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LOW TAX CRUX OF HK'S PROSPERITY

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A LOW TAXATION POLICY AND A PRUDENT BUDGETARY ESTIMATE HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO HONG KONG'S PROSPERITY, THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT OFFICER, MR WILLIAM YAP, SAID THIS (SUNDAY) AFTERNOON.

SPEAKING AT THE GIRL GUIDES SHARING DAY, MR YAP ADDED THAT THE LAISSEZ-FAIRE POLICY, A STABLE MONETARY SYSTEM AND A SOUND FINANCIAL MECHANISM ALSO PLAYED A VITAL PART TO THE SUCCESS OF HONG KONG.

MR YAP SAID IT RELIED ON THE JOINT EFFORTS OF THE COMMUNITY TO KEEP UP WITH THE ACHIEVEMENTS.

NOTING THAT HONG KONG ACHIEVED A SATISFACTORY GROWTH RATE OF 5.5 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS LAST YEAR, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS DETERMINED TO SPEND MORE ON UPGRADING AND DIVERSIFYING ITS SERVICES.

"IN PARTICULAR, THE ELDERLY, THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED AND THE POOR WILL GET BETTER CARE AND ASSISTANCE.

"THESE IMPROVEMENT PLANS, INCLUDING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, LAW AND ORDER, HYGIENE AND EDUCATION, ARE TO FULFIL THE GOVERNOR'S COMMITMENTS IN LAST YEAR'S POLICY ADDRESS," MR YAP SAID.

MR YAP SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO TACKLE INFLATION AND MINIMISE ITS IMPACT.

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BUDGET ENSURES A PROSPEROUS YEAR AHEAD

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THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT OFFICER, MR BART IRELAND, SAID TODAY (SUNDAY) THAT THE 1994/95 BUDGET HAD SET THE FOUNDATION FOR A PROSPEROUS YEAR AHEAD.

HE SAID HONG KONG PEOPLE WOULD ENJOY THE FRUITS OF ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AS THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY HAD PROPOSED SHARING THE REVENUE SURPLUS WITH THE PUBLIC THROUGH TAX CONCESSIONS.

OFFICIATING AT THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME CUM ANTI-NARCOTICS CARNIVAL, MR IRELAND ALSO STRESSED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN LAW AND ORDER IN THE TERRITORY.

NOTING THAT THE CRIME FIGURES IN 1993 WERE AMONG THE LOWEST IN THE PAST DECADE, MR IRELAND SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD INCREASED THE EXPENDITURE FOR THE POLICE TO $8.8 BILLION.

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SAI KUNG RESIDENTS TO BENEFIT FROM BUDGET
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THE GOVERNMENT'S FINANCIAL ESTIMATES FOR 1994/95 WILL IMPROVE THE LIVELIHOOD OF ALL RESIDENTS IN SAI KUNG, SAI KUNG DISTRICT OFFICER, MR PARRISH NG, SAID TODAY (SUNDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE CIVIC EDUCATION CARNIVAL OF SAI KUNG IN PO LAM ESTATE, TSEUNG KWAN O, MR NG POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S NEW BUDGET WAS AMPLE EVIDENCE OF ITS COMMITMENT TO UPGRADE THE COMMUNITY'S QUALITY OF LIFE AND IMPROVE ENVIRONMENT, EDUCATION, MEDICAL AND WELFARE SERVICES.

HE SAID THE ESTIMATES ALSO REFLECTED A STABLE AND BOOMING ECONOMIC OUTLOOK AND RESIDENTS WOULD THEREFORE BE ABLE TO SHARE THE ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENTS AND ENJOY DRAMATIC SALARY TAX CONCESSIONS.

AS THE GOVERNMENT WAS ALSO CONSCIOUS OF THE COMMUNITY'S DESIRE TO ENCOURAGE FAMILIES TO PROVIDE CARE AND SUPPORT FOR ELDERLY MEMBERS, A NEW CATEGORY OF DEPENDENT GRANDPARENT ALLOWANCE UNDER THE SALARY TAX CONCESSION HAD ALSO BEEN INTRODUCED.

MR NG SAID AS STATED BY THE GOVERNOR IN HIS POLICY ADDRESS, THE GOVERNMENT WAS COMMITTED TO DEVOTING MORE FUNDS TO EDUCATION AND SIX MORE PRIMARY SCHOOLS WOULD BE SET UP IN TSEUNG KWAN O TO MEET THE GROWING DEMANDS.

