



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1981

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RESERVES USED FOR HONG KONG'S BENEFIT

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CONTRARY TO POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS, HONG KONG'S RESERVES ARE NOT BEING SENT TO BRITAIN FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

THE RESERVES BELONG TO HONG KONG AND ARE EMPLOYED FOR THE BENEFIT OF HONG KONG, THE SECRETARY FOR MONETARY AFFAIRS, MR DOUGLAS BLYE SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AT A ROTARY CLUB OF HONG KONG LUNCHEON MEETING, MR BLYE SAID THE AMOUNT OF HONG KONG'S FISCAL RESERVES WAS SHOWN IN THE GOVERNMENT'S MONTHLY ACCOUNTS AS THE +GENERAL REVENUE BALANCE+.

IN THE ACCOUNTS PUBLISHED IN THE LATEST GOVERNMENT GAZETTE, THE AMOUNT OF FISCAL RESERVES AT SEPTEMBER 30, 1981 WAS \$18 204 MILLION, AND OF THIS \$16 861 MILLION HAD BEEN USED TO BUY EXCHANGE FUND DEBT CERTIFICATES.

THE EXCHANGE FUND DEBT CERTIFICATES SHOWN IN THE GOVERNMENT'S BALANCE SHEET ARE LIQUID ASSETS ENCASHABLE AT ANY TIME, HE SAID, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE NORMALLY ONLY REDEEMED TO MEET CASH SHORTFALLS.

+THE RESIDUE, AFTER ALLOWING FOR DEPOSITS WITH THE GOVERNMENT FROM VARIOUS SOURCES AND ADVANCES MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT, IS, AS CAN BE SEEN FROM THOSE ACCOUNTS, HELD IN CASH AND BANK BALANCES,+ HE SAID.

MR BLYE EXPLAINED THAT THE EXCHANGE FUND WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1935 FOR THE PURPOSE OF REGULATING THE EXCHANGE VALUE OF THE CURRENCY OF HONG KONG AND THAT IT WAS STILL ITS MAIN PURPOSE.

+THIS MEANS THAT IT MUST HAVE FOREIGN CURRENCY ASSETS WHICH IT CAN SELL WHEN THE HONG KONG DOLLAR IS UNDER PRESSURE,+ HE SAID.

+HONG KONG DOLLARS ARE ALSO REQUIRED TO PURCHASE FOREIGN CURRENCY WHEN THE EXCHANGE VALUE OF THE DOMESTIC UNIT IS APPRECIATING TOO QUICKLY, BUT EXPERIENCE INDICATES THAT EXCHANGE RATE DISTORTIONS MORE OFTEN FOLLOW FROM A PERCEIVED WEAKNESS IN THE VALUE OF THE LOCAL CURRENCY RATHER THAN THE OTHER WAY ROUND.

+AND SO THE FUND NEEDS TO HOLD A GREATER PROPORTION OF ITS ASSETS IN FOREIGN CURRENCY THAN IN LOCAL UNIT.+

MR BLYE SAID THE FUND WAS HELD IN U.S. DOLLARS, CANADIAN DOLLARS, DEUTSCHMARKS, SWISS FRANCS, GUILDERS, YEN, STERLING AND HONG KONG DOLLARS.

THE STERLING ELEMENT AMOUNTS TO ABOUT 10 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL ASSETS OF THE FUND.

/MR BLYE

MR BLYE SAID PART OF THE FUND WAS HELD IN BRITISH GOVERNMENT SECURITIES AND THAT THIS WAS THE ONLY WAY IN WHICH IT COULD BE SAID THAT HONG KONG'S RESERVES WERE USED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

+BUT THE FUND HAS ALSO LENT MONEY TO OTHER COUNTRIES THROUGH THE PURCHASE OF SECURITIES ISSUED BY GOVERNMENTS OF CANADA, NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, WEST GERMANY, HOLLAND, NORWAY, DENMARK, U.S.A. AND JAPAN, TO MENTION THE MAIN COUNTRIES TO WHICH THE FUND HAS LENT MONEY,+ HE SAID.

+MONEY HAS ALSO BEEN LENT TO INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK, THE WORLD BANK AND THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK.

+ALL OF THESE SECURITIES INCLUDING BRITISH GOVERNMENT LIABILITIES, EARN INTEREST AND THEY CAN ALL BE CONVERTED INTO THE CURRENCY IN WHICH THEY ARE DENOMINATED.

+IN TURN, THE PROCEEDS FROM SUCH SALES CAN BE USED TO PURCHASE OTHER FREELY CONVERTIBLE CURRENCIES INCLUDING HONG KONG DOLLARS,+ HE ADDED.

MR BLYE SAID ALTHOUGH THE EXCHANGE FUND'S ACCOUNTS WERE NOT PUBLISHED, IT WAS WELL KNOWN INTERNATIONALLY THAT ITS FOREIGN EXCHANGE HOLDINGS WERE SUBSTANTIAL, AND ALTHOUGH THESE HOLDINGS WERE NOT ACQUIRED ESSENTIALLY TO INCREASE CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG, THEIR EXISTENCE HAD DONE JUST THAT.

