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GSP DECISION REGRETTED

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THE DECISION OF THE UNITED STATES TO WITHDRAW GENERALISED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES ADVANTAGES FOR CERTAIN HONG KONG PRODUCTS IS REGRETTABLE BUT NOT A DISASTER.

THIS WAS SAID TODAY (SATURDAY) BY MR K.Y. YEUNG, ACTING SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, WHO WAS COMMENTING ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT. HOWEVER, HE ADDED THAT THE FACT THAT KOREA, TAIWAN AND SINGAPORE, HAD ALSO BEEN GRADUATED MEANT THAT THE BALANCE OF COMPETITIVENESS IN THE REGION WAS STILL MAINTAINED.

MR YEUNG SAID THAT HE WAS DISAPPOINTED BY THE DECISION OF THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION TO GRADUATE HONG KONG.

"WE MADE STRONG ARGUMENTS AT SENIOR LEVELS WITHIN THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION. IN THE PAST IT HAS BEEN VERY SUPPORTIVE OF OUR OPEN MARKET POLICIES.

"GRADUATING AN OPEN MARKET LIKE HONG KONG WILL SEND THE WRONG MESSAGE TO TRADING PARTNERS OF THE U.S. AND IT WILL REMOVE AN IMPORTANT INCENTIVE TO OTHERS TO OPEN THEIR MARKETS," HE SAID.

MR YEUNG NOTED THAT THE OVERALL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF GRADUATION ON HONG KONG WOULD NOT BE SERIOUSLY DAMAGING AS ONLY ABOUT 15 PER CENT OF HONG KONG'S EXPORTS TO THE U.S. BENEFITTED FROM GSP. IN 1986 HONG KONG BUSINESSES WERE SAVED BY ABOUT HK$530 MILLION IN TARIFFS THAT WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN PAYABLE.

"EVEN THOUGH WITHDRAWAL WILL NOT HAVE A SERIOUS EFFECT ON HONG KONG'S EXPORT, WE HAD HOPED THAT THE U.S. WOULD ACCEPT THAT WE ARE DIFFERENT FROM OTHER ASIAN EXPORTING NATIONS - OUR MARKETS ARE WIDE OPEN AND WE HAVE NO BARRIERS TO AMERICAN EXPORTERS.

HE EXPLAINED THAT GSP IS A DONOR SCHEME WHEREBY IMPORTING COUNTRIES ACCORD DUTY-FREE TREATMENT TO CERTAIN PRODUCTS TO ASSIST INDUSTRIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. HONG KONG HAS VALUED ITS STATUS AS A BENEFICIARY OF U.S. GSP WHICH HAS HELPED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDUSTRY AND DIVERSIFICATION FROM TEXTILE AND GARMENT MANUFACTURE.

THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT MOUNTED A CONSIDERABLE EFFORT TO PUT ACROSS ITS CASE IN THE UNITED STATES, SAID MR YEUNG, HOWEVER THE REALITIES OF PRESENT DOMESTIC POLITICAL PRESSURES HAD TO BE FACED.

THE MAIN PRODUCTS WHICH WILL BE AFFECTED FROM THE DECISION ARE TOYS AND SPORTS EQUIPMENT, TELEPHONE SETS, CERTAIN HOUSEHOLD ITEMS SUCH AS ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES AND COOKING UTENSILS, DATA PROCESSING MACHINES, CERTAIN TYPES OF ELECTRONIC RECORDING AND COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT AND WOODEN FURNITURE ITEMS.

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RICE CONTROL SCHEME PLAYS VITAL ROLE

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HONG KONG HAS VARIOUS SOURCES OF SUPPLY FOR THE HUGE AMOUNT OF RICE IT CONSUMES, INCLUDING CHINA, THAILAND, AUSTRALIA AND THE UNITED STATES.

RICE IMPORTING IS SUBJECT TO CONTROL UNDER A CONTROL SCHEME OPERATED BY THE TRADE DEPARTMENT. WITHIN THE SCHEME, THERE ARE 46 REGISTERED RICE STOCKHOLDERS, INCLUDING TWO ADDITIONAL IMPORTERS SELECTED BY BALLOT ON THURSDAY.

