DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 1991

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THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 1991

SUCCESSFUL MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS VITAL TO HK: GOVERNOR

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HONG KONG STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE APPEALS FOR CONSTRUCTIVE ACTION NOW TO ENSURE THAT THE MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS, THE URUGUAY ROUND IS NOT HELD UP FURTHER, THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, SAID IN THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS ON THURSDAY (MARCH 14).

ADDRESSING THE NETHERLANDS-HONG KONG SOCIETY, THE GOVERNOR SAID HONG KONG WANTED TRADE BARRIERS TO BE REDUCED, AND WHERE POSSIBLE REMOVED, NOT RAISED OR REPLACED BY OTHER PROTECTIONIST DEVICES.

"IT IS THEREFORE VITALLY IMPORTANT FOR US THAT THE CURRENT MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS, THE URUGUAY ROUND, COME TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION.

"THE WORLD IS GOING THROUGH SIGNIFICANT CHANGES AND IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THESE ARE ALLOWED TO WORK THROUGH WITHOUT THE ADDED RISKS OF INCREASED TRADE RESTRICTIONS.

"IT IS DISAPPOINTING THAT THE ROUND HAS NOT BEEN CONCLUDED AS PLANNED," SIR DAVID SAID.

SIR DAVID POINTED OUT THAT HONG KONG DEPENDED ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND IT BELIEVED AS AN ARTICLE OF FAITH THAT FREE TRADE PRODUCED THE GREATEST GOOD FOR THE GREATEST NUMBER.

"WE ARE PROOF THAT IT WORKS," HE SAID, ADDING THAT FREE TRADE WORKED FOR ALL, NOT JUST FOR HONG KONG.

"SOME OF THE CHANGES TAKING PLACE IN THE WORLD HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY BENEFICIAL TO THE EUROPE/ASIA RELATIONSHIP, AS THEY SEEM TO HAVE INDIRECTLY ALLAYED THE FEARS OF A FORTRESS EUROPE THAT WERE SO PREVALENT ONLY A YEAR AGO.

"THIS IS ENCOURAGING. WE MUST ALL HOPE THAT NEITHER WILL THESE FEARS RECUR, NOR WILL THERE BE ANY BASIS FOR THEM.

"NOBODY SHOULD WANT A TENDENCY IN EUROPE TO LOOK ONLY INWARDS, INSTEAD OF OUTWARDS AT THE GROWING CONSUMER POWER AND MARKET OPPORTUNITIES OF THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION," THE GOVERNOR SAID.

SIR DAVID POINTED OUT THAT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NETHERLANDS AND HONG KONG HAD NEVER BEEN SO STRONG.

HE BELIEVED THERE WERE TWO MAIN REASONS FOR THIS CLOSE RELATIONSHIP: A SHARED BELIEF IN THE VIRTUES OF FREE TRADE; AND THE IMAGINATION TO EXPLOIT THE OPPORTUNITIES THIS PROVIDED.

/HE POINTED .....

HE POINTED OUT THAT HONG KONG WAS NETHERLANDS' THIRD LARGEST TRADING PARTNER IN ASIA.

THERE WAS A SIGNIFICANT DUTCH COMMUNITY OF ONE AND A HALF THOUSAND IN HONG KONG AND A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE NETHERLANDS WHO HAD THEIR ROOTS IN HONG KONG.

DUTCH INVESTMENT IN HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY WAS HIGH AND THE FIGURE OF SOME 330 MILLION GUILDERS MADE THE NETHERLANDS THE FIFTH BIGGEST OVERSEAS INVESTOR IN HONG KONG, THE GOVERNOR SAID.

"THE DUTCH PRESENCE IN THE SERVICE SECTOR IS ALSO SIGNIFICANT. YOUR SHIPPING LINES DO A GREAT DEAL OF BUSINESS WITH HONG KONG. SO DOES KLM.

"DUTCH BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ARE INCREASINGLY WELL REPRESENTED IN THE TERRITORY," SIR DAVID SAID.

THE GOVERNOR OUTLINED TO THE AUDIENCE WHAT HAD BEEN DONE SO FAR AND WHAT REMAINED TO BE DONE FOR THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG.

HE SAID THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WAS ACTIVELY PREPARING FOR A FUTURE BEYOND THE END OF THIS CENTURY.

"WHILE WE MAKE THE NECESSARY INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES REQUIRED BY THE CHANGE OF SOVEREIGNTY, WE ALSO BELIEVE IT IS RIGHT TO DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO LAY THE FOUNDATIONS FOR HONG KONG TO ENTER THE 21ST CENTURY AS ONE OF THE KEY CENTRES OF ECONOMIC DYNAMISM IN EAST ASIA," HE SAID.

THE GOVERNOR POINTED OUT THAT NO ONE SHOULD BELIEVE THAT HONG KONG WAS NOT FACING AN ENORMOUS CHALLENGE.

"WE KNOW WE ARE. THERE ARE MANY QUESTIONS THAT CANNOT BE ANSWERED AT THIS STAGE. I AM SURE, HOWEVER, THAT THIS CHALLENGE IS ONE THAT CAN AND WILL BE MET AND OVERCOME.

"IT IS IN ALL PARTIES' INTERESTS THAT HONG KONG CONTINUES TO PROSPER. AND ALL THE ECONOMIC INDICATORS POINT TOWARDS GROWTH.

"THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR HONG KONG AND THE VITAL ROLE IT HAS CARVED OUT FOR ITSELF AS THE PRE-EMINENT REGIONAL BUSINESS CENTRE.