+I AM EQUALLY SURE, EVEN IF WE COULD IGNORE THE NEED TO HOLD SUBSTANTIAL FOREIGN CURRENCY ASSETS FOR EXCHANGE RATE MANAGEMENT PURPOSES, THAT WERE THE BULK OF OUR OVERSEAS HOLDINGS TO BE REPATRIATED TO HONG KONG, SO THAT THE EXCHANGE FUND'S LIABILITIES WERE LARGELY MATCHED BY HONG KONG DOLLAR DENOMINATED ASSETS - AND FOR MONETARY REASONS THIS IS OBVIOUSLY NOT POSSIBLE, AT LEAST AT THE PRESENT TIME - THAT INTERNATIONAL CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG WOULD BE SERIOUSLY WEAKENED.+

MR BLYE SAID HE HAD REASON TO BELIEVE ALSO THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH MORE DIFFICULT AND PERHAPS EVEN IMPOSSIBLE TO ARRANGE OVERSEAS LOANS FOR CAPITAL INTENSIVE PROJECTS SUCH AS THE MTR IF HONG KONG'S OFFICIAL FOREIGN CURRENCY RESERVES WERE NOT SUBSTANTIAL.

IN MOST YEARS, HE POINTED OUT, THE FUND'S INCOME EXCEEDS ITS EXPENDITURE, AND AS A RESULT, THERE IS A TENDENCY FOR THE FUND'S ACCUMULATED SURPLUS TO GROW AND FOR THE LIABILITY COVER TO INCREASE.

IN THE FIRST HALF OF 1981, FOR EXAMPLE, THE FUND EARNED ABOUT \$2 200 MILLION. AFTER PAYING INTEREST ON EXCHANGE FUND DEBT CERTIFICATES AND AFTER MEETING ALL ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES, THE NOTE AND COIN CIRCULATION COSTS, ITS INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE HALF YEAR SHOWED A SURPLUS OF ABOUT \$1 000 MILLION.

+THIS MEANS, BY WAY OF COMPARISON, THAT THE EXCHANGE FUND SURPLUS FOR THE HALF YEAR IS ROUGHLY EQUAL TO THE TOTAL COLLECTIONS FROM RATES IN A FULL YEAR,+ HE SAID.

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COMPARED WITH PRIVATE SECTOR INSTITUTION, THE FUND'S SURPLUS ALSO EXCEEDED THE PUBLISHED HALF YEARLY, AFTER TAX PROFIT, OF HONG KONG'S LARGEST BANK BY ABOUT 60 PER CENT, HE SAID.

DURING HIS TALK, MR BLYE ALSO SET OUT TO DISPEL TWO OTHER POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS: THE BELIEF THAT THE PROCEEDS OF THE NOTE ISSUE WERE USED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SHAREHOLDERS OF THE NOTE ISSUING BANKS= AND THAT THERE WAS AN OBLIGATION TO MAINTAIN A MINIMUM 105 PER CENT ASSET COVER FOR THE NOTE ISSUE.

ON THE FIRST ONE MR BLYE SAID: +THE NOTE ISSUE MECHANISM IN HONG KONG IS AN AUTOMATIC PROCESS - EACH NOTE ISSUING BANK INCREASES ITS ISSUE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS OWN NEEDS AND THE NEEDS OF ITS CUSTOMERS (INCLUDING OTHER BANKS).+

THE BANK DID SO BY ACQUIRING CERTIFICATES OF INDEBTEDNESS FROM THE EXCHANGE FUND EQUIVALENT TO THE VALUE OF THE NOTES IT WISHED TO ISSUE.

+THE NOTE ISSUING BANKS PAY THE FACE VALUE OF THE CERTIFICATE OF INDEBTEDNESS ISSUED TO THEM INTO AN EXCHANGE FUND ACCOUNT IN THEIR BOOKS,+ HE SAID.

+I HAVE EXPLAINED HOW THE MONEY RECEIVED BY THE FUND IS USED AND THAT IT IS EMPLOYED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE EXCHANGE FUND, AND THEREFORE FOR THE COMMUNITY.

+IT FOLLOWS THAT THE SHAREHOLDERS OF THE NOTE ISSUING BANKS DO NOT DIRECTLY BENEFIT FROM THE FUNDS WHICH FLOW FROM THE NOTE ISSUE.+

ON THE SECOND MISCONCEPTION, MR BLYE SAID IT AROSE FROM THE WORDING OF THE EXCHANGE FUND ORDINANCE.

SECTION 8 OF THE ORDINANCE, HE SAID, STATES THAT ANY SUM OR ANY PART OF ANY SUM IN EXCESS OF THE AMOUNT REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN THE ASSETS OF THE FUND AT 105 PER CENT OF TOTAL LIABILITIES MAY BE TRANSFERRED TO THE GENERAL REVENUE OF HONG KONG.

+WHAT THE ORDINANCE SAYS IS THAT MONEY CANNOT BE TRANSFERRED TO OTHER GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS UNLESS THE ASSETS OF THE FUND ARE IN EXCESS OF 105 PER CENT OF LIABILITIES. THERE IS NO MINIMUM COVER REQUIREMENT.+

MR BLYE ADDED THAT THE COVER FOR THE NOTE ISSUE AND THE FUND'S TOTAL LIABILITIES WAS SUBSTANTIALLY IN EXCESS OF 105 PER CENT AND THAT COVER WAS HELD LARGELY IN HIGHLY-LIQUID FOREIGN CURRENCY ASSETS.

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NEW ANTI-SMOKING MEASURES

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL INTENSIFY ITS EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF SMOKING AND THEREFORE ITS HARMFUL EFFECTS ON PUBLIC HEALTH WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF A PACKAGE OF ANTI-SMOKING MEASURES.