ACCORDING TO MRS SHIRLEY Y.S. LAU, TRADE OFFICER AT THE TRADE DEPARTMENT IN CHARGE OF THE RICE CONTROL SCHEME, EXPERIENCE IN THE TRADE IS AN IMPORTANT CRITERION WHEN THE NUMBERS OF IMPORTERS IS EXPANDED.

THIS IS IN LINE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE FIRST 29 RICE STOCKHOLDERS IN 1955 WHEN THE SCHEME WAS INTRODUCED.

"THE NUMBER OF RICE STOCKHOLDERS WAS INCREASED TO 38 IN 1957 AND THEY, AMONG THEMSELVES, SHARED THE 900 UNITS OF RICE QUOTA AT 100 TONNES PER UNIT PER QUARTER," MRS LAU SAID.

HOWEVER, SINCE A RESHUFFLE OF THE QUOTA ALLOCATION IN 1976 THE QUANTITY OF RICE TO BE IMPORTED INTO HONG KONG PER QUARTER FOR LOCAL CONSUMPTION IS SUBJECT TO A QUOTA WHICH IS DIVIDED INTO 1,000 UNITS AT 90 TONNES PER UNIT.

STATISTICS SHOW THAT WITH CHANGING EATING HABITS THE CONSUMPTION OF RICE PER CAPITA HAS DROPPED CONSIDERABLY, FROM 120 KILOGRAMS PER YEAR IN 1961 TO 65 IN 1986.

"THE IMPORT OF RICE TO HONG KONG HAS BEEN MAINTAINED AT AROUND 350,000 TONNES PER YEAR FOR THE PAST 10 YEARS, WHICH IS DUE TO THE GROWING POPULATION," MRS LAU SAID.

FINDINGS BY THE TRADE DEPARTMENT ALSO SHOW THAT WHILE HONG KONG PEOPLE HAVE BEEN EATING LESS RICE, MORE OF THEM HAVE BEEN CHANGING TO RICE OF HIGHER QUALITY, AS EVIDENCED BY THE GROWING POPULARITY IN RECENT YEARS OF THE MORE HIGHLY PRICED THAT "FRAGRANT" AND AUSTRALIAN "INGA".

"RICE IS STILL CONSIDERED A STAPLE FOODSTUFF AND THE GOVERNMENT, AS ADVISED BY THE RICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, SEES THE NEED TO CONTROL IT," MRS LAU SAID.

THE 13-MEMBER COMMITTEE, WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1974, ADVISES THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE ON THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE OPERATION OF THE RICE CONTROL SCHEME AND ON ALL ASPECTS OF THE RICE TRADE.

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IT ALSO CONSIDERS SUCH MATTERS CONCERNING THE IMPORT AND DISTRIBUTION OF RICE AS MAY BE REFERRED TO IT BY THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE AND MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS ACCORDINGLY.

THE COMMITTEE CONSISTS OF DIFFERENT GROUPS TO GIVE VARIED VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT.

AT PRESENT, MEMBERS INCLUDE THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE, AN ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF TRADE, A PRINCIPAL TRADE CONTROLS OFFICER OF THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT, RICE IMPORTERS, RICE WHOLESALERS, RICE RETAILERS, AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE CONSUMER SECTOR, LARGE RETAIL CHAINS, NON-RICE TRADERS AND PROFESSIONALS.

MRS LAU SAID THAT IN 1973-74, THERE WAS INTERNATIONAL SHORTAGE IN THE RICE SUPPLY, AND FOR A TIME THAILAND (A MAJOR SUPPLIER) BANNED RICE EXPORTS.

IMPORTERS WERE NOT ALWAYS ABLE TO SECURE ENOUGH RICE AND SOME WHOLESALERS AND RETAILERS ALSO HAD DIFFICULTIES IN OBTAINING SUPPLIES FROM IMPORTERS.

PRICES INCREASED AND THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF PROFITEERING BY THE TRADE.

"THERE WAS A NEED TO OVERSEE THE RICE TRADE AND TO SUPERVISE THE PROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RICE CONTROL SCHEME TO ENSURE THAT CONSUMERS' INTEREST WAS PROTECTED," MRS LAU SAID.