"AS AN INCREASING NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESSMEN REALISE, THOSE WHO ARE SERIOUS ABOUT DOING BUSINESS IN ASIA CANNOT AFFORD NOT TO BE REPRESENTED IN HONG KONG," THE GOVERNOR SAID.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

THE FULL TEXT OF THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH WILL BE SENT BY FACSIMILE.

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GOVERNOR BEGINS HECTIC SCHEDULE IN THE HAGUE

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THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, TODAY (THURSDAY) BEGAN A HECTIC ROUND OF MEETINGS AND OTHER ENGAGEMENTS IN THE HAGUE ON THE SECOND LEG OF HIS EUROPEAN VISIT.

SIR DAVID STARTED THE DAY WITH A COURTESY CALL ON THE DUTCH PRIME MINISTER, MR RUDOLPHUS LUBBERS. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY CALLS ON THE MINISTER OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, DR JACOBUS ANDRIESSEN, AND THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE, MRS YVONNE VAN ROOY.

LATER IN THE MORNING, THE GOVERNOR WILL HAVE A MEETING WITH (MR J.P. HOFSTEE, ACTING SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS).

THIS WILL BE FOLLOWED BY AN INFORMAL LUNCH WITH SENIOR DUTCH BUSINESSMEN AND BANKERS.

IN THE AFTERNOON, SIR DAVID WILL GIVE A SPEECH TO THE NETHERLANDS-HONG KONG SOCIETY.

SIR DAVID'S VISIT TO THE HAGUE FOLLOWED A HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO HANNOVER IN GERMANY WHERE HE OFFICIATED AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF CEBIT 1991, THE WORLD'S LARGEST AND MOST IMPORTANT FAIR FOR OFFICE EQUIPMENT, DATA PROCESSING, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, AND SOFTWARE INDUSTRY.

TOMORROW (FRIDAY) THE GOVERNOR WILL FLY TO HAMBURG WHERE HE WILL DELIVER KEYNOTE ADDRESSES TO A LUNCHEON HOSTED BY THE EAST ASIA SOCIETY AND THE HONG KONG ECONOMIC AND TRADE OFFICE TO THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMMUNITY, AS WELL AS THE ANNUAL DINNER OF THE EAST ASIA SOCIETY.

THE GOVERNOR WILL LEAVE HAMBURG ON SATURDAY (MARCH 16) AND WILL ARRIVE BACK IN HONG KONG ON THE FOLLOWING DAY (SUNDAY).

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BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND IN HK

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THERE ARE PLENTY OF BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN HONG KONG FOR FOREIGN AND LOCAL COMPANIES ALIKE, THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR JOHN CHAN, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE CEBIT 91 BUSINESS FORUM: "HONG KONG/EUROPE OVERVIEW" IN HANNOVER, GERMANY, MR CHAN SAID THESE HAD NOT ESCAPED THE ATTENTION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY.

MORE THAN 500 COMPANIES WITH EC INTERESTS WERE OPERATING IN HONG KONG.

/INVESTMENT IN .....

INVESTMENT IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR ALONE WAS VALUED AT $4.6 BILLION (OR ROUGHLY 830 MILLION DEUTSCHE MARKS) MAKING THE EC THE THIRD LARGEST SOURCE OF OVERSEAS INVESTMENT IN THIS VITAL AREA, HE SAID.

HONG KONG AND EUROPE WERE BOTH IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE THAT WOULD OPEN UP NEW DOORS TO PROSPERITY.

"THE CREATION OF A SINGLE, UNIFIED EUROPEAN MARKET AT THE END OF 1992 WILL HERALD SIGNIFICANT PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER ECONOMIC GROWTH.

"THE CHANGES TAKING PLACE IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THE ONGOING DISCUSSIONS ABOUT GREATER EUROPEAN INTEGRATION ARE POTENTIALLY EVEN MORE EXCITING IN THE LONGER TERM," HE SAID.

"THERE WILL BE FEW PLACES WITHIN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY WHERE MY MESSAGE WILL BE CLEARER THAN IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY," HE SAID.

IT WAS THE LARGEST MARKET FOR HONG KONG GOODS IN EUROPE, WITH EXPORTS IN 1990 TOTALLING 3.6 BILLION DM.

IN ADDITION, HONG KONG HANDLED 4.3 BILLION DM WORTH OF RE-EXPORTS OF CHINESE GOODS TO GERMANY LAST YEAR.

BIT IT WAS NOT ONE-WAY TRADE.

GERMAN EXPORTS TO HONG KONG IN 1990 WERE VALUED AT SOME 3 BILLION DM, PLUS A FURTHER 550 MILLION DM EXPORTED TO CHINA THROUGH HONG KONG.

"THERE IS MUCH POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER GROWTH IN GERMAN EXPORTS TO HONG KONG AND CHINA, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREAS OF COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT AND OTHER HIGH TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS," MR CHAN SAID.

"I ALSO BELIEVE THAT, WITH THE FORMAL UNIFICATION OF EAST AND WEST GERMANY IN OCTOBER 1990, THE DEMAND FOR CONSUMER GOODS CAN BE EXPECTED TO INCREASE SIGNIFICANTLY, OPENING UP NEW AREAS OF TRADE AND INVESTMENT," HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE CHOICE OF HONG KONG AS THE BUSINESS PARTNER FOR THIS YEAR'S CEBIT WAS A FITTING RECOGNITION OF THE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES WHICH EXISTED BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA-PACIFIC GENERALLY, AND BETWEEN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY AND HONG KONG IN PARTICULAR.

"THE CHALLENGE FACING OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITIES IS HOW TO MAXIMISE THESE OPPORTUNITIES. I AM SURE THEY WILL RISE TO THE CHALLENGE," MR CHAN SAID.