THE FOUR MAIN AREAS OF THE NEW INITIATIVE ARE :

- * ESTABLISHING, AND ENCOURAGING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF, NON-SMOKING AREAS=
- * PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION=
- * HEALTH WARNINGS AND STATEMENTS OF TAR AND NICOTINE CONTENT=
- * CONTROLS ON ADVERTISING.

IN RECENT YEARS THE GOVERNMENT HAS CONDUCTED A RELATIVELY LOW-KEY ANTI-SMOKING CAMPAIGN, MAINLY THROUGH EDUCATION AND PUBLICITY.

ACCORDING TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, MR GEOFFREY BARNES, SEVERAL FACTORS WERE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TODAY TO STEP UP ITS EFFORTS AGAINST SMOKING.

IN HONG KONG SOME 1 800 PEOPLE DIED FROM LUNG CANCER IN 1980. THIS REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF 58 PER CENT IN THE NUMBER OF DEATHS IN THE PAST TEN YEARS.

THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT ACCEPTS THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION CALCULATION THAT IN COUNTRIES WHERE SMOKING IS WIDESPREAD, IT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR 90 PER CENT OF LUNG CANCER DEATHS.

+THERE IS ALSO GROWING CONCERN ABOUT THE RISKS OF PASSIVE SMOKING, THAT IS NON-SMOKERS BREATHING AIR CONTAINING SMOKE PRODUCED BY SMOKERS IN THEIR CLOSE PROXIMITY,+ MR BARNES SAID.

MR BARNES SAID WHILE PUBLIC HEALTH WAS THE MAIN ISSUE, IT WAS NOTED THAT BETWEEN 1976 AND 1980, MORE THAN 19 000 FIRE ACCIDENTS WERE THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY CARELESS SMOKING, REPRESENTING 33 PER CENT OF ALL FIRE ACCIDENTS. THESE RESULTED IN SEVEN DEATHS AND 422 INJURIES.

+IN A RECENT PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY COMMISSIONED BY THE HOME AFFAIRS BRANCH THERE WAS GENERAL SUPPORT FOR THE MEASURES NOW PROPOSED,+ MR BARNES DISCLOSED.

AT THE MOMENT, SMOKING IS WHOLLY PROHIBITED IN SOME FORMS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT WHILE THERE ARE NO-SMOKING AREAS IN OTHERS. RESTRICTIONS ALSO APPLY IN SOME PUBLIC BUILDINGS SUCH AS THE CITY HALL AND OTHER CULTURAL FACILITIES MANAGED BY THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT.

NEARLY 90 PER CENT OF THE PEOPLE INTERVIEWED IN THE RECENT SURVEY WERE IN FAVOUR OF A BAN ON SMOKING IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND ENCLOSED PUBLIC PLACES.

INITIALLY IT IS PROPOSED THAT CONTROLS SHOULD COVER PUBLIC TRANSPORT (EXCEPT TAXIS AND HIRE CARS), PUBLIC LIFTS, THEATRES, CONCERT HALLS AND CINEMAS, HOSPITAL WARDS, MEDICAL AND DENTAL CLINICS, CLASSROOMS AND PUBLIC WAITING AREAS IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

IN THE CASE OF SINGLE-DECKER PUBLIC TRANSPORT, IT IS PROPOSED THAT THERE SHOULD BE A TOTAL BAN ON SMOKING. ON DOUBLE-DECKER BUSES AND TRAMS, SMOKING WOULD BE ALLOWED ON ONE DECK BUT PROHIBITED ON THE OTHER. IN THE CASE OF PLACES OF ENTERTAINMENT, THE MANAGEMENT WOULD BE REQUIRED TO ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE PROVISION WAS MADE FOR NON-SMOKERS. MR BARNES SAID LEGISLATION WITH PENALTIES WOULD BE PROVIDED TO IMPLEMENT THESE PROPOSALS WHILE OTHERS INVOLVING FACILITIES UNDER THE GOVERNMENT'S CONTROL WOULD BE EFFECTED BY ADMINISTRATIVE MEANS.

IN 1976 THE GOVERNMENT BEGAN A PROGRAMME OF EDUCATION AND PUBLICITY AIMED PARTICULARLY AT DISCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE FROM SMOKING. IN ADDITION TO THE INCLUSION OF THE ANTI-SMOKING MESSAGE IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM, A VARIETY OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES SUCH AS EXHIBITIONS AND COMPETITIONS HAVE BEEN ORGANISED. THE MESSAGE HAS ALSO BEEN PUBLICISED ON TELEVISION AND THROUGH POSTERS AND STICKERS.

+THE PRESENT LOW-KEY APPROACH AND EMPHASIS ON EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG WILL BE BROADENED TO WARN THE GENERAL PUBLIC MORE POSITIVELY ABOUT THE DANGERS OF SMOKING,+ MR BARNES SAID.

IN ADDITION TO CONTINUING TO PROMOTE THE +BE CONSIDERATE+ MESSAGE, FUTURE PUBLICITY WILL BE AIMED AT PREVENTING NON-SMOKERS FROM STARTING THE HABIT AS WELL AS PERSUADING SMOKERS TO STOP, SPREADING A NEW HEALTH WARNING SUCH AS +HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WARNING : CIGARETTE SMOKING IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH+ AND ENCOURAGING OPERATORS OF FACILITIES USED BY THE PUBLIC TO SUPPORT SMOKING RESTRICTIONS ON THEIR PREMISES.