SAI KUNG DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS GENERALLY WELCOME THE NEW BUDGET, MR NG ADDED.

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BUDGET PROVIDES BETTER SERVICES FOR ELDERLY
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THE ISLANDS DISTRICT OFFICER, MR CHRISTOPHER WONG, SAID THE 1994/95 BUDGET DEMONSTRATED THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING BETTER CARE AND SUPPORT FOR THE ELDERLY.

OFFICIATING AT THE PENG CHAU "RESPECT THE AGED" GATHERING TODAY (SUNDAY), MR WONG SAID THE HARD WORK OF THESE PEOPLE IN THEIR YOUTH HAD CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG.

THE BUDGET PROPOSES TO PROVIDE AN EXTRA 1,660 PLACES IN CARE AND ATTENTION HOMES FOR THE ELDERLY. SIX DAY-CARE CENTRES, ONE HEALTH CENTRE AND 14 MULTI-SERVICE CENTRES ARE ALSO PLANNED, HE SAID.

THERE IS ALSO A NEW $20,000 ALLOWANCE FOR DEPENDENT GRANDPARENTS IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE FAMILIES TO TAKE CARE OF THEIR SENIOR MEMBERS, HE ADDED.

MR WONG URGED THE PUBLIC TO FAMILIARISE THEMSELVES WITH THE BUDGET AS IT CONTAINED MANY PROPOSALS WHICH AFFECTED THEIR LIVELIHOOD.

"BOOKLETS ON THE BUDGET CAN BE OBTAINED FROM ALL DISTRICT OFFICES," HE SAID.

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ELDERLY TO SHARE ECONOMIC BOOM

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ELDERLY WILL BE ABLE TO SHARE HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THEIR PAST CONTRIBUTIONS, THE WONG TAI SIN DISTRICT OFFICER, MR ALDAN KWOK, SAID TODAY (SUNDAY).

SPEAKING AT A FEAST FOR LOCAL SENIOR CITIZENS, MR KWOK SAID THE BUDGET ANNOUNCED LAST WEEK HAD PROPOSED FUNDS TO FINANCE 1,660 PLACES IN CARE AND ATTENTION HOMES, 24 NEW SERVICE CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY, AND THE ISSUE OF CONCESSIONARY SENIOR CITIZEN CARDS.

BESIDES, HE SAID, TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY THE YOUNG PEOPLE TO SUPPORT THEIR ELDERLY FAMILY MEMBERS, A NEW DEPENDENT GRANDPARENT TAX ALLOWANCE OF $20,000 WILL BE INTRODUCED.

MORE, THE ALLOWANCE FOR A DEPENDENT PARENT WOULD ALSO RISE FROM $17,000 TO $20,000.

WITH HONG KONG ACHIEVING A RECORD GDP GROWTH LAST YEAR AND EARMARKING AN ESTIMATED SURPLUS OF $7.6 BILLION FOR 1994/95, MR KWOK SAID A BETTER STANDARD OF LIVING AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES COULD BE EXPECTED.

SPENDING IN AREAS LIKE HEALTH AND WELFARE, EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION WILL ALSO BE INCREASED.

ON COMMUNITY AFFAIRS, MR KWOK SAID THE PUBLIC COULD ALSO TAKE PART UNDER THE PRESENT THREE-TIER SYSTEM.

ON THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD TO HAVE ALL THE NECESSARY LEGAL PROCEDURES COMPLETED BEFORE THEY COULD BE CARRIED OUT ON SCHEDULE.

WITH THE ENDORSEMENT OF THE FIRST POLITICAL REFORM BILL, MR KWOK BELIEVED THAT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WOULD TRY ITS BEST TO WORK OUT A SET OF FAIR, OPEN AND ACCEPTABLE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS AND HAVE THEM INCORPORATED INTO THE SECOND BILL.

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BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR TAI PO RESIDENTS

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TAI PO RESIDENTS WILL SHARE HONG KONG'S REMARKABLE ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENTS AND ENJOY A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE UNDER THE NEW GOVERNMENT BUDGET PROPOSALS, TAI PO DISTRICT OFFICER, MR PO PUI-LEONG, SAID TODAY (SUNDAY).

