DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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$25 MILLION PAYOUT TO TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS
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TOTAL PAYMENTS FOR DEATH AND INJURY GRANTS UNDER THE +NO FAULT+ TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS ASSISTANCE (TAVA) SCHEME HAVE PASSED THE $25 MILLION MARK.

THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT HAS PAID OUT MORE THAN $25.2 MILLION AS QUICK CASH RELIEF TO 6 654 CASES SINCE THE SCHEME STARTED IN MAY 1979.

MR SIU KING-CHIU, HEAD OF THE TAVA SECTION, SAID TODAY (MONDAY) ANOTHER $41 000 HAD BEEN AUTHORISED FOR PAYMENT TO 110 CASES AND NOW AWAIT COLLECTION AT THE DEPARTMENT.

MR SIU SAID GRANTS ALREADY MADE WERE PAID TO 596 CASES INVOLVING DEATH, AND TO 6 058 CASES INVOLVING INJURIES WHICH HAD CAUSED AT LEAST SEVEN DAYS' LOSS OF EARNING CAPACITY.

PAYMENTS FOR DEATH GRANTS AMOUNTED TO OVER $4.2 MILLION, HE SAID, WHILE INJURY PAYMENTS TOTALLED $21 MILLION, OF WHICH $5 MILLION WERE FOR FURTHER PAYMENTS TO THOSE WHO REQUIRED EXTENDED SICK LEAVE.

MR SIU SAID THE HIGHEST PAYMENT SO FAR WAS $26 100 IN ONE FATAL CASE, WHILE OTHER PAYMENTS RANGED FROM $800 TO $25 040.

+AT PRESENT, 323 APPLICATIONS ARE BEING PROCESSED AND THE APPLICANTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO RECEIVE PAYMENTS SHORTLY,+ HE SAID.

THE TAVA SCHEME IS NON-MEANS TESTED AND PROVIDES QUICK CASH RELIEF FOR TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS OR THEIR DEPENDANTS REGARDLESS OF WHO WAS AT FAULT IN CAUSING THE ACCIDENT.

UNDER THE SCHEME, TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS MUST BE REPORTED TO THE POLICE.

PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ACCIDENTS CAN APPLY WITHIN SIX MONTHS OF THE INCIDENT AT THE DEPARTMENT'S TAVA SECTION ON THE 14TH FLOOR OF THE WORLD TRADE CENTRE AT 280 GLOUCESTER ROAD, HONG KONG (TEL. NOS. 5-779421 AND 5-7903650).

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MORE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY NEEDED

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THE COMMISSIONER OF INDUSTRY, MR LAWRENCE MILLS, TODAY (MONDAY) EMPHASISED THE CONTINUOUS NEED TO INTRODUCE NEW SKILLS, MORE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY, AND EQUIPMENT INTO HONG KONG TO ENSURE THAT LOCAL INDUSTRY RESPONDS QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY TO THE CHANGING DEMANDS AND CHALLENGES OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET PLACE.

MR MILLS WAS ADDRESSING THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY OF HONG KONG OXYGEN'S NEW AIR SEPARATION PLANT AT JUNK BAY, WHICH IS THE MOST MODERN OF ITS KIND IN THE WORLD.

CONGRATULATING THE COMPANY'S MANAGEMENT, THE ENGINEERS AND TECHNICIANS FOR BRINGING THE LATEST TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS FIELD TO HONG KONG, MR MILLS SAID: +ALL THIS HAS A SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR ME AS THE COMMISSIONER OF INDUSTRY, BECAUSE IT DEMONSTRATES NOT ONLY THE GROWING SOPHISTICATION OF LOCAL INDUSTRY AND THE FORWARD THINKING ATTITUDE OF OUR ENTREPRENEURS BUT ALSO THEIR CONFIDENCE IN THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG INDUSTRY.+

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE NEW PLANT IS SEPARATING AND PURIFYING ARGON (ONE OF THE RARE GASES THAT EXISTS IN AIR) FOR THE FIRST TIME - ADDING TO THE COMPANY'S RANGE SERVING HONG KONG'S INDUSTRY AND SOCIETY. UP TO NOW, ARGON HAS HAD TO BE IMPORTED.