LEGISLATION WILL BE INTRODUCED TO MAKE IT COMPULSORY FOR THE HEALTH WARNING TO BE CARRIED ON EVERY CIGARETTE PACKET AND IN SPECIFIED TYPES OF CIGARETTE ADVERTISING. THESE WOULD INCLUDE ADVERTISEMENTS ON TELEVISION, RADIO, IN CINEMAS AND IN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER PERIODICALS.

MR BARNES SAID WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION REPORTS INDICATED THAT CIGARETTES WITH A HIGH TAR AND NICOTINE CONTENT PRESENTED A GREATER RISK TO SMOKERS. IN ORDER TO ASCERTAIN THE TAR AND NICOTINE CONTENT OF INDIVIDUAL BRANDS, THE GOVERNMENT WILL CARRY OUT TESTS WITH THE AID OF AN AUTOMATIC SMOKING MACHINE. THE RESULTS IN THE FORM OF LEAGUE TABLES WILL BE MADE PUBLIC BY THE CONSUMER COUNCIL TWICE A YEAR AND ADVERTISERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO INCLUDE A GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE LATEST TAR RATING OF THEIR PRODUCT IN PRINTED ADVERTISEMENTS.

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CIGARETTE ADVERTISING IS ALREADY BANNED IN PREMISES UNDER THE GOVERNMENT'S DIRECT CONTROL SUCH AS AT PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES AND THE STAR FERRY CONCOURSES.

CIGARETTE ADVERTISING ON TELEVISION IS CURRENTLY PROHIBITED BETWEEN 4.30 PM AND 6.30 PM DAILY AND THE CONTENT OF COMMERCIALS IS GOVERNED BY THE TELEVISION AUTHORITY'S CODE OF PRACTICE AND A VOLUNTARY CODE OF CONDUCT DRAWN UP WITH THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY IN 1977. MORE THAN 70 PER CENT OF THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS BELIEVED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD IMPOSE RESTRICTIONS ON TELEVISION CIGARETTE ADVERTISEMENTS, BOTH IN TERMS OF QUANTITY AND CONTENT. IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO ADOPT A POLICY OF STRONGER MEASURES AGAINST SMOKING, THE TELEVISION AUTHORITY WILL REVIEW THE CODE OF PRACTICE AND CONSIDER HOW EXISTING RESTRICTIONS ON ADVERTISING SHOULD BE EXTENDED.

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STATEMENT ON RESERVOIR

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THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT IS ISSUED BY THE DIRECTOR OF WATER SUPPLIES IN RESPONSE TO PRESS QUESTIONS ON A REPORT CARRIED IN A NEWSPAPER TODAY:

TAI LAM CHUNG RESERVOIR IS STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT IN THAT TSUEN WAN, KWAI CHUNG, TSING YI, TUEN MUN AND YUEN LONG DEPEND UPON ITS THROUGHPUT FOR SUPPLY.

THE SOURCES OF WATER INTO TAI LAM CHUNG RESERVOIR ARE THE YIELD FROM ITS OWN CATCHMENT AREA AND A PROPORTION OF THE WATER FROM CHINA, TOGETHER WITH THE OUTPUT FROM THE DESALTER WHEN IT IS OPERATING.

THE OPERATING RULES FOR THE RESERVOIR REQUIRE IT TO BE REASONABLY FULL AT THE BEGINNING OF THE DRY SEASON AND THE COMBINED INPUTS OF DESALTED WATER AND WATER FROM CHINA, HAVE IMPROVED THE STORAGE TO AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL.

THE PROSPECT OF IT OVERFLOWING, HOWEVER, IS LOW. NEVERTHELESS, THE SITUATION HAS BEEN UNDER CONSTANT OBSERVATION AND MEASURES ARE IN HAND TO INCREASE DRAW-OFF AND REDUCE INPUT SO AS TO OBIVATE THE POSSIBILITY OF OVERFLOW.

THERE ARE NO TECHNICAL PROBLEMS AT PLOVER COVE WHICH WOULD PRECLUDE THE RECEPTION OF A GREATER PROPORTION OF CHINESE WATER, AS HAS BEEN SUGGESTED.

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QUESTION ON +PORT OF FIRST CALL+ POLICY AT LEGCO

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE ASKED AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TOMORROW WHETHER IT WILL CONSIDER CHANGING ITS +PORT OF FIRST CALL+ POLICY WITH REGARD TO VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

THE QUESTION WILL BE ASKED BY THE HON. HO KAM FAI, UNOFFICIAL MEMBER +IN VIEW OF THE INCREASING DIFFICULTIES IN RESETTLING THE REFUGEES AND INDICATIONS THAT MANY ARE SIMPLY ECONOMIC ADVENTURERS.+

MR HO'S QUESTION WILL BE AMONG SIX QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS ON A NUMBER OF MATTERS.

HONG KONG'S TRAFFIC PROBLEM WILL BE TAKEN UP BY THE HON. ANDREW SO, WHO WILL ASK WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT HAS ANY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO RELIEVE +THE SERIOUS TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN THE MAJOR BOTTLENECKS+ ON ROADS DURING RUSH HOURS.

THE GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO BE ASKED BY THE HON. WONG LAM IF IT WILL CONSIDER MAKING IT COMPULSORY FOR ALL OCEAN-GOING VESSELS ENTERING AND LEAVING HONG KONG WATERS TO EMPLOY QUALIFIED HARBOUR PILOTS, IN ORDER TO REDUCE NAVIGATION ACCIDENTS.