SHE ADDED THAT IT WAS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND THAT THE RICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE WAS SET UP.

THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED RICE STOCKHOLDERS REMAINED AT 38 UNTIL 1976 WHEN SEVEN ADDITIONAL RICE STOCKHOLDERS WERE REGISTERED.

EIGHTEEN UNITS WERE ALLOCATED BY BALLOT ON THURSDAY TO TWO ADDITIONAL RICE STOCKHOLDERS, AT NINE UNITS EACH.

OF THESE, SIX WERE UNALLOCATED UNITS OF THE TRADE DEPARTMENT RESULTING FROM THE RESHUFFLE OF THE QUOTA ALLOCATION SYSTEM IN 1976 AND 12 WERE RETURNED TO THE TRADE DEPARTMENT UPON THE CLOSURE OF BUSINESS OF ONE FORMER RICE STOCKHOLDER IN 1986.

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MORE CENTRES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN PIPELINE

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AN ADDITIONAL 19 CHILDREN AND YOUTH CENTRES SERVING OVER 20,000 MORE MEMBERS WILL COME INTO SERVICE IN 1988-89, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, SAID TODAY (SATURDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE HONG KONG YWCA BUTTERFLY ESTATE SOCIAL SERVICE CENTRE IN TUEN MUN, MRS WONG NOTED THAT THERE WERE NOW 185 CHILDREN AND YOUTH CENTRES WITH SOME 210,000 MEMBERS AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT SPENT MORE THAN $101.6 MILLION ON THIS SERVICE IN 1987-88.

"CHILDREN AND YOUTH CENTRES ARE SET UP ON A DISTRICT BASIS AT THE RATIO OF ONE CENTRE PER 20,000 POPULATION," MRS WONG SAID.

"THEIR AIM IS TO PROVIDE A WIDE RANGE OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTHS AGED BETWEEN SIX AND 24 TO MEET THEIR DEMANDS AND CATER FOR THEIR INTERESTS; TO GROOM THEIR LEADERSHIP QUALITIES; AS WELL AS TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS THEMSELVES, THEIR FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY IN THEIR GROWING UP.

"THROUGH PARTICIPATING AND PLANNING VARIOUS ACTIVITIES, THEY WILL LEARN TO SPEND THEIR LEISURE TIME MORE MEANINGFULLY AND WILL ACHIEVE A BALANCED SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND PERSONAL INTEGRITY SO THAT THEY WILL GROW UP AS LAW-ABIDING AND CIVIC-MINDED CITIZENS," SHE SAID.

FOLLOWING A REVIEW OF THE PLANNING STANDARD FOR THESE CENTRES BY THE DEPARTMENT, THE SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE HAD RECENTLY DISCUSSED AND ENDORSED THE RECOMMENDATION TO ADOPT A MORE FLEXIBLE STANDARD ACCORDING TO POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, SHE ADDED.

MRS WONG POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE NOW 13 YOUTH CENTRES AND 13 CHILDREN'S CENTRES IN TUEN MUN AND AN ADDITIONAL EIGHT YOUTH CENTRES AND SEVEN CHILDREN'S CENTRES WOULD BE SET UP IN THE DISTRICT IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS TO MEET POPULATION GROWTH.

NOTING THAT SOME HOUSING ESTATES WERE FAR AWAY FROM THE TOWN PROPER, SHE SAID THAT THEIR DEMAND FOR YOUTH FACILITIES WOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF WHEN THE FLEXIBLE PLANNING STANDARD WAS ADOPTED IN THE FUTURE.

SHE NOTED THAT THE BUTTERFLY ESTATE SOCIAL SERVICE CENTRE WAS THE THIRTEENTH CHILDREN AND YOUTH CENTRE OF THE HONG KONG YWCA AND THAT ITS MEMBERSHIP HAD INCREASED TO 1,800 SINCE IT STARTED OPERATION LAST JANUARY.

ITS SERVICES SUCH AS INTEREST AND SERVICE GROUPS, READING ROOMS, TRAINING COURSES AND FAMILY SERVICE WERE WIDELY SUPPORTED BY RESIDENTS THERE.