SPEAKING AT A PRIZE PRESENTATION CEREMONY OF THE TAI PO SPORTS ASSOCIATION, MR PO POINTED OUT THAT IN ADDITION TO HUGE SALARY TAX CONCESSIONS, IMPROVEMENTS WOULD BE MADE TO THE ENVIRONMENT, WELFARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID UNDER THE NEW ESTIMATES FOR 1994/95, $3.2 BILLION WOULD BE PUT BACK INTO THE TAXPAYERS' POCKETS.

THIS MEANS THAT ABOUT 420,000 TAXPAYERS OR A QUARTER OF THE TOTAL WILL DROP OUT OF THE TAX NET ENTIRELY WITH A FURTHER 1.13 MILLION PEOPLE PAYING LESS TAX.

ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS IN TAI PO, MR PO SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD COMMITTED $610 MILLION TO UPGRADING THE WATER QUALITY OF TOLO HARBOUR AND $415 MILLION TO A SEWAGE SYSTEM FOR THE DISTRICT.

ON THE WELFARE FRONT, THERE WILL BE 248 ADDITIONAL PLACEMENTS IN CARE AND ATTENTION HOMES FOR THE ELDERLY, 50 MORE FOSTER CARE AND SMALL GROUP HOMES, AS WELL AS AN ADDITIONAL HOME HELP TEAM FOR THE DISTRICT.

DENTAL CARE SERVICES WILL ALSO BE EXTENDED TO A CLINIC IN TAI PO, MR PO ADDED.

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SPECIAL CAMPAIGN TO ENSURE SITE SAFETY

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THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT'S FACTORY INSPECTORS WILL LAUNCH A SPECIAL TASK FORCE PROGRAMME TOMORROW (MONDAY) TO ENSURE SAFETY ON CONSTRUCTION SITES THROUGH INTENSIVE ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS.

"THE SPECIAL CAMPAIGN, WHICH WILL TARGET ON SITES WITH POOR ACCIDENT RECORD AND HIGH RISK WORK ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS WORKING AT HEIGHT, WILL BE CARRIED OUT BETWEEN MARCH AND OCTOBER THIS YEAR," DEPUTY CHIEF FACTORY INSPECTOR, MR KAN HON-SANG, SAID TODAY (SUNDAY).

"AS IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SAFETY OF SCAFFOLDS IS ONE OF OUR MAIN TARGETS THIS YEAR, FACTORY INSPECTORS WILL EXERCISE GREAT VIGILANCE ON OFFENCES RELATING TO UNSAFE AND SUB-STANDARD SCAFFOLDS.

"WE WILL ALSO CHECK ON THE SAFE USE OF LIFTING APPLIANCES AND LIFTING GEARS AND THE USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT SUCH AS SAFETY BELTS AND SAFETY HELMETS," HE ADDED.

MR KAN POINTED OUT THAT EXPERIENCE FROM PREVIOUS SIMILAR EXERCISES HAD PROVED THAT THE OPERATION WAS VERY EFFECTIVE AND THAT THE NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY HAD BEEN DECLINING IN THE PAST SIX YEARS.

"IN VIEW OF THE HIGH FATALITY FIGURE IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN 1993, FACTORY INSPECTORS WILL NOT HESITATE TO PROSECUTE BLATANT OFFENDERS," HE SAID.

MR KAN REMINDED CONTRACTORS AND SUB-CONTRACTORS TO COMPLY WITH THEIR STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS AND DUTIES.

/"OTHERWISE, THEY .....

"OTHERWISE, THEY MAY BE LIABLE TO A MAXIMUM FINE OF $200,000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR 12 MONTHS FOLLOWING THE RECENT AMENDMENT OF THE SAFETY LEGISLATION."

MEANWHILE, MR KAN ALSO URGED WORKERS TO CO-OPERATE WITH THE EMPLOYERS IN THE ADOPTION OF THE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AND THE USE OF PERSONAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT.

"TO ENSURE SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK IS A MUTUAL AFFAIR REQUIRING FULL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES," HE SAID.

"AN EMPLOYEE'S DUTIES HAVE CLEARLY BEEN SPELLED OUT IN THE GENERAL DUTIES AND OTHER PROVISIONS OF THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS ORDINANCE AND SUBSIDIARY REGULATIONS."