ON HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA, HE SAID ITS RAPID DEVELOPMENT HAD OFFERED HONG KONG BUSINESSMEN NEW TRADING AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES WHICH THEY QUICKLY SEIZED.

"TODAY, HONG KONG IS THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE OF EXTERNAL INVESTMENT IN CHINA, ACCOUNTING FOR 60 TO 70 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL IN TERMS OF BOTH THE NUMBER OF VENTURES AND THE AMOUNT INVESTED," HE SAID.

/"COUPLED WITH .....

"COUPLED WITH THE EXPANSION IN RECENT YEARS OF CHINA'S OWN EXTERNAL TRADE, THESE INVESTMENTS ACROSS THE BORDER HAVE BEEN THE MAIN DRIVING FORCE BEHIND HONG KONG'S RAPID RE-EMERGENCE AS AN ENTREPOT."

IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION, MR CHAN SAID CHINESE INVESTMENT IN HONG KONG HAD ALSO GROWN TREMENDOUSLY, AND HAD DIVERSIFIED FROM THE TRADITIONAL TRADE-RELATED SECTORS INTO VARIOUS NEW AREAS SUCH AS PROPERTY INVESTMENT, FINANCIAL SERVICES, MANUFACTURING AND INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECTS.

AS AT THE END OF 1989, TOTAL CHINESE INVESTMENT IN HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY STOOD AT SOME 600 MILLION DM AT ORIGINAL COST.

"THIS VERY CLOSE ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP HAS PLACED HONG KONG IN A UNIQUE POSITION TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS CHINA'S DEVELOPMENT," MR CHAN SAID.

"WITH ITS LONG EXPERIENCE AND PROVEN EXPERTISE IN TRADING WITH THE WORLD, AND ITS KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF CHINA, HONG KONG WILL HAVE MUCH TO OFFER TO THE WESTERN TRADER WHO IS KEEN ON EXPLOITING THE VAST CHINESE MARKET."

IN TANDEM WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCREASINGLY CLOSE RELATIONS WITH CHINA HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP WITH ITS ASIA-PACIFIC PARTNERS HAD ALSO BEEN GROWING RAPIDLY: TRADE WITH THE REGION INCREASED BY OVER 22 PER CENT A YEAR IN THE LAST 10 YEARS, AND ACCOUNTED FOR 62 PER CENT OF HONG KONG'S GLOBAL TRADE IN 1990.

"THESE ARE VERY SOLID FOUNDATIONS UPON WHICH WE CAN BUILD FOR THE FUTURE," MR CHAN SAID.

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EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE SINO-BRITISH JOINT LIAISON GROUP

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THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP HELD ITS EIGHTEENTH MEETING IN BEIJING FROM MARCH 12 TO 14, 1991.

THE TWO SIDES CONTINUED THEIR DISCUSSIONS ON PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DEFENCE OF HONG KONG AND THE MAINTENANCE OF ITS PUBLIC ORDER.

ON THE BASIS OF THE WORK OF EXPERTS, THE GROUP HAD A FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COURT OF FINAL APPEAL IN HONG KONG.

THE TWO SIDES HAD A FURTHER EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON PROTECTING AND PROMOTING INVESTMENT BETWEEN HONG KONG AND RELEVANT COUNTRIES.

ON THE BASIS OF THE WORK OF EXPERTS, THE TWO SIDES CONTINUED THEIR DISCUSSION OF MATTERS RELATING TO INTERNATIONAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS.

THE GROUP AGREED THAT ITS NEXT MEETING SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN HONG KONG IN THE WEEK BEGINNING JUNE 10, 1991.

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INT'L DRUG SYNDICATES BROKEN UP
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NARCOTICS DETECTIVES IN HONG KONG AND THE USA HAVE BROKEN UP WHAT THEY BELIEVED TO BE TWO INTERNATIONAL DRUG SYNDICATES FOLLOWING THE ARRESTS OF SUSPECTED KEY SYNDICATE MEMBERS BOTH IN HONG KONG AND NEW YORK.

FIVE PERSONS, INCLUDING FOUR MEN AND ONE WOMAN, WERE ARRESTED IN HONG KONG AND TWO AMERICAN MEN, AGED 24 AND 30 WERE ARRESTED IN NEW YORK IN A JOINT UNITED STATES-HONG KONG UNDERCOVER OPERATION THAT LASTED THREE MONTHS.

IN THE OPERATION, 3.5 KILOGRAMMES OF SUSPECTED NO. 4 HEROIN WERE SEIZED IN NEW YORK WHICH CARRIED A RETAIL VALUE OF UP TO US $3.5 MILLION (HK$27 MILLION) IN THE NORTH AMERICAN MARKETS.

THE OPERATION WAS MOUNTED IN JANUARY WITH UNDERCOVER AGENTS FROM THE US DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION (DEA) POSING AS BUYERS AND MANAGED TO SECURE THE DELIVERY OF THE SUSPECTED NO.4 HEROIN TO NEW YORK IN MID-FEBRUARY.

THE SUSPECTED DRUGS WERE CONCEALED IN MAHJONG TILES SENT FROM HONG KONG.

MEANWHILE, RAIDS WERE CARRIED OUT SIMULTANEOUSLY BY OFFICERS OF THE NARCOTICS BUREAU IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE TERRITORY YESTERDAY (WEDNESDAY).

NARCOTICS BUREAU OFFICERS SUBSEQUENTLY ARRESTED FOUR MEN, AGED BETWEEN 30 AND 35, IN TWO TSIM SHA TSUI EAST HOTELS ON WEDNESDAY EVENING.

FOLLOW-UP RAIDS WERE ALSO MOUNTED IN NGAU TAU KOK, KOWLOON WALLED CITY,HUNG HOM AND WONG TAI SIN RESULTING IN THE ARREST OF A 20-YEAR-OLD WOMAN IN A HUNG HOM PREMISES.