A STATEMENT WILL BE SOUGHT FROM THE GOVERNMENT BY THE HON. PETER C. WONG ON THE PROGRESS BEING MADE IN RE-CLASSIFYING SCHOOL HIRE VANS DESIGNED TO CARRY MORE THAN SEVEN ADULT PASSENGERS AS PRIVATE LIGHT BUSES, THUS ENABLING THEM TO CARRY MORE SCHOOL PASSENGERS.

THE TWO OTHER QUESTIONS, WILL CONCERN SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION UNDER THE SUPPLEMENTARY MEDICAL PROFESSIONS ORDINANCE, AND THE USE OF THE METRIC SYSTEM IN HONG KONG.

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MAIL DELAY FROM AUSTRALIA

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SURFACE MAIL RECEIVED BY THE POST OFFICE ON NOVEMBER 19, FROM WESTERN AUSTRALIA WAS APPARENTLY SUBJECTED TO CONSIDERABLE DELAY IN TRANSIT PRIOR TO DELIVERY BY THE SHIPPING COMPANY TO THE HONG KONG POST OFFICE, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE POST OFFICE ANNOUNCED TODAY (TUESDAY).

+EXAMINATION OF THE POSTMARKS ON THE MAIL ITEMS REVEALED THAT THEY WERE POSTED FROM THE END OF MAY ONWARDS. INVESTIGATIONS ARE BEING CONDUCTED TO FIND OUT THE CAUSE OF DELAY,+ THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES FOR OCTOBER 1981

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THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT TODAY PUBLISHED THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES FOR OCTOBER 1981.

THE NEW CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A) AND THE NEW CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (B) FOR OCTOBER 1981 WERE 124 AND 123 RESPECTIVELY, EACH BEING 3 POINTS OR 2.5 PER CENT HIGHER THAN THAT FOR THE PRECEDING MONTH. WHEN COMPARED WITH THE CORRESPONDING MONTH IN 1980, THE NEW C.P.I. (A) INCREASED BY 18 POINTS OR 17 PER CENT AND THE NEW C.P.I. (B) BY 17 POINTS OR 16 PER CENT.

THE THREE-POINT INCREASE IN BOTH THE NEW C.P.I. (A) AND C.P.I. (B) IN OCTOBER WAS DUE MAINLY TO HIGHER FOOD PRICES, ESPECIALLY FOR FRESH VEGETABLES, TOGETHER WITH HIGHER RENTS IN PRIVATE DWELLINGS, AND UPWARD MOVEMENTS IN BOTH SCHOOL FEES AND TEXTBOOK PRICES FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR OF 1981/82.

THE NEW C.P.I. (A) AND C.P.I. (B) ARE BASED ON THE EXPENDITURE PATTERNS OF 50 PER CENT AND 30 PER CENT, RESPECTIVELY, OF URBAN HOUSEHOLDS IN HONG KONG, WHICH WERE DERIVED FROM THE 1979/80 HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE SURVEY. AT THAT TIME, THE NEW C.P.I. (A) REFERRED TO HOUSEHOLDS SPENDING BETWEEN \$1 000 AND \$3 499 A MONTH AND THE NEW C.P.I. (B) TO HOUSEHOLDS SPENDING BETWEEN \$3 500 AND \$6 499 A MONTH.

THE INDEXES FOR OCTOBER 1981 IN RESPECT OF THE NINE COMMODITY/SERVICE SECTIONS IN THE TWO CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES ARE GIVEN BELOW, TOGETHER WITH THOSE FOR SEPTEMBER 1981 AND OCTOBER 1980.

(AVERAGE DURING THE PERIOD
OCTOBER 1979 TO SEPTEMBER 1980 = 100)

SECTION	NEW C.P.I. (A)			NEW C.P.I. (B)		
	OCT 80	SEP 81	OCT 81	OCT 80	SEP 81	OCT 81
FOODSTUFFS	106	125	129	106	125	128
HOUSING	104	116	119	105	116	119
FUEL AND LIGHT	109	138	139	109	138	139
ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AND TOBACCO (FOR HOME CONSUMPTION)	104	117	117	104	116	116
CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR	104	114	117	104	113	118
DURABLE GOODS	101	108	108	101	109	109
MISCELLANEOUS GOODS	105	111	112	106	112	113

/TRANSPORT AND

TRANSPORT AND VEHICLES	110	134	134	109	130	131
SERVICES	108	120	124	107	119	123
ALL ITEMS	106	121	124	106	120	123

THE INDEX FOR FOODSTUFFS INCREASED BY 4 POINTS IN THE NEW C.P.I. (A) AND BY 3 POINTS IN THE NEW C.P.I. (B). INCREASES WERE RECORDED IN THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF FRESH VEGETABLES, RICE, AND MEALS BOUGHT IN RESTAURANTS. THE EFFECTS OF MOVEMENTS IN RETAIL PRICES OF OTHER FOOD ITEMS ON THE INDEX FOR FOODSTUFFS WERE INSIGNIFICANT.

THE INDEX FOR HOUSING INCREASED BY 3 POINTS IN BOTH THE NEW C.P.I. (A) AND C.P.I. (B) AS HIGHER RENT WAS RECORDED IN PRIVATE DWELLINGS.

THE INDEX FOR CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR INCREASED BY 3 POINTS IN THE NEW C.P.I. (A) AND BY 5 POINTS IN THE NEW C.P.I. (B) AS A RESULT OF HIGHER PRICES FOR MEN'S AND WOMEN'S OUTERCLOTHING.