MRS WONG COMMENDED THE ASSOCIATION FOR ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIAL SERVICES IN HONG KONG.

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SERVICES FOR ELDERLY DEVELOPING IN RIGHT DIRECTION

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SERVICES FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN DEVELOPING ALONG THE LINES SET DOWN IN THE 1979 WHITE PAPER ON SOCIAL WELFARE WITH INCREASES IN BOTH THE TYPES OF SERVICES OFFERED AND THE NUMBER OF ELDERLY CATERED FOR, THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR STEPHEN LAW, SAID TODAY (SATURDAY).

"THE POLICY RECOGNISES THE IMPORTANCE OF 'CARE IN THE FAMILY AND IN THE COMMUNITY' AS WELL AS THE NEED FOR RESIDENTIAL CARE," HE SAID.

MR LAW WAS SPEAKING AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF A 10-DAY SEMINAR, ON SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY, ORGANISED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND THE HONG KONG SOCIETY FOR THE AGED.

HE SAID THIS TWO-PRONGED APPROACH WAS APPROPRIATE AND NECESSARY NO MATTER WHETHER FROM THE ANGLE OF VALUE FOR MONEY, EXPERIENCE, REAL NEEDS OR VIABILITY.

"BUT THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT WHILE ENCOURAGING CARE IN THE FAMILY AND IN THE COMMUNITY, CONSTANT ATTENTION AND ASSESSMENT ARE NEEDED TO ENSURE A BALANCED DEVELOPMENT OF THESE TWO ASPECTS SO THAT THERE CAN BE TIMELY PROVISIONS TO MEET THE SERVICE NEEDS," HE ADDED.

MR LAW STRESSED THAT SOCIETY COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO TAKE OVER A FAMILY'S RESPONSIBILITY BUT, ON THE OTHER HAND, IT SHOULD BE PREPARED TO ACT IF THE FAMILY COULD NOT FULFIL ITS ROLE.

"THIS ENTAILS CONSTANT REVIEW OF CHANGES IN SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND FLEXIBLE MANIPULATION OF LIMITED RESOURCES SO AS TO PROMOTE RESPECT FOR THE ELDERLY AND, AT THE SAME TIME, TO ENSURE PROPER CARE IS AVAILABLE TO THEM," HE SAID.

FORTUNATELY, HONG KONG'S SOCIETY WAS ONE WHICH HAD GREAT RESPECT FOR THE ELDERLY AND MANY PHILANTHROPISTS LIKED TO MAKE DONATIONS TOWARDS SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY.

"AS FOR THE CHILDREN, THEY NORMALLY WILL DO THEIR UTMOST TO TAKE CARE OF THEIR PARENTS AND WILL FEEL UNEASY IF FOR SOME REASONS THEY CANNOT DO SO," HE SAID.

"WE CAN CERTAINLY DRAW ON THESE LATENT RESOURCES IN THE SOCIETY AND IN THE FAMILY."

THEREFORE, SERVICES AND FACILITIES OTHER THAN RESIDENTIAL CARE, INCLUDING HOME HELP AND CASH ASSISTANCE, WERE VERY IMPORTANT.

AT THE SAME TIME, SOCIAL CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY AND MULTI-SERVICE CENTRES COULD HELP THE ELDERLY TO REMAIN ACTIVE IN THE COMMUNITY.

/HOWEVER, HE .....

HOWEVER, HE APPRECIATED THAT THOSE ELDERLY PEOPLE NEEDING CARE AND ATTENTION CONSTITUTED A HEAVY AND LONG-TERM BURDEN, BOTH FINANCIALLY AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY, TO THEIR FAMILIES.

"AS THERE IS STILL A LACK OF CARE AND ATTENTION SERVICES, WE ARE NOW REVIEWING THE PLANNING RATIO TO ENSURE THEY DO MEET THE NEEDS," HE SAID.

MR LAW ADDED THAT THE DEPARTMENT WOULD ORGANISE MORE REFRESHER TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS IN CO-OPERATION WITH VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE STANDARD OF SERVICE.