NO DRUGS WERE FOUND IN THE OPERATION BUT CASH AND VALUABLES AMOUNTING TO $100,000 WERE SEIZED.

THE TWO SUSPECTS ARRESTED IN NEW YORK WERE BELIEVED TO BE DISTRIBUTORS OF THE SEIZED HEROIN.

POLICE BELEIVED THE ARRESTED PERSONS WERE KEY MEMBERS OF TWO INTERNATIONAL SYNDICATES WHICH MIGHT HAVE EXPORTED A LARGE QUANTITY OF NO 4 HEROIN FROM ASIAN COUNTRIES TO THE US MARKETS BY CONCEALING THEM IN MAHJONG TILES AND BUDDHA STATUES.

EXCEPT FOR THE WOMAN WHO WAS RELEASED ON POLICE BAIL OF $500, THE REMAINING PERSONS ARE STILL BEING DETAINED FOR ENQUIRIES.

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HONG KONG (CONTROL OF GOLD, SECURITIES, PAYMENTS AND CREDITS KUWAIT AND REPUBLIC OF IRAQ) ORDER 1990

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THE BANK OF ENGLAND ANNOUNCED ON MARCH 13, 1991 THAT THE CONTROL OF GOLD, SECURITIES, PAYMENTS AND CREDITS (KUWAIT) DIRECTIONS 1990 (STATUTORY INSTRUMENT 1990 NO. 1591 OF AUGUST 2, 1990) WERE REVOKED FROM MIDNIGHT ON MARCH 12, 1991 AND THAT CONSEQUENTLY THE TERMS OF THE BANK OF ENGLAND'S KUWAIT NOTICE DATED AUGUST 7, 1990, SUPPLEMENT NO. 1 DATED AUGUST 25, SUPPLEMENT NO. 2 DATED SEPTEMBER 3, SUPPLEMENT NO. 3 DATED SEPTEMBER 13 AND SUPPLEMENT NO. 4 DATED NOVEMBER 6 CEASED TO APPLY WITH EFFECT FROM THE SAME TIME.

THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE HAS INFORMED THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT THAT THE HONG KONG (CONTROL OF GOLD, SECURITIES, PAYMENTS AND CREDITS KUWAIT AND REPUBLIC OF IRAQ) ORDER 1990 (THE "HONG KONG ORDER") REMAINS IN FORCE BUT THAT IT IS EXPECTED THAT AN ORDER PARTIALLY REVOKING THAT ORDER IS EXPECTED TO BE PASSED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL ON APRIL 16, 1991. AT THAT TIME IT IS EXPECTED THAT RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED ON IRAQI ASSETS WILL REMAIN IN FORCE.

AT PRESENT THOSE PROHIBITED BY THE HONG KONG ORDER FROM TRANSACTING BUSINESS RELATING TO KUWAITI ASSETS MAY APPLY TO THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR PERMISSION TO DO SO. THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY WISHES SUCH PERSONS TO KNOW THAT IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES ALL SUCH APPLICATIONS SHALL BE DEALT WITH SYMPATHETICALLY AND FURTHER PERMISSIONS OF A MORE GENERAL EFFECT ARE URGENTLY BEING CONSIDERED.

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REPORTED RED TIDES NOT CAUSED BY TOXIC SPECIES

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IN RESPONSE TO PRESS ENQUIRIES ON A REPORT IN SING TAO JIH PAO TODAY (MARCH 14) ON TOXIC RED TIDES, THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT (AFD) ISSUED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

"AFD HAS SO FAR RECEIVED SEVEN REPORTS OF RED TIDES THIS YEAR. HOWEVER, NONE OF THEM WERE CAUSED BY TOXIC SPECIES AND THERE IS NO CAUSE FOR PUBLIC ALARM.

A RED TIDE OF THE TOXIC SPECIES ALEXANDRIUM CATENELLIA WAS RECORDED IN 1989. SINCE THEN THIS SPECIES WAS OCCASIONALLY DETECTED IN HONG KONG WATERS, BUT ONLY AT VERY LOW CONCENTRATION, NOT ENOUGH TO CONSTITUTE A RED TIDE.

MOREOVER, THE PRESENCE OF THIS TOXIC ALGAE IN THE WATER DOES NOT NECESSARILY MAKE SHELLFISH UNSAFE FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION.

/AFD NOTED .....

AFD NOTED THAT THIS SPECIES WAS PRESENT AT LOW CONCENTRATION IN WATERS AT TIN HA WAN IN LATE JANUARY.

HOWEVER, THE DEPARTMENT DETECTED NO TOXICITY IN GREEN MUSSEL SAMPLES COLLECTED FROM THE TIN HA WAN FISH CULTURE ZONE.

MEANWHILE, SAMPLING TESTS ON GREEN MUSSELS CONDUCTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD ALSO CONFIRMED THAT TOXICITY IN THE SHELLFISH WERE WELL BELOW THE ACCEPTABLE TOXIC LEVELS RECOMMENDED BY THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION."

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TECHNO-ECONOMIC AND MARKET RESEARCH ON METALS INDUSTRY

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THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT WILL LAUNCH A TECHNO-ECONOMIC AND MARKET RESEARCH STUDY OF THE METALS INDUSTRY IN THE LATTER HALF OF THIS YEAR, THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRY, MR WILFRED WONG, SAID THIS (THURSDAY) EVENING.

SPEAKING AT A DINNER MEETING OF THE GROUP 2 (INDUSTRY) OF THE HONG KONG INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERS, MR WONG SAID THIS WAS PART OF A SERIES OF REGULAR STUDIES COMMISSIONED BY THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT ON THE MAJOR GROUPS OF MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, NAMELY TEXTILES AND CLOTHING, ELECTRONICS, PLASTICS AND METALS.

