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~~\$30~~ metallic strips could save \$26m

A \$30 piece of metal is set to save the Government \$26 million next year.

Commissioner for Transport Gordon Siu told Legislative Councillors the metal strips would be installed in Hongkong's parking meters to prevent those "who specialise in tampering" by using makeshift keys to open meters.

Mr Siu said the use of electronic cards in meters was being considered. Tunnel tolls and car parking fees could also be paid in this way.

It was also announced that traffic congestion may be regulated by "area road pricing" where motorists are charged for the use of roads in selected districts, with the highest charges for the busiest roads during the busiest periods.

■ Commissioner for Labour John Hammond said there were 183 confirmed cases of occupational diseases last year. Of these, 145 were diagnosed as silicosis, mainly contracted in the construction industry and quarries.

A compensation fund board had been set up and a range of promotional and educational activities were being prepared by a newly appointed public relations officer to try and tackle the problem.

The total number of industrial accidents in 1989 was also reported at 26,399, a slight decrease on the previous year.

Mr Hammond said the department attempted to investigate all fatal accidents and those resulting in serious injury.

He also said 200 new contracts issued to local workers to work outside Hongkong 173 were granted to restaurant workers in West Germany.

Amend
Top
From