THE INDEX FOR SERVICES INCREASED BY 4 POINTS IN BOTH THE NEW C.P.I. (A) AND C.P.I. (B) BECAUSE OF THE UPWARD MOVEMENTS IN BOTH SCHOOL FEES AND TEXTBOOK PRICES FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR OF 1981/82.

PRICE MOVEMENTS IN OTHER SECTIONS WERE INSIGNIFICANT.

DETAILS OF THESE PRICE MOVEMENTS ARE GIVEN IN THE +CONSUMER PRICE INDEX REPORT+ FOR OCTOBER 1981, SOON ON SALE AT \$2 PER COPY AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, GROUND FLOOR, CONNAUGHT PLACE, HONG KONG.

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WATER PUMP SYSTEM FOR VILLAGERS

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A WATER PUMP SYSTEM HAS BEEN BUILT IN PAI MIN KOK VILLAGE IN SHAM TSENG, TSUEN WAN, ENABLING VILLAGERS TO HAVE THEIR OWN SUPPLY.

BEFORE, VILLAGERS USED A STANDPIPE FOR DRINKING WATER AND WELL WATER FOR WASHING AND OTHER PURPOSES.

TSUEN WAN TOWN MANAGER, DR JAMES HAYES, WILL OFFICIATE AT A SWITCH-ON CEREMONY TOMORROW (WEDNESDAY) AT 4 PM.

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE WELCOME TO COVER THE CEREMONY. A GOVERNMENT VEHICLE WILL LEAVE KOWLOON PUBLIC PIER AT 2.30 PM.

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BUS DEPOT SUB-GROUP HOLDS ITS LAST MEETING

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THE FINAL MEETING OF THE GROUP SET UP TO REVIEW THE EXISTING AND FUTURE PARKING AND MAINTENANCE FACILITIES OF KMB WAS HELD TODAY (TUESDAY).

THE GROUP HAD HELD SIX FORMAL MEETINGS AND A NUMBER OF VISITS TO KMB DEPOTS SINCE IT WAS ESTABLISHED IN JUNE.

MEMBERSHIP COMPRISES OFFICIALS FROM SEVERAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, REPRESENTATIVES FROM KMB, TAC MEMBERS, AND TWO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

AT TODAY'S MEETING, MEMBERS AGREED TO RECOMMEND THAT KMB PURSUE A PROGRAMME THAT WILL ULTIMATELY REMOVE ALL OVERNIGHT PARKING OF BUSES FROM STREETS, AND WOULD PROVIDE PARKING ACCOMMODATION FOR THE WHOLE FLEET IN DEPOTS, AND IN CERTAIN ENVIRONMENTALLY ACCEPTABLE TERMINI.

AT PRESENT THE CAPACITY OF KMB'S EXISTING PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY DEPOTS IS SUFFICIENT TO ACCOMMODATE LESS THAN HALF THE TOTAL BUS FLEET. ABOUT A QUARTER OF THE FLEET IS PARKED OVERNIGHT IN TERMINI, AND THE REMAINDER ON STREETS AROUND THE EXISTING DEPOTS AT KWUN TONG, LAI CHI KOK, TUEN MUN AND SHA TIN.

THIS SITUATION WILL IMPROVE CONSIDERABLY IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS WHEN TEMPORARY SITES AT CHA KWO LING, SHEK WU HUI AND YUEN LONG BECOME OPERATIONAL, BUT THE SUB-GROUP'S RECOMMENDATION WILL ENSURE THAT THE IMPROVEMENTS ARE SUSTAINED SO THAT THE FLEET, WHICH IS ESTIMATED TO GROW TO 3 000 BUSES BY THE EARLY 1990'S IS PROPERLY ACCOMMODATED OFF-STREET, AND IS ACCESSIBLE FOR CLEARING AND MAINTENANCE.

THE EFFECTS ON KMB'S COSTS OF THE RECOMMENDED DEPOT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME WILL BE RELATIVELY SMALL, AND SUBSTANTIALLY LESS THAN THE PROGRAMME PREVIOUSLY ENVISAGED, AS THE USE OF CERTAIN TERMINI FOR THE OVERNIGHT PARKING OF, EVENTUALLY, 1 000 BUSES HAS NOW BEEN RECOMMENDED.

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PHONE DIRECTORY ON SALE

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THE SECOND ISSUE OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT TELEPHONE DIRECTORY FOR 1981, CONTAINING MORE THAN 15 000 LISTINGS, IS NOW ON SALE.

THE DIRECTORY, PRODUCED IN A NEW TYPOGRAPHIC STYLE, LISTS THE TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF THE STAFF IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND A NUMBER OF OTHER OFFICIAL BODIES.

THE PUBLICATION IS AVAILABLE AT \$12 PER COPY FROM THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GPO BUILDING, CONNAUGHT PLACE, HONG KONG.

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TWO LAND SITES FOR SALE
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TWO SITES FOR PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES ARE BEING OFFERED FOR SALE BY TENDER BY THE CROWN LANDS AND SURVEY OFFICE.

THE FIRST LOT, WITH AN AREA OF ABOUT 1 532 SQUARE METRES, IS IN ARGYLE STREET.

THE SITE CARRIES A BUILDING COVENANT OF \$7.3 MILLION AND SHOULD BE DEVELOPED BEFORE JUNE 30, 1985.

AND, UNDER THE SALES CONDITION, THE SUCCESSFUL TENDERER FOR THIS SITE MUST ALSO BUILD FOR THE GOVERNMENT, FREE OF CHARGE, 40 FLATS IN TWO RESIDENTIAL BLOCKS ON ANOTHER SITE IN FORFAR ROAD.