UNDERLINING THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TOWARDS INDUSTRY, HE SAID : +THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO A NEW INVOLVEMENT IN ASSISTING INDUSTRY'S EFFORTS TO DIVERSIFY AND MOVE UP-MARKET. BUT IT REMAINS A POLICY OF INVOLVEMENT, NOT INTERFERENCE. THE ULTIMATE DECISIONS AND THE IN-PUT HAVE TO COME FROM INDUSTRY ITSELF.+

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'PAI LAU' OPENED TO MARK VILLAGE RESITING

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THE FORBEARANCE OF RESIDENTS OF A NEW TERRITORIES VILLAGE, WHO CO-OPERATED WITH THE GOVERNMENT WHEN THE TUEN MUN HIGHWAY WAS BEING BUILT NEARBY, WAS PRAISED TODAY (MONDAY).

THE VILLAGERS LIVE IN SHAM TSENG, WHERE A MASSIVE VIADUCT WAS CONSTRUCTED AS PART OF THE HIGHWAY PROJECT.

THEY CONTINUED TO LIVE IN THEIR HOUSES WHILE THE WORK WENT ON, BUT WERE EVENTUALLY RESITED UNDER THE GOVERNMENT'S VILLAGE REMOVAL SCHEME.

TO MARK THEIR CO-OPERATION, AND COMPLETION OF THE RESITING OF SHAM TSENG VILLAGE, A 'PAI LAU' (DECORATIVE ARCHWAY) WAS TODAY OPENED IN THE VILLAGE BY TSUEN WAN TOWN MANAGER, DR JAMES HAYES.

THE 'PAI LAU' IS EIGHT METRES HIGH AND NINE METRES WIDE. IT IS SITUATED AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE VILLAGE.

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SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY, DR HAYES DESCRIBED CONSTRUCTION OF THE VIADUCT AS AN +EXCITING PROJECT+ WHICH INVOLVED BUILDING A 30 METRES HIGH MAJOR STRUCTURE ACROSS THE VALLEY LINKING ROAD WORKS ON THE HILLS ON EACH SIDE.

THE WORKS, HE SAID, HAD TO BE CONSTRUCTED VERY CLOSE TO THE OLD HOUSES AND HENCE CAUSED A GREAT DEAL OF NUISANCE AND INCONVENIENCE TO VILLAGERS.

+WE GREATLY APPRECIATED THEIR FORBEARANCE DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME AND I WOULD LIKE TO REMIND EVERYONE HERE TODAY THAT THIS CO-OPERATION WAS GREATLY VALUED BY THE GOVERNMENT,+ HE SAID.

DR HAYES ALSO ASSURED THAT MORE EXPANSION WORKS, SUCH AS THE REPROVISIONING OF A MARKET AND A RECREATION GROUND, WOULD BE CARRIED OUT IN THE VILLAGE IN DUE COURSE.

+DISCUSSIONS ABOUT WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN ARE CONTINUING IN THE CONCERNED GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, AND LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS AND FIRMS WILL BE CONSULTED,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID VILLAGERS COULD LOOK FORWARD TO IMPROVED HOUSING AND MORE FACILITIES WHEN THE PROPOSALS WERE FINALISED AND APPROVED, AND WORK WAS STARTED TO IMPLEMENT THEM BY STAGES.

ALSO OFFICIATING AT TODAY'S CEREMONY WERE THE CHAIRMAN OF TSUEN WAN RURAL COMMITTEE, MR CHAN LAU-FONG= LOCAL COMMUNITY LEADER, MR CHAN PO-FONG= AND THE VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVE, MR FU YUEN-HUNG.

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A TREAT FOR LUNAR NEW YEAR

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MUSIC AND GAIETY WILL FILL STATUE SQUARE ON SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 8) WHEN A LUNAR NEW YEAR ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMME TAKES PLACE.

IN THE FORM OF A VARIETY SHOW, IT HAS BEEN SPECIALLY ORGANISED TO CELEBRATE THE YEAR OF COCKEREL AND TO PROVIDE A FREE FESTIVITY PROGRAMME TO THE PUBLIC.

THE SHOW WILL BE PRESENTED BY THE HONGKONG AND SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION, THE HONG KONG ARTS FESTIVAL SOCIETY, THE URBAN COUNCIL AND THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES.