MR KAN STRESSED THAT WORKERS WERE NOT IMMUNE TO PROSECUTIONS.

"IF A WORKER ADOPTED AN IRRESPONSIBLE APPROACH TO SAFETY AND HEALTH WHICH WOULD ENDANGER HIMSELF OR THE OTHERS DESPITE THE EMPLOYER DISCHARGED FULLY HIS OBLIGATIONS, OUR FACTORY INSPECTORS WILL PROSECUTE THE WORKER WITHOUT HESITATION," HE SAID.

"IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS SINCE 1989, 28 WORKERS HAVE BEEN PROSECUTED FOR BREACHING THE SAFETY AND HEALTH LAW.

"AFTER THE LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENT, AN EMPLOYEE WOULD BE LIABLE TO A MAXIMUM FINE OF $50,000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR SIX MONTHS," HE WARNED.

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ACADEMY OF MEDICINE TO GET SITE FOR HEADQUARTERS

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THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL HAS AGREED THAT A SITE AT WONG CHUK HANG ROAD SHOULD BE GRANTED BY PRIVATE TREATY TO THE HONG KONG ACADEMY OF MEDICINE FOR BUILDING ITS HEADQUARTERS.

THE ACADEMY IS AN INDEPENDENT STATUTORY BODY ESTABLISHED TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE ART AND SCIENCE OF MEDICINE, AND TO FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT OF POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION AND CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION.

ITS HEADQUARTERS IS AT PRESENT LOCATED IN THE STAFF QUARTERS OF THE PAMELA YOUDE NETHERSOLE EASTERN DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN CHAI WAN.

THE PERMANENT HEADQUARTERS WILL ACCOMMODATE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES, CHAMBERS FOR THE MEMBER COLLEGES OF THE ACADEMY, AN AUDITORIUM, SEMINAR ROOMS, FUNCTION ROOMS, ROOMS FOR EXTERNAL EXAMINERS, A LIBRARY, A MUSEUM, A DINING HALL AND OTHER ANCILLARY FACILITIES.

DOCTORS AND DENTISTS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMY CAN USE THESE FACILITIES TO CONDUCT MEETINGS, EXAMINATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONAL COURSES.

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DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS TO IMPORT WORKERS

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THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PRELIMINARY APPLICATIONS TO IMPORT WORKERS UNDER THE IMPORTATION OF LABOUR SCHEME WILL BE ON FRIDAY, MARCH 25.

"EMPLOYERS WHO INTEND TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SCHEME SHOULD SUBMIT THEIR APPLICATIONS TO THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ENTERTAINED," A SPOKESMAN FOR THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY (SUNDAY).

APPLICATION FORMS AND GUIDANCE NOTES CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT, THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT AND DISTRICT OFFICES.

COMPLETED APPLICATION FORMS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT FOR FURTHER PROCESSING.

ABOUT 11,000 QUOTAS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR RE-USE THIS YEAR.

"IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF EMPLOYERS TO SUBMIT THEIR APPLICATIONS AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE IF THEY WANT TO AVOID THE LAST-MINUTE RUSH."

ENQUIRIES ON IMMIGRATION-RELATED MATTERS CAN BE MADE TO THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT ON TEL 829 3220 AND 829 3225.

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STI VISITS SINGAPORE

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THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR CHAU TAK-HAY, LEFT TODAY (SUNDAY) FOR A TWO-DAY VISIT TO SINGAPORE.

"HONG KONG IS AT THE HEART OF THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION. WE ARE PARTICIPATING ACTIVELY IN THE WORK OF APEC (ASIA PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION) AND ARE KEEN TO STRENGTHEN OUR ECONOMIC AND TRADE TIES WITH OUR PARTNERS IN THE REGION," SAID MR CHAU.

HONG KONG AND SINGAPORE ENJOY EXCELLENT TRADE RELATIONS. SINGAPORE IS HONG KONG'S SIXTH LARGEST TRADING PARTNER, MR CHAU SAID.

"HONG KONG AND SINGAPORE HAVE ALWAYS WORKED TOGETHER VERY CLOSELY IN BOTH THE GATT (GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE) AND APEC AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO IN THE FUTURE."