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TWO-DAY POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL COURSE BEGINS

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MORE THAN 360 DOCTORS, HEALTH PERSONNEL AND SCIENTISTS IN HONG KONG ATTENDED A POSTGRADUATE COURSE WHICH BEGAN AT A LOCAL HOTEL TODAY (SATURDAY).

THE TWO-DAY COURSE COMPRISES THREE SESSIONS ON VARIOUS MEDICAL AND HEALTH TOPICS INCLUDING A SYMPOSIUM ON AIDS WHICH WILL BE HELD TOMORROW (SUNDAY) AFTERNOON.

THE EVENT - HONG KONG POSTGRADUATE COURSE 1988 - IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN FRANCISCO (UCSF), THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT, THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG AND THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY THIS AFTERNOON, THE DIRECTOR OF THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT, DR K.L. THONG, CONGRATULATED THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR ORGANISING THE COURSE.

HE SAID THE POSTGRADUATE COURSE WAS THE RESULT OF DISCUSSIONS BY A COMMITTEE ON THE HK/UCSF HEALTH SCIENCE EXCHANGE PROGRAMME WHICH WAS SET UP FOLLOWING A VISIT TO HONG KONG IN 1986 BY A DELEGATION OF ACADEMIC HEADS OF THE UCSF.

ABOUT 15 INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED FACULTY MEMBERS OF UCSF HAVE COME TO HONG KONG SPECIALLY TO CONDUCT THE COURSE.

SPEAKERS FOR THE AIDS SYMPOSIUM WILL INCLUDE TWO WORLD AUTHORITIES ON AIDS - DR J. LEVY AND DR PAUL VOLBERDING. DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DR S.H. LEE, AND CONSULTANT, DR E.K. YEOH, OF THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT WILL ALSO PARTICIPATE AS PANELLISTS.

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PARENTS URGED TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM DRUG ABUSE

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PARENTS WERE URGED TODAY (SATURDAY) TO PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN FROM THE DANGER OF DRUG ABUSE BY PROVIDING THEM WITH PROPER CARE AND GUIDANCE.

THE APPEAL WAS MADE BY THE ACTING COMMISSIONER FOR NARCOTICS, MR FREDERICK TONG, AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE 1987-88 TUEN MUN DISTRICT ANTI-NARCOTICS CAMPAIGN.

HE NOTED THAT IN ADDITION TO A CONCERTED EFFORT FROM ALL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN STEPPING UP LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AND ENHANCING ANTI-DRUG PREVENTIVE EDUCATION AND PUBLICITY WORK, FULL SUPPORT FROM PARENTS WAS A MUST IN ORDER TO COMBAT THE DRUG PROBLEM IN HONG KONG.

ALTHOUGH THE PROBLEM OF THE ABUSE OF PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE HAD AROUSED MUCH PUBLIC CONCERN, WE SHOULD NOT OVERLOOK THE FACT THAT HEROIN ABUSE STILL REMAINED OUR MAIN PROBLEM, MR TONG SAID.

DURING THE CEREMONY, HE WAS JOINED BY OTHER GUESTS IN UNVEILING AN ANTI-DRUG WALL PAINTING DESIGNED BY THE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS OF THE CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT OF TUEN MUN TECHNICAL INSTITUTE.

THE WALL WAS PAINTED BY SOME 60 MEMBERS FROM THE TUEN MUN JUNIOR POLICE CALL, TUEN MUN YWCA OUTREACH TEAM, YAN OI TONG CENTRE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD ADVICE ACTION COUNCIL YICK YUEN CENTRE.

JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE ACTION COMMITTEE AGAINST NARCOTICS, THE TUEN MUN DISTRICT BOARD AND THE TUEN MUN DISTRICT OFFICE, THE DISTRICT CAMPAIGN WAS AIMED AT REMINDING THE YOUNGER GENERATION IN THE LOCALITY OF THE NEED TO BE ALERT TO PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG ABUSE AND TO ADOPT A PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARDS LIFE.

ANTI-NARCOTICS MESSAGES WERE DISSEMINATED THROUGH A VARIETY OF EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE LAST SEVEN MONTHS.