THE SECOND SITE, LOCATED IN TAI TAM ROAD, MEASURES ABOUT 21 200 SQUARE METRES. CARRYING A BUILDING COVENANT OF \$122 MILLION, IT SHOULD BE DEVELOPED BEFORE MARCH 31, 1986.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR TENDERS IS JANUARY 15, 1982.

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

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WORK STARTS AT SAI KUNG SPORTSGROUND
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THE FIRST FULL-SIZED SPORTSGROUND SPECIALLY BUILT FOR COMPETITIVE SPORTS IN SAI KUNG WILL BE READY NEXT SUMMER, SAID THE DIRECTOR OF NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES, MR JIMMY SWEETMAN.

SPEAKING AT THE FOUNDATION STONE-LAYING CEREMONY OF THE SAI KUNG TANG SHIU KIN SPORTSGROUND TODAY (TUESDAY), MR SWEETMAN SAID THE SPORTS CENTRE WOULD BE READY IN TIME TO STAGE SOME OF THE FIXTURES FOR NEXT YEAR'S INTER-DISTRICT SPORTS.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THIS YEAR, SAI KUNG HAD WON THE INAUGURAL CHAMPIONSHIP FOR THE INTER-DISTRICT FOOTBALL COMPETITION INITIATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR NEW TERRITORIES EVEN WITHOUT THE ADVANTAGE OF A +HOME+ GROUND THIS YEAR.

+WITH THE PROPER FACILITIES FOR MATCH PRACTICE AND TRAINING NEXT YEAR, I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE SAI KUNG SPORTS ASSOCIATION WILL BE ABLE TO BUILD ON THIS SUCCESS AND TO IMPROVE STILL FURTHER ON PERFORMANCE FOR OTHER SPORTS,+ SAID MR SWEETMAN.

MR SWEETMAN SAID PLANS WERE ALSO BEING DRAWN UP FOR A SWIMMING POOL, SQUASH COURTS AND TENNIS COURTS FOR THE DISTRICT.

/+A SITE

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+A SITE FOR A COMPLEX TO HOUSE THESE FACILITIES WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF THE SPORTSGROUND IS NOW BEING INVESTIGATED,+ HE ADDED.

MR SWEETMAN EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT WITH CONTINUED SUPPORT FROM THE SAI KUNG SPORTS ASSOCIATION, THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT BOARD AND THE RECREATION AND SPORT SERVICE, THEY COULD WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE THE SAI KUNG TANG SHIU KIN SPORTS GROUND A TRAINING GROUND FOR FUTURE CHAMPIONS AND TO DO JUSTICE TO THE NAME OF THEIR GENEROUS BENEFACTOR.

THE SPORTSGROUND COST \$6 MILLION, OF WHICH \$3 MILLION WAS GIVEN BY SIR SHIU-KIN .

THE TIMELY AND GENEROUS DONATION HAD MADE A REALITY OF THE PROJECT, MR SWEETMAN SAID.

BEFORE LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THE SPORTSGROUND, THE SECRETARY FOR NEW TERRITORIES, MR DAVID AKERS-JONES ALSO PAID TRIBUTE TO SIR SHIU-KIN FOR HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROJECT.

SIR SHIU-KIN'S CHARITABLE DONATIONS TO COMMUNITY AND WELFARE PROJECTS IN HONG KONG THIS FINANCIAL YEAR TOTALLED MORE THAN \$22 MILLION, MR AKERS-JONES SAID.

+THE LION'S SHARE OF THIS HAS GONE TOWARDS PROVIDING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES= MAJOR DONATIONS INCLUDE A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THIS SPORTSGROUND, ANOTHER IN TUEN MUN, AND A NEW INDOOR GAMES HALL IN NORTH KWAI CHUNG.

+THESE CONTRIBUTIONS GIVE TREMENDOUS ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT IN HELPING TO ACHIEVE THE TARGETS SET FOR PROVIDING THE FACILITIES NEEDED BY OUR RAPIDLY GROWING COMMUNITIES AND I HOPE THAT OTHERS WILL FOLLOW HIS SUPREME EXAMPLE.

+THIS DISTRICT SPORTSGROUND IS FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF 6 000 SCHOOL CHILDREN AND 30 000 RESIDENTS WITHIN COMFORTABLE WALKING DISTANCE OF THE SAI KUNG TOWN AND FILLS A LONG-FELT NEED,+ HE SAID.

SIR SHIU-KIN WAS PRESENTED WITH A SILVER PLATE BY MR SWEETMAN, WHILE MR AKERS-JONES ACCEPTED A TROWEL FROM SIR SHIU-KIN.

ALSO ATTENDING THE CEREMONY WERE THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (SOUTH REGION) OF NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES, MR JAMES WILSON= THE DISTRICT OFFICER OF SAI KUNG, MR CHAN SUI-JEUNG= THE CHIEF ENGINEER OF ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, MR C.S. LEE= THE CHAIRMAN OF SAI KUNG RURAL COMMITTEE, MR CHUNG POON= AND THE CHAIRMAN OF HANG HAU RURAL COMMITTEE, MR YAU KEI.

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SEMINAR ON INDUSTRIAL SAFETY
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FACTORY SUPERVISORS AND FOREMEN WERE URGED TODAY (TUESDAY) TO ENSURE THAT WORKERS OBSERVE SAFETY RULES AND TAKE THE NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS WHEN AT WORK.