IN SINGAPORE, MR CHAU WILL MEET MR YEO CHEOW TONG, MINISTER FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, AND PROFESSOR S JAYAKUMAR, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

"I WOULD LIKE TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON APEC WITH MINISTER YEO AND MINISTER JAYAKUMAR, WHO ARE MY COUNTERPARTS IN APEC.

/"I WILL .....

"I WILL ALSO DISCUSS WITH MINISTER YEO PREPARATIONS FOR THE MARRAKESH MINISTERIAL MEETING," MR CHAU SAID.

TRADE MINISTERS WILL INITIAL THE URUGUAY ROUND AGREEMENT IN MARRAKESH, MOROCCO, IN THE MIDDLE OF NEXT MONTH.

"I WILL ALSO TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PAY CALLS ON MR WONG KAN SENG AND BRIGADIER-GENERAL GEORGE YEO, WITH WHOM I HAVE WORKED AT PREVIOUS APEC MEETINGS," MR CHAU SAID.

MR WONG IS CURRENTLY SINGAPORE'S MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS. BRIGADIER-GENERAL YEO IS THE MINISTER FOR INFORMATION AND THE ARTS.

WHILE IN SINGAPORE, MR CHAU WILL VISIT THE APEC SECRETARIAT AND MEET ITS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. MR CHAU WILL ALSO VISIT SINGAPORE'S SCIENCE PARK AND INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH.

APEC IS A FORUM FOR HIGH LEVEL INFORMAL DIALOGUE ON REGIONAL TRADE AND ECONOMIC ISSUES.

APEC CURRENTLY COMPRISES 17 MEMBERS.

THEY ARE, APART FROM HONG KONG, AUSTRALIA, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM, CANADA, CHINA, INDONESIA, JAPAN, KOREA, MALAYSIA, MEXICO, NEW ZEALAND, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, THE PHILIPPINES, SINGAPORE, THAILAND, CHINESE TAIPEI, AND THE USA.

THE APEC SECRETARIAT IS LOCATED IN SINGAPORE.

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SIR ROBERT HO TUNG CHARITABLE FUND PAYS OUT $13.4M

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THE SIR ROBERT HO TUNG CHARITABLE FUND HAS RECENTLY MADE GRANTS TOTALLING $13.4 MILLION TO 75 CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS IN HONG KONG.

THIS WAS ANNOUNCED TODAY (SUNDAY) BY DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE AND CHAIRMAN OF THE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE FOR ADVISING THE GOVERNOR ON ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND, MISS JACQUELINE WILLIS.

MISS WILLIS SAID MAJOR GRANTS THIS YEAR INCLUDED A SUM OF $2,184,491 MADE TO THE TUNG WAH GROUP OF HOSPITALS.

OF THAT AMOUNT, $842,000 WAS TO FUND THE SETTING UP OF A MAMMOGRAPHIC X-RAY UNIT FOR EXAMINING BREAST CANCER WHILE ANOTHER $500,000 WAS FOR INTRODUCING THE FIRST PUBLIC CORNEAL REFRACTIVE SURGERY SERVICE IN THE OPHTHALMIC CENTRE OF THE TUNG WAH EASTERN HOSPITAL.

A SUM OF $566,300 WAS GRANTED TO THE GRANTHAM HOSPITAL AND THE RUTTONJEE HOSPITAL TO BUY MEDICAL EQUIPMENT.

/THE PO .....

THE PO LEUNG KUK RECEIVED A GRANT OF $556,520 FOR RENOVATING ITS LAM TIN NURSERY.

THE HONG KONG RED CROSS WAS GRANTED $306,930 FOR IMPROVING THE BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE, THE HOSPITAL LIBRARY SERVICE AND PURCHASE OF OTHER EQUIPMENT.

A SUM OF $1,578,210 WAS INJECTED INTO THE SAMARITAN FUND TO ENABLE IT TO PROVIDE HEART VALVES, CARDIAC CATHETERS AND INTRAOCULAR LENSES TO NEEDY PATIENTS.

THE MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF HONG KONG RECEIVED A GRANT OF $114,000 FOR THE PUBLICATION OF BOOKS ON MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION.

THE HAVEN OF HOPE CHRISTIAN SERVICE-BRADBURY CLINIC WAS GRANTED $152,000 FOR IMPROVING THE MEDICAL SERVICE TO RESIDENTS OF THE TSEUNG KWAN O NEW TOWN.