OTHER GUESTS OFFICIATING AT TODAY'S CEREMONY WERE TUEN MUN DISTRICT OFFICER, MR STEPHEN SELBY; POLICE DISTRICT COMMANDER OF TUEN MUN, MR G.H. COX; TUEN MUN DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMAN, MR LAU WONG-FAT; AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TUEN MUN DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE, MR SIT HO-YIN.

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SAI KUNG RESIDENTS URGED TO VOTE

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THE ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER OF SAI KUNG, MISS BETTY CHING, TODAY (SATURDAY) CALLED ON REGISTERED ELECTORS IN THE DISTRICT TO EXERCISE THEIR RIGHTS AND VOTE IN THE DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS ON MARCH 10.

SPEAKING AT THE DANCE PERFORMANCE NIGHT AT THE SAI KUNG JOCKEY CLUB TOWN HALL, MISS CHING POINTED OUT THAT THE DISTRICT'S 15,155 REGISTERED ELECTORS SHOULD ALL MAKE USE OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO ELECT THE IDEAL REPRESENTATIVES TO THE DISTRICT BOARD.

MISS CHING ALSO PRAISED THE RESIDENTS FOR SUPPORTING VARIOUS KINDS OF DISTRICT ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THE DANCE PERFORMANCE NIGHT.

"IT IS THIS SPIRIT OF SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS THAT HAS ENABLED THE DISTRICT BOARD TO FUNCTION SUCCESSUYLLY," MISS CHING SAID.

MORE THAN 1,2000 SAI KUNG RESIDENTS WERE TREATED TO CHINESE, WESTERN AND CHILDREN'S DANCES PERFORMED BY ABOUT 250 DANCERS.

IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT SUCH A LARGE-SCALE DANCE PERFORMANCE WAS HELD IN THE DISTRICT.

THE DANCERS RANGED FROM CHILDREN FROM THE DISTRICT'S KINDERGARTENS TO DANCING ENTHUSIASTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS. STUDENTS FROM THE HONG KONG ACADEMY FOR PERFORMING ARTS ALSO PERFORMED MODERN AND CHINESE DANCES.

SPONSORED BY THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT BOARD AND ORGANISED BY A WORKING GROUP, THE DANCE PERFORMANCE WAS AIMED AT FOSTERING RESIDENTS' INTERESTS AND IMPROVING THEIR SKILLS IN DANCING. IT ALSO PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPANTS TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCE.

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DANCE TREAT IN SHA TIN

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DANCE LOVERS WILL BE TREATED TO AN EVENING OF DIFFERENT FORMS OF DANCE AT THE AUDITORIUM OF SHA TIN TOWN HALL NEXT SATURDAY (FEBRUARY 6).

THE OCCASION IS THE 8TH SHA TIN DANCE COMPETITION WINNERS' SHOW.

/ELEVEN FORMS .....

ELEVEN FORMS OF DANCE WILL BE PERFORMED, INCLUDING ORIENTAL FOLK, WESTERN FOLK, SOCIAL, MODERN, ORIENTAL CLASSICAL AND WESTERN CLASSICAL.

FIVE OF THE DANCES WILL BE PERFORMED BY WINNERS IN THE DISTRICT DANCE COMPETITION AND THE OTHERS BY DANCERS FROM THE HONG KONG DANCING ASSOCIATION, HONG KONG DANCING SCHOOL, MODERN DANCE TROUPE AND CHRISTINE LIAO BALLET SCHOOL.

THE HONG KONG DANCING ASSOCIATION WILL ALSO GIVE THE FIRST PUBLIC PERFORMANCE OF "MIU YAM LIU (WONDERFUL BIRD)".

THE SHOW IS BEING JOINTLY PRESENTED BY THE SHA TIN ARTS ASSOCIATION AND REGIONAL COUNCIL WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE SHA TIN DISTRICT OFFICE AND SPONSORSHIP FROM THE SHA TIN DISTRICT BOARD. IT WILL BEGIN AT 7 PM.

DURING THE SHOW, ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER, MR ANDREW PYNE, AND DB MEMBER, MR ROGER LAU, WILL PRESENT PRIZES TO COMPETITION WINNERS.