"THESE STUDIES AIM TO PROVIDE MANUFACTURERS WITH AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS HAPPENING LOCALLY, IN CHINA AND IN OTHER PARTS OF WORLD, SO AS TO ASSIST THEM TO IMPROVE THEIR COMPETITIVENESS," HE SAID.

MR WONG SAID INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM THESE STUDIES WAS WIDELY DISSEMINATED TO MANUFACTURERS, AND VERY OFTEN RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE STUDIES HAD LED TO THE INTRODUCTION OF A RANGE OF SUPPORT MEASURES TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF THE INDUSTRY.

"THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CLOTHING TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATION CENTRE AND THE HONG KONG PLASTICS TECHNOLOGY CENTRE ARE AMONG THE MORE NOTABLE EXAMPLES," HE SAID.

MR WONG SAID THAT, WHILE THE LOCAL INDUSTRY WAS STILL COMPETITIVE IN MANY SECTORS, THIS POSITION WAS BEING THREATENED BY THE PACE AT WHICH TECHNOLOGIES CHANGED ON THE ONE HAND AND THE IMPROVED CAPABILITIES OF OUR COMPETITORS ON THE OTHER.

"THIS REINFORCES THE NEED FOR OUR MANUFACTURERS TO MOVE TOWARDS GREATER EFFICIENCY, BETTER QUALITY AND HIGHER VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS IF THEY ARE TO MAINTAIN THEIR COMPETITIVENESS," HE SAID.

"SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS, THE DEPARTMENT HAS PLANS TO ALSO COMMISSION STUDIES ON THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A SCIENCE PARK IN HONG KONG AND THE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT REQUIRED TO ASSIST INDUSTRIALISTS TO COMPLY WITH THE INCREASINGLY STRINGENT ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION RULES AND REGULATIONS," MR WONG SAID.

/BESIDES TECHNO-ECONOMIC .....

BESIDES TECHNO-ECONOMIC AND MARKET RESEARCH STUDIES ON THE MAJOR GROUPS OF MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY, MR WONG SAID THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT ALSO COMMISSIONED OTHER STUDIES TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC TERRITORY-WIDE INDUSTRIAL ISSUES OR EXPLORE THE POTENTIAL OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN NEW AREAS.

IN DECEMBER 1990, THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL WAS COMMISSIONED TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON INDUSTRIAL AUTOMATION TO ASSESS THE SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM BENEFITS OF INDUSTRIAL AUTOMATION IN HONG KONG AND ADVISE ON WAYS OF HELPING MANUFACTURERS TO MAKE OPTIMUM USE OF AUTOMATION.

ANOTHER STUDY TO ASSESS THE POTENTIAL OF THE CHEMICAL PROCESSING INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG WAS COMMISSIONED BY THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT IN JANUARY 1991.

IN ADDITION TO COMMISSIONING THE SERVICES OF OVERSEAS AND LOCAL CONSULTANTS, THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT ITSELF CONDUCTS REGULAR AND AD HOC SURVEYS TO ASSESS THE CURRENT STATUS OF HONG KONG INDUSTRIES OR TO UPDATE SOME OF THE FINDINGS OF PREVIOUS CONSULTANCY STUDIES.

ANNUALLY, THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT CARRIES OUT A SURVEY OF LOCAL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES TO FIND OUT FROM MANUFACTURERS HOW THEY SEE THEIR BUSINESS PROSPECTS, WHAT THEY THINK OF HONG KONG'S INVESTMENT ENVIRONMENT, AND WHETHER THEY SEE ANY CONSTRAINTS ON THE GROWTH OF THEIR INDUSTRIES.

ANOTHER SURVEY CONDUCTED ANNUALLY IS THAT OF OVERSEAS INVESTMENT IN HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES.

MR WONG SAID THAT WHILE THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT COMMISSIONED SO MANY STUDIES EVERY YEAR, THEY OUGHT TO BE SEEN AS TOOLS TO ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT IN COMING UP WITH NEW INITIATIVES FOR STRENGTHENING INDUSTRIES SUPPORT SERVICES AND FACILITIES.

HE SAID THERE WAS NO QUESTION THAT INDUSTRIAL SUPPORT MEASURES WERE DICTATED BY THE CONSULTANTS.

"AS A MATTER OF FACT, ALL THE MAJOR STUDIES ARE STEERED BY COMMITTEES COMPRISING INDUSTRIALISTS, ACADEMICS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

"RECENTLY, WE ARE MOVING IN THE DIRECTION OF GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL EXPERTISE PLAYING A GREATER ROLE IN CONSULTANCY STUDIES.

"THIS HAS RECEIVED VERY ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT FROM INDUSTRIALISTS AND ACADEMICS SITTING ON THE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT BOARD AND ITS COMMITTEES," HE SAID.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

MR WONG'S SPEECH WILL BE SENT BY FACSIMILE.

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REGULATORY FRAMEWORK ESSENTIAL FOR INSURANCE INTERMEDIARIES

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THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY IS NOW WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF INSURANCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONTROL OF INSURANCE INTERMEDIARIES, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE OFFICE SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

"A SUITABLE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONTROL OF INSURANCE INTERMEDIARIES WHICH ARE AGENTS AND BROKERS IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE CONTINUED HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSURANCE MARKET IN HONG KONG," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF INSURANCE, ESTABLISHED IN JUNE 1990 TO TAKE OVER THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INSURANCE DIVISION OF THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, WAS PLEASED TO NOTE THE DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING SELF-REGULATORY MEASURES BY THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY TO ENHANCE THE PROTECTION OF INSURANCE CLAIMANTS AND POLICY HOLDERS.

