FLAGS ARE HOISTED.

THE DATES AND TIMES OF THE PRACTICE ARE:

DATE		TIME
MAY 2	(MONDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
MAY 3	(TUESDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
MAY 7	(SATURDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
MAY 9	(MONDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
MAY 10	(TUESDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
MAY 11	(WEDNESDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
MAY 12	(THURSDAY)	8.30 AM - 11.59 PM
MAY 13	(FRIDAY)	MIDNIGHT - 5 PM
MAY 18	(WEDNESDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
MAY 19	(THURSDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
MAY 20	(FRIDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
MAY 21	(SATURDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
MAY 23	(MONDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
MAY 24	(TUESDAY)	8.30 AM - 11.59 PM
MAY 25	(WEDNESDAY)	MIDNIGHT - 11.59 PM
MAY 26	(THURSDAY)	MIDNIGHT - 5 PM
MAY 27	(FRIDAY)	8.30 AM - 6 PM
MAY 28	(SATURDAY)	8.30 AM - 11.59 PM
MAY 30	(MONDAY)	8.30 AM - 11.59 PM
MAY 31	(TUESDAY)	MIDNIGHT - 11.59 PM

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WAN CHAI TO TSIM SHA TSUI FERRY SERVICE STRENGTHENED
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THE STAR FERRY COMPANY WILL STEP UP THE FREQUENCY OF ITS WAN CHAI TO TSIM SHA TSUI SERVICE WITH EFFECT FROM TOMORROW (SATURDAY), THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED.

THE SERVICE WAS INTRODUCED BY THE COMPANY ON APRIL 1.

BETWEEN 7.30 AM AND 7.40 PM ON WEEKDAYS, THE FREQUENCY WILL BE INCREASED FROM THE EXISTING 20 MINUTES TO 10 MINUTES. IN ADDITION, THE OPERATING HOURS OF THE SERVICE WILL BE EXTENDED TO 11 PM DAILY.

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TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF WESTERN STREET
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WESTERN STREET BETWEEN DES VOEUX ROAD WEST AND CONNAUGHT ROAD WEST WILL BE CLOSED TO TRAFFIC FROM 10 AM ON MONDAY (MAY 2).

THIS MEASURE WILL BE IN EFFECT FOR ABOUT TWO WEEKS FOR ROADWORKS.

VEHICLES HEADING FOR CONNAUGHT ROAD WEST WILL BE DIVERTED VIA CENTRE STREET.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE EXISTING LEFT-TURN BAN FROM DES VOEUX ROAD WEST EASTBOUND INTO CENTRE STREET WILL BE TEMPORARILY LIFTED.

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