TICKETS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED FREE ON A FIRST-COME, FIRST SERVED BASIS AT THE SHA TIN DISTRICT OFFICE ENQUIRY CENTRE AND THE SHA TIN OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT IN KCR HOUSE AS WELL AS AT VARIOUS COMMUNITY HALLS IN THE DISTRICT. ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON 0-6066552 AND 0-6989750.

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SCHOOL CHILDREN JOIN VEGETABLE GROWING COMPETITION

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MORE THAN 120 PRIMARY SCHOOLS WILL COMPETE FOR TOP HONOURS IN A VEGETABLE GROWING (IN POTS) COMPETITION AT THE TEACHERS' CENTRE OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AT 4 PAK FUK ROAD, NORTH POINT, ON TUESDAY (FEBRUARY 2).

THE COMPETITION IS ORGANISED BY THE PRIMARY SCIENCE SECTION OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT.

IT AIMS TO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN TO LEARN, THROUGH PARTICIPATION AND OBSERVATION, THE SHAPE, STRUCTURE AND GROWTH OF PLANTS AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF PLANTS FOR BEAUTIFYING THE ENVIRONMENT.

EACH PARTICIPATING SCHOOL WILL BE ALLOWED TO SUBMIT FOUR ENTRIES OF ANY OF THE FIVE DIFFERENT SPECIES. THE PLANTS ARE GROWN BY PUPILS IN POTS STARTING FROM THE SEEDLING STAGE IN SEPTEMBER UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF TEACHERS.

/ALL ENTRIES .....

ALL ENTRIES WILL BE JUDGED BY A PANEL OF ADJUDICATORS ON TUESDAY MORNING AND A PRIZE-GIVING PRESENTATION CEREMONY WILL BE HELD AT 2.30 PM AT THE TEACHERS' CENTRE.

THERE WILL BE THREE WINNERS FOR EACH OF THE HONG KONG ISLAND, KOWLOON AND NEW TERRITORIES DIVISIONS.

THE CHAMPION OF EACH DIVISION WILL BE AWARDED A SHIELD AND A COUPON OF$500. THE PRIZES WILL BE SPONSORED BY CHOI HING LEE SEED COMPANY LIMITED. OTHER WINNING ENTRIES WILL RECEIVE A SHIELD WHILE THE HIGHLY COMMENDED ONES WILL RECEIVE PENNANTS.

ALL ENTRIES WILL BE DISPLAYED AT THE TEACHERS' CENTRE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CEREMONY AND ON WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY (FEBRUARY 3 AND 4) BETWEEN 9 AM AND 5 PM DAILY.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE PRIZE-GIVING CEREMONY AT THE TEACHERS' CENTRE AT 4 PAK FUK ROAD, NORTH POINT, AT 2.30 PM ON TUESDAY (FEBRUARY 2).

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TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN SHAM SHUI PO

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TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW ON FAT TSUENG STREET SOUTH OF LAI CHI KOK ROAD IN SHAM SHUI PO, A NUMBER OF ROAD SECTIONS WILL BE RE-ROUTED TO ONE-WAY CLOCKWISE DIRECTION FROM 10 AM ON TUESDAY (FEBRUARY 2).

THEY ARE:

* FAT TSEUNG STREET BETWEEN YEE KUK STREET AND TUNG CHAU STREET;
* TUNG CHAU STREET NORTH OF FAT TSEUNG STREET;
* THE UNNAMED ROAD SOUTH OF WANG CHEONG FACTORY ESTATE BETWEEN TUNG CHAU STREET AND YEE KUK STREET; AND
* YEE KUK STREET NORTH OF FAT TSEUNG STREET.

AT THE SAME TIME, TWO ROAD SECTIONS WILL BECOME 7 AM TO 7 PM DAILY URBAN CLEARWAYS:

* FAT TSEUNG STREET FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH LAI CHI KOK ROAD TO A POINT ABOUT 75 METRES WEST OF THE SAME JUNCTION; AND
* YEE KUK STREET FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH FAT TSEUNG STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 10 METRES NORTH OF THE SAME JUNCTION.

WITHIN THE URBAN CLEARWAYS, NO VEHICLE WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS.

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