+THE SUPERVISORS AND FOREMEN MAY HAVE ACCESS TO HIGHER LEVEL MANAGEMENT AND, THEY SHOULD THUS SUGGEST MEASURES TO MAKE THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT SAFE,+ MR CHAN KAM-CHUEN SAID AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY SEMINAR FOR EMPLOYEES IN HONG KONG, HELD AT THE CHINESE YMCA AT WATERLOO ROAD.

HE SAID THAT INDUSTRIAL SAFETY WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EMPLOYERS, EMPLOYEES AND THE GOVERNMENT.

+WITHOUT THE FULLEST COOPERATION AND COMPLETE INVOLVEMENT OF THESE THREE PARTIES, NO MOVEMENT TOWARDS MAKING SAFETY A RULE OF LIFE IS LIKELY TO SUCCEED,+ HE SAID.

AMONG OTHER SPEAKERS AT THE SEMINAR WERE MR ANTHONY LAI, CHIEF SAFETY OFFICER OF THE HONG KONG UNITED DOCKYARDS LTD.= MR LEE WING-KIN, ENGINEER, HONG KONG ELECTRIC CO. LTD.= MR CHOW WING-CHEONG, DIVISIONAL OFFICER, FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT= MR YIP YUK-LUN, ACTING CHIEF FACTORY INSPECTOR= MR CHIU KAI-SUN, INDUSTRIAL HYGIENIST AND MR WOO KIANG-YIU, ACTING LABOUR OFFICER.

THE SEMINAR, ORIGINALLY TO BE HELD FOR ONE DAY, WILL BE HELD FOR A SECOND DAY, DUE TO OVER-SUBSCRIPTION.

A LABOUR DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID, +BECAUSE OF THE OVERWHELMING APPLICATIONS FROM EMPLOYEES, THE SEMINAR HAS TO BE EXTENDED TO TWO DAYS AND THAT THIS SIGNIFICANT PARTICIPATION SHOWS THAT EMPLOYEES IN HONG KONG ARE AWARE OF INDUSTRIAL SAFETY.

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POP CONCERT AT TSUEN WAN ARTS FESTIVAL
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ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FOURTH TSUEN WAN ARTS FESTIVAL WILL BE A POP CONCERT ON JANUARY 28 NEXT YEAR, FEATURING FOUR OF HONG KONG'S TOP SINGERS, ELIZA CHAN, JOHNNY YIP, DING MACARDO AND ANNABELLE, WHO WILL SING A WIDE SELECTION OF SONGS IN CANTONESE AND ENGLISH, IN THE TSUEN WAN TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM, STARTING AT 7.30 PM.

THE TSUEN WAN ARTS FESTIVAL, TO BE HELD BETWEEN JANUARY 22 AND FEBRUARY 13, 1982, IS JOINTLY PRESENTED BY THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT BOARD, THE TSUEN WAN TOWN HALL, THE TSUEN WAN CULTURE AND RECREATION CO-ORDINATING ASSOCIATION AND THE MUSIC OFFICE.

TICKETS FOR THE CONCERT AT \$10, \$20 AND \$30 ARE ON SALE THROUGH POSTAL BOOKINGS UNTIL DECEMBER 9.

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LOGO SOUGHT FOR TAI PO DISTRICT BOARD
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TAI PO DISTRICT BOARD IS LOOKING FOR A LOGO AND HAS PROVIDED \$4 000 FOR A DESIGN COMPETITION.

ANY HONG KONG RESIDENT CAN ENTER THE COMPETITION AND THERE IS NO LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL ENTRIES.

DESIGNS SHOULD SHOW DISTRICT CHARACTERISTICS OR THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD.

ALL ENTRIES MUST BE SUBMITTED BEFORE DECEMBER 15 TO TAI PO DISTRICT OFFICE.

THE WINNER WILL RECEIVE A CASH PRIZE OF \$3 000 WHILE FIVE RUNNERS-UP WILL BE AWARDED \$200 EACH.

JUDGES WILL BE DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS. RESULTS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN JANUARY NEXT YEAR, AND WINNERS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY LETTER.

THE SELECTED LOGO WILL APPEAR ON DISTRICT BOARD LETTERHEADS AND OTHER PUBLICITY MATERIALS.

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DOLL COTS FOR DISABLED CHILDREN
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TWELVE DOLL COTS MADE BY MEMBERS OF THE LADIES SECTION OF THE PRISON OFFICERS' CLUB WERE TODAY DONATED TO ABOUT 150 DISABLED CHILDREN AT THE DUCHESS OF KENT CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL AT SANDY BAY, IN CONNECTION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS.

DR LOUIS HSU, MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT OF THE HOSPITAL, RECEIVED THE COTS FROM MRS BEVERLEY GARNER, PRESIDENT OF THE CLUB'S LADIES SECTION.

THE DOLL COTS WERE MADE BY WIVES OF PRISON OFFICERS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE LADIES SECTION.

THE HOSPITAL, SUBVENTED BY THE GOVERNMENT, IS RUN UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE RELIEF OF DISABLED CHILDREN AND HAS 200 BEDS.

FOLLOWING THE PRESENTATION OF THE COTS, MRS GARNER, ACCOMPANIED BY DR HSU AND OTHER OFFICIALS OF THE HOSPITAL, SAW THE VARIOUS SECTIONS AND FACILITIES AVAILABLE WITHIN THE ORGANISATION.

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