THE OFFICE WAS ALSO PLEASED TO NOTE THAT THE INSURANCE CLAIMS COMPLAINTS BUREAU, AN INDEPENDENT BODY TO DEAL WITH CLAIMS UP TO $250,000 BY INDIVIDUAL POLICY HOLDERS, WAS ESTABLISHED IN FEBRUARY 1990, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

ACCORDING TO STATISTICS RELEASED BY THE OFFICE, FIVE NEW INSURERS, ONE LOCAL AND FOUR OVERSEAS COMPANIES, WERE AUTHORISED TO CARRY ON INSURANCE BUSINESS IN OR FROM HONG KONG IN 1990.

"DURING THE SAME YEAR, 16 INSURERS CEASED TO BE AUTHORISED AS A RESULT OF THEIR CESSATION OF INSURANCE BUSINESS," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"AS AT DECEMBER 31, 1990 THERE WERE 262 AUTHORISED INSURERS OPERATING IN HONG KONG, REPRESENTING A NET DECREASE OF 11 SINCE DECEMBER 31, 1989," HE SAID.

OF THE 262 AUTHORISED INSURERS, 123 WERE HONG KONG INCORPORATED. OF THE INSURERS INCORPORATED OVERSEAS, 36 WERE INCORPORATED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 27 IN USA, 10 IN BERMUDA, EIGHT IN JAPAN, SEVEN IN SWITZERLAND, AND FIVE IN EACH OF CANADA, FRANCE AND SINGAPORE.

EIGHT APPLICATIONS FOR AUTHORISATION WERE RECEIVED DURING THE YEAR, COMPARED WITH THREE FOR THE PREVIOUS (1989) YEAR.

"AS AT DECEMBER 31, 1990 THERE WERE FOUR PENDING APPLICATIONS FROM NEW INSURERS, ONE RELATING TO LONG TERM BUSINESS AND THREE TO GENERAL BUSINESS," HE SAID.

"THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY HAD EXERCISED HIS POWER OF INTERVENTION ON 82 OCCASIONS DURING THE YEAR IN CONNECTION WITH 37 INSURERS," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

/"TWO AMENDMENTS .....

"TWO AMENDMENTS TO THE INSURANCE COMPANIES ORDINANCE CAME INTO OPERATION LAST YEAR," HE SAID.

THE INSURANCE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE NO. 44 OF 1990, ENACTED ON JUNE 28 LAST YEAR, INTRODUCED "PRIOR NOTIFICATION" REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING PROPOSED CHANGES OF CONTROLLERS BY AUTHORISED INSURERS, AND PROVISIONS TO GIVE LEGAL EFFECT TO INSURANCE CONTRACTS ISSUED BY UNAUTHORISED INSURERS.

THE INSURANCE COMPANIES ORDINANCE (AMENDMENT OF THIRD SCHEDULE) REGULATIONS 1990 WERE INTRODUCED ON DECEMBER 7, 1990. THE REGULATIONS BRING INTO EFFECT NEW REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR HONG KONG INSURANCE BUSINESS COMMENCING FROM THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1990.

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DTC REGISTRATION REVOKED

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THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING ANNOUNCED THAT THE REGISTRATION OF CREDIT SUISSE FINANCE LIMITED AND THAT OF CHEMICAL ASIA LIMITED AS DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES HAVE BEEN REVOKED AS AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS TODAY (THURSDAY) AT THEIR OWN REQUEST UNDER SECTION 31(2) OF THE BANKING ORDINANCE.

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TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEME TO EASE CONGESTION AT CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL

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WORKS HAVE STARTED UNDER A TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEME TO EASE THE WESTBOUND TRAFFIC NEAR THE HONG KONG ENTRANCE OF THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL, THE ACTING CHIEF ENGINEER (HONG KONG) OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, MR WILLIAM LIEW KWOK-SHAN, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY) AT A PRESS CONFERENCE.

THE SCHEME WILL COMPRISE BOTH CONSTRUCTION WORK AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES MAINLY AT THE ISLAND EASTERN CORRIDOR (IEC), VICTORIA PARK ROAD AND GLOUCESTER ROAD.

IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE THREE MONTH CONSTRUCTION WORK WILL BE COMPLETED IN JUNE.

"THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT IS CONCERNED THAT TUNNEL CONGESTION HAS AFFECTED OTHER NON-TUNNEL USERS AND THE DEPARTMENT HAS PROPOSED THE SERIES OF MEASURES TO EASE THE SITUATION," MR LIEW SAID.

"IT WILL BE HELPFUL FOR ROAD USERS IN THE AREA TO BE INFORMED OF THE MEASURES," HE ADDED.

/THE DEPARTMENT .....

THE DEPARTMENT WILL MONITOR CLOSELY THE SITUATION WHILE THE IMPROVEMENT MEASURES ARE UNDERWAY.

ON THE IEC, THE WESTBOUND CARRIAGEWAY WEST OF OIL STREET WILL BE MODIFIED TO PROVIDE TWO LANES FOR THE CENTRAL-BOUND TRAFFIC WHICH WILL CONTINUE ONTO VICTORIA PARK ROAD.

SIMILARLY, VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE VICTORIA PARK ROAD WESTBOUND CARRIAGEWAY WILL BE WIDENED TO ALLOW THE CONTINUATION OF THE TWO-LANE CENTRAL-BOUND TRAFFIC AND A SMOOTH FLOW OF TRAFFIC TOWARDS THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL.