ONE OF THE LARGEST CHARITABLE TRUSTS IN HONG KONG, THE SIR ROBERT HO TUNG CHARITABLE FUND WAS SET UP WITH A BEQUEST OF $500,000 BY THE LATE SIR ROBERT HO TUNG ON HIS DEATH IN 1956.

IN 1966, THE CAPITAL OF THE FUND WAS INCREASED THROUGH THE INJECTION OF $4,950,000 FROM THE CHINA CHARITABLE FUND SET UP BY HIM.

THE SIR ROBERT HO TUNG CHARITABLE FUND IS ADMINISTERED BY HONGKONG BANK TRUSTEE LTD.

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED ONCE A YEAR THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, HOSPITAL AUTHORITY, THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION.

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PARENTS' ROLE IN FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS

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PARENTS ARE URGED TO LEARN THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF DRUGS.

"INFORMED PARENTS ARE MUCH BETTER EQUIPPED TO DEAL WITH DRUG ABUSE AND STEER THEIR CHILDREN IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION," THE COMMISSIONER FOR NARCOTICS, MR ALASDAIR SINCLAIR, SAID.

HE WAS SPEAKING AT THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT 93/94 FIGHT CRIME CUM ANTI-NARCOTICS CARNIVAL HELD THIS (SUNDAY) AFTERNOON AT KOWLOON PARK PIAZZA.

"SOME YOUNG PEOPLE ARE MORE AT RISK THAN OTHERS.

"CHARACTERISTICS CORRELATED WITH DRUG TAKING AMONG YOUNGSTERS INCLUDE AIMLESSNESS AND BOREDOM, UNEMPLOYMENT, LOW SELF-ESTEEM, A DISRUPTED FAMILY LIFE, ACADEMIC FAILURE AND TRUANCY," SAID MR SINCLAIR.

/SINCE YOUNGSTERS .....

SINCE YOUNGSTERS LACKED INSIGHT AND MATURITY, PARENTS NEED TO ADVISE THEIR CHILDREN THAT DRUG ABUSE WOULD NEVER HELP THEM COPE WITH STRESSES BUT WOULD ONLY WORSEN THEIR PROBLEMS AND RUIN THEIR LIVES.

"A STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE FAMILY IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH DRUG ABUSE. CLEAR AND CONSISTENT CHILD-REARING PRACTICES PROVIDE THE BEST PROTECTION FOR OUR CHILDREN," HE SAID.

IN ORDER TO INCREASE PARENTS' AWARENESS OF THE DRUG PROBLEM, THE NARCOTICS DIVISION HAD PRODUCED TWO TELEVISION ANNOUNCEMENTS IN PUBLIC INTEREST AND A LEAFLET "EVERY PARENT'S GUIDE TO DRUG ABUSE", GIVING SOME TIPS FOR PARENTS AND REMINDING THEM OF THEIR ROLE IN GUIDING THEIR CHILDREN AWAY FROM DRUGS.

MORE, A PILOT SCHEME OF TALKS FOR PARENTS HAD BEEN ORGANISED SINCE JUNE 1992.

"ALTHOUGH WE HAVE TRIED TO HOLD THESE AT CONVENIENT TIMES, THE ATTENDANCE AT THE SEVEN TALKS CONDUCTED HAD BEEN RATHER LOW," THE COMMISSIONER SAID.

HE HOPES PARENTS CAN TAKE UP THEIR RESPONSIBILITY SERIOUSLY AND HELP THEIR CHILDREN FACE CHALLENGES, FAILURE AND WORRIES.

"TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT DRUGS BEFORE SOMEBODY ELSE DOES," THE COMMISSIONER SAID.

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NEW LEAFLETS FOR APPLYING S6 READY

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THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IS LAUNCHING A PUBLICITY DRIVE TO TELL SECONDARY FIVE STUDENTS HOW TO APPLY FOR ONE OF 23,790 SECONDARY SIX PLACES PROVIDED BY SCHOOLS IN THE COMING ACADEMIC YEAR.

A DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THERE WOULD BE AN EXTRA 672 SECONDARY SIX PLACES IN SEPTEMBER, REPRESENTING AN INCREASE OF ABOUT THREE PER CENT OVER LAST YEAR.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID A NEW LEAFLET AND SUMMARY TABLE ON SECONDARY SIX ADMISSION WERE BEING COLLECTED BY SCHOOLS FOR DSISTRIBUTION TO SECONDARY FIVE STUDENTS.

THE NEW LEAFLET CONTAINS ADMISSION DETAILS, AND ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF THE 19 EDUCATION DISTRICT OFFICES TO HELP STUDENTS SEEK FURTHER INFORMATION.

PRIVATE CANDIDATES WILL RECEIVE THE LEAFLET AND SUMMARY TABLE FROM THE HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY WHEN IT SENDS OUT IDENTIFICATION FORMS FOR THE HONG KONG CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION (HKCEE).

ADDITIONAL LEAFLETS AND SUMMARY TABLES ARE AVAILABLE FROM DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICES AND OFFICES OF THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY.

/A 24-HOUR .....

A 24-HOUR TELEPHONE ENQUIRY SERVICE HAS STARTED OPERATION. STUDENTS WHO WISH TO HEAR SECONDARY ALLOCATION PROCEDURES FOR SECONDARY SIX PLACES MAY DIAL 891 0088.

IN ADDITION, A HOTLINE WILL BE SET UP IN EARLY AUGUST, WHEN RESULTS OF HKCEE ARE ANNOUNCED, TO HELP STUDENTS SEEK ADVICE OR CLARIFICATION ABOUT ADMISSION PROCEDURES, AND TO HANDLE ANY COMPLAINTS.

THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT RECEIVED SEVEN COMPLAINTS ABOUT SECONDARY SIX PLACE ALLOCATION LAST YEAR, OF WHICH TWO COMPLAINTS WERE FOUND TO BE JUSTIFIED.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID MORE PUBLICITY WOULD BE CONDUCTED IN EARLY AUGUST BEFORE HKCEE RESULTS WERE ANNOUNCED.

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PRE-TEST SURVEY FOR 1996 POPULATION BY-CENSUS

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THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT WILL CONDUCT A PRE-TEST SURVEY FROM MARCH 12 TO 20 TO TEST THE QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN AND THE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES OF THE 1996 POPULATION BY-CENSUS.

A SAMPLE OF LIVING QUARTERS HAS BEEN SELECTED FROM FIVE DISTRICTS - MID-LEVELS, KWUN TONG, NGAU TAU KOK, KWAI CHUNG AND SHA TIN.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID THEY WERE CHOSEN TO TEST DIFFERENT FIELDWORK PROBLEMS THAT MIGHT ARISE IN DIFFERENT LOCATIONS.

ALL HOUSEHOLDS AND PERSONS LIVING IN THE SELECTED QUARTERS WILL BE ENUMERATED.

CENSUS OFFICERS WILL VISIT THEM BETWEEN 9 AM AND 10 PM TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS.

THE TOPICS WILL COVER BASIC DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS SUCH AS AGE AND SEX, SOCIO-ECONOMIC ATTRIBUTES SUCH AS OCCUPATION, INDUSTRY, PLACE OF WORK OR STUDY, EARNINGS FROM EMPLOYMENT AND OTHER CASH INCOME.

THE DEPARTMENT IS SENDING OUT LETTERS WHICH BEAR THE CENSUS OFFICERS' NAMES TO THE HOUSEHOLDS.

DURING THE VISITS, EACH CENSUS OFFICER WILL IDENTIFY HIMSELF WITH AN ENUMERATOR IDENTITY CARD AND A CERTIFICATE OF IDENTITY ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

IF IN DOUBT, THE HOUSEHOLDERS CAN CHECK THEIR IDENTITY BY CALLING 887 5540. OTHER ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE PRE-TEST SURVEY CAN ALSO BE MADE ON THIS TELEPHONE LINE WHICH IS OPERATING UNTIL MARCH 22.

THIS IS A VOLUNTARY STATISTICAL SURVEY CONDUCTED UNDER THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS ORDINANCE AND WAS GAZETTED ON FEBRUARY 25.

"INFORMATION ON INDIVIDUAL PERSONS OR HOUSEHOLDS COLLECTED IN THE SURVEY WILL BE TREATED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE AND WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO ANY PERSONS OR GROUPS OUTSIDE THE DEPARTMENT," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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