THE PROGRAMME, WHICH WILL START AT 2.15 PM AND LAST UNTIL 4.15 PM, WILL FEATURE A CONCERT BY A CHINESE FOLK MUSIC ORCHESTRA, TRADITIONAL DANCES AND FOLK SONGS IN ADDITION TO DRAGON AND LION DANCES.

FREE ADMISSION TICKETS TO THE SHOW WILL BE AVAILABLE ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS, FROM TOMORROW (TUESDAY) AT THE HONG KONG ARTS FESTIVAL BOX OFFICE, CITY HALL, WHICH WILL BE OPEN FROM 10.30 AM TO 8.00 PM THROUGHOUT THE LUNAR NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS (FEBRUARY 5 - 8), AND FROM TOM LEE PIANO CO. LTD. ON TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY (FEBRUARY 3 AND 4).

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ACDO (WONG TAI SIN) RETIRES

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THE DIRECTOR OF HOME AFFAIRS, MR J.G. BARNES, TODAY (MONDAY) PRESENTED A RETIREMENT GIFT TO MR LAU KWONG-TO, WHO HAS SERVED THE GOVERNMENT FOR 29 YEARS.

MR LAU, EXECUTIVE OFFICER I AND ASSISTANT CITY DISTRICT OFFICER (LIAISON) FOR THE WONG TAI SIN DISTRICT WILL GO ON PRE-RETIREMENT LEAVE NEXT WEEK.

SINCE JOINING THE CIVIL SERVICE IN APRIL 1952 AS A TEMPORARY CLERK, MR LAU WORKED HIS WAY THROUGH VARIOUS CLERICAL AND LIAISON GRADES TO BE APPOINTED EXECUTIVE OFFICER I IN MAY 1972.

DURING HIS CAREER WITH THE GOVERNMENT HE HAS WORKED IN VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS INCLUDING THE KOWLOON CANTON RAILWAY, SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND HOME AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT WITH APPOINTMENTS IN KOWLOON CITY AND WONG TAI SIN.

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LUNAR NEW YEAR POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS

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THE POSTMASTER GENERAL ANNOUNCED THERE WOULD BE NO MAIL DELIVERIES ON LUNAR NEW YEAR DAY (THURSDAY) AND ON SATURDAY (FEBRUARY 7).

HOWEVER, THERE WILL BE ONE DELIVERY ON FRIDAY (FEBRUARY 6) AND ONE ON SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 8).

HE ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT ALL POST OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED FROM FEBRUARY 5 TO 7. HOWEVER, 33 POST OFFICES, INCLUDING THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, ON HONG KONG ISLAND= KOWLOON CENTRAL AND TSIM SHA TSUI POST OFFICES IN KOWLOON= AND TSUEN WAN AND TAI PO POST OFFICES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, WILL BE OPEN FROM 9 AM TO NOON ON SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 8).

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MARINE HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS

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THE MARINE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (MONDAY) THAT ITS OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED DURING THE LUNAR NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS (FEBRUARY 5, 6, 7 AND 8) WITH THE EXCEPTIONS OF:

* THE PORT COMMUNICATION CENTRE WHICH WILL BE OPEN CONTINUOUSLY=

* MACAU FERRY TERMINAL UNIT OFFICES WHICH WILL BE OPEN FROM 7.30 AM TO 1.30 AM THROUGHOUT THE HOLIDAYS=

* THE VICTORIA SMALL CRAFT LICENSING OFFICE WHICH WILL BE OPEN FROM 9 AM TO 11 AM ON SATURDAY (FEBRUARY 7)=

* THE ENTRY AND CLEARANCE OFFICE WHICH WILL BE OPEN FROM 9 AM TO 11.30 AM ON FRIDAY (FEBRUARY 6)= AND

* PUBLIC CARGO WORKING AREAS AT WAN CHAI, YAU MA TEI, KWUN TONG, TSUEN WAN AND WESTERN DISTRICT WHICH WILL BE CLOSED ON THURSDAY AND FRIDAY (FEBRUARY 5 AND 6). HOWEVER, VESSELS WITH VALID PERMITS MAY BERTH AT THESE AREAS DURING THE HOLIDAYS.

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