THE TRAFFIC ON VICTORIA PARK ROAD, WEST OF THE SLIP ROAD TO GLOUCESTER ROAD, AT PRESENT BOUND FOR HAPPY VALLEY AND WAN CHAI, WILL BE DIVERTED INTO THE SLIP ROAD AND ONTO GLOUCESTER ROAD SERVICE ROAD IN FRONT OF THE EXCELSIOR HOTEL AND THE WORLD TRADE CENTRE.

TO CATER FOR THE ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC, THE SLIP ROAD WILL BE WIDENED FROM ONE LANE TO TWO LANES AND GLOUCESTER ROAD SERVICE ROAD WILL BE WIDENED FROM TWO LANES TO THREE LANES.

ADDITIONALLY, THE BUS LAYBY ON VICTORIA PARK ROAD WEST OF THE PETROL FILLING STATIONS WILL BE CANCELLED AND RELOCATED ON GLOUCESTER ROAD SERVICE ROAD WEST OF CANNON STREET. THIS RELOCATION WILL AFFECT 18 BUS ROUTES, REPRESENTING A TOTAL OF ABOUT 120 BUSES IN THE PEAK HOUR.

WHEN THE NEW BUS STOP IS COMPLETED, THE TWO EXISTING BUS STOPS ON GLOUCESTER ROAD: ONE NEXT TO THE PETROL FILLING STATIONS, AND THE OTHER ON THE SERVICE ROAD WEST OF PATERSON STREET WILL BE CANCELLED.

THE AFFECTED BUS ROUTES WILL BE DIVERTED INTO GLOUCESTER ROAD SERVICE ROAD VIA THE SLIP ROAD EAST OF THE PETROL FILLING STATIONS.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT FEATURE IS THE PROVISION OF A BUS GATE NEAR PERCIVAL STREET TO FACILITATE EASY EXIT OF BUSES TO GLOUCESTER ROAD.

MOREOVER, THE JUNCTIONS OF HING FAT STREET/GORDON ROAD/WING HING STREET AND HING FAT STREET/TSING FUNG STREET/VICTORIA PARK ROAD WILL ALSO BE IMPROVED TO PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE ROUTE BETWEEN IEC AND CAUSEWAY ROAD/HAPPY VALLEY.

TO FACILITATE THE NEW TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEME, SOME EXISTING ROAD MARKINGS AND TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE ALTERED AND NEW ONES ADDED WHILE CLOSURE OF LANES WILL ALSO BE REQUIRED.

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IMPROVING WORK SAFETY THROUGH TRAINING AND EDUCATION

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PROPER TRAINING AND EDUCATION HAVE A REAL IMPACT ON IMPROVING SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE CONDITIONS IN INDUSTRY, REGIONAL CONSULTANT ON CONSTRUCTION SAFETY TRAINING TO THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO), MR W.T. ASUNCION, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE SYMPOSIUM ON SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT - TRAINING WORKSHOPS FOR TRAINERS, MR ASUNCION SAID: "IT IS THROUGH GOOD TRAINING AND EDUCATION THAT WE CAN EXPECT POSITIVE ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO REDUCE THE ENORMOUS NUMBER OF DEATHS AND INJURIES IN VARIOUS INDUSTRIES IN THE ASIAN REGION.

"THE ASIAN REGION IN GENERAL, AND HONG KONG IN PARTICULAR, HAS TAKEN SIGNIFICANT STRIDES IN THE FIELD OF SAFETY AND HEALTH DURING THE PAST TWO DECADES."

HE ADDED THAT THIS HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE BY THE INITIATIVES TAKEN BY GOVERNMENTS WITH THE SUPPORT OF EMPLOYERS' AND WORKERS' ORGANISATIONS.

MR ASUNCION NOTED THAT WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF MORE MECHANISATION AND NEWER TECHNOLOGIES IN INDUSTRY, MANY BASIC AND TRADITIONAL SAFE WORK METHODS MUST BE REVIEWED BY MANAGEMENT AND WORKERS IN ORDER TO MINIMISE THE ASSOCIATED HAZARDS.

THE TWO-DAY SYMPOSIUM, WHICH BEGAN TODAY, IS ORGANISED JOINTLY BY THE REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC OF THE ILO AND THE FACTORY INSPECTORATE DIVISION OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT.

MORE THAN 160 OFFICERS FROM 73 ORGANISATIONS TOOK PART IN A SERIES OF WORKSHOPS WHICH INTRODUCED THE ESSENTIAL METHODS AND INSTRUCTIONAL TRAINING TECHNIQUES FOR ORGANISING OR IMPLEMENTING IN-HOUSE SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAMMES.

OFFICIATING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY WERE MR W.T. ASUNCION; THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, MR DARWIN CHEN; THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH COUNCIL, MR K.Y. TONGSON; AND A COUNCIL MEMBER, MR CHEUNG LUN; AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY OF REGISTERED SAFETY OFFICERS, MR LEE HUNG-KWONG.

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DISADVANTAGES TO CHINESE
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS CAN BE REMOVED

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THE GOVERNMENT MUST NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE AIM OF CONVINCING PARENTS THAT TO CHOOSE A CHINESE MEDIUM SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR THEIR CHILDREN WOULD NOT HANDICAP THEM IN TERMS OF THEIR CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO TERTIARY EDUCATION, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR K.Y. YEUNG SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE CHINESE TEXTBOOKS EXHIBITION, MR YEUNG SAID THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL AT STAKE IN ACHIEVING THIS AIM, AND EVERYONE IN THE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY - INCLUDING SCHOOLS AND THE TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS - HAD A SHARE OF THE RESPONSIBILITY IN ACHIEVING IT.

HE POINTED OUT THAT PARENTAL RESISTANCE TO A CHINESE MEDIUM EDUCATION WOULD REMAIN STRONG UNLESS PARENTS COULD BE CONVINCED THAT SUCH A CHOICE WOULD NOT PLACE THE SECONDARY 6 AND 7 STUDENTS OF CHINESE MIDDLE SCHOOLS AT A DISADVANTAGE IN TERMS OF THEIR ACCESS TO TERTIARY EDUCATION, AND THEREFORE TO BETTER PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE EMPLOYMENT.

THERE ARE SEVERAL STEPS THE GOVERNMENT CAN TAKE TO CONVINCE PARENTS THAT THESE DISADVANTAGES CAN BE OR ARE BEING REMOVED, MR YEUNG SAID.

"IN THE FIRST PLACE, THE ADDITIONAL TEACHERS AND RESOURCES THAT WE HAVE BEEN INVESTING IN THE CHINESE MIDDLE SCHOOLS SINCE 1988 SHOULD, BY 1992-93, ENABLE THEM AND THEIR STUDENTS TO SWITCH TO THE MORE DIFFICULT SYLLABUS B AT SECONDARY 5.

"THUS, BY SEPTEMBER 1993, THE STUDENTS OF CHINESE MIDDLE SCHOOL ENTERING THEIR SIXTH FORM COURSES SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO THE FULL USE OF ENGLISH PAPER ON THE SAME FOOTING AS THOSE OF ENGLISH MEDIUM SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

"SECONDLY, THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND I HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING WITH HEADS OF THE TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS THEIR FUTURE REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRY TO VARIOUS FIRST DEGREE COURSES.

"THESE VARY FROM INSTITUTION TO INSTITUTION, FROM FACULTY TO FACULTY AND INDEED FROM COURSE TO COURSE.

"I AM SEEKING TO HAVE THE POSITION CLARIFIED, BECAUSE PARENTS CANNOT CHOOSE IF THEY REMAIN CONFUSED OR UNCERTAIN, AND I HOPE TO BE ABLE TO OBTAIN A CLEAR AND CONSISTENT STATEMENT OF LANGUAGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS BY THE MIDDLE OF THIS YEAR," HE SAID.

MR YEUNG AND THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION ARE ALSO CONSIDERING WAYS AND MEANS BY WHICH THE SECONDARY 6 AND 7 STUDENTS OF CHINESE MIDDLE SCHOOLS CAN BE HELPED TO OVERCOME THEIR DISADVANTAGES.

"THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS OF PROVIDING HELP TO THESE STUDENTS, MR YEUNG SAID.

/"FOR EXAMPLE .....

"FOR EXAMPLE, ONE POSSIBILITY IS TO ARRANGE FOR MORE THAN ONE SITTING OF THE USE OF ENGLISH EXAMINATION EACH YEAR. THIS WILL REQUIRE CONSULTATION WITH THE EXAMINATION AUTHORITY.

"ANOTHER POSSIBILITY IS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL TUITION IN ENGLISH, IN THE FORM OF BRIDGING COURSE. THIS WILL REQUIRE CAREFUL PLANNING AND CONSULTATION WITH ALL PARTIES CONCERNED," MR YEUNG SAID.

"WHATEVER MIGHT EMERGE OUT THESE DISCUSSIONS - AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO DEVISE A SUITABLE PACKAGE OF MEASURES," HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE EDUCATION COMMISSION BELIEVED QUITE STRONGLY THAT CHINESE IS BECOMING AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT LANGUAGE.

"MASTERING IT IS NOW ESSENTIAL IF ONE WANTS TO GET INTO POLITICS, INTO TRADE WITH OR INVESTMENT IN CHINA, AND INTO THE GENERAL GRADES OF THE CIVIL SERVICE.

"THE COMMISSION BELIEVES THAT, AS THESE SECTORS OF OUR COMMUNITY BECOME LOCALISED AND AS THE AWARENESS OF A CHINESE IDENTITY BECOMES PROGRESSIVELY ENHANCED, THERE WILL INEVITABLY BE AN INCREASING DEMAND FOR CHINESE MEDIUM EDUCATION.

"IN THE LONG TERM, THEREFORE, PARENTAL RESISTANCE TO CHOOSING A CHINESE MEDIUM EDUCATION SHOULD BE WANE," HE NOTED.

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ALL READY FOR THE CENSUS

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THE STAGE IS SET FOR THE TERRITORY-WIDE 1991 POPULATION CENSUS TO COMMENCE TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

TODAY, MORE THAN 14,000 TEMPORARY ENUMERATION STAFF WHO ATTENDED THE FINAL BRIEFING SESSION ORGANISED BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT DECLARED TO KEEP DATA ON INDIVIDUAL PERSONS AND HOUSEHOLDS COLLECTED IN THE CENSUS STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

UNDER THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS ORDINANCE, STAFF ENGAGED IN THE CENSUS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO DIVULGE SUCH INFORMATION TO UNAUTHORISED PERSONS AND THEY ARE LIABLE TO PROSECUTION IF THEY ACT AGAINST THIS PROVISION.

"MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC CAN REST ASSURED THAT THE INDIVIDUAL DATA WILL NOT BE DISCLOSED TO PERSONS NOT PERFORMING ANY FUNCTION RELATING TO THE CENSUS," THE COMMISSIONER FOR CENSUS AND STATISTICS, MR BENJAMIN MOK, SAID WHEN VISITING A FEW FIELD CENTRES THIS (THURSDAY) MORNING.

/AS INFORMATION .....

AS INFORMATION WOULD ONLY BE USED FOR OVERALL STATISTICAL PURPOSES, MR MOK STRESSED THAT NO OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WOULD BE ALLOWED ACCESS TO SUCH INFORMATION.

TO SUPPORT THE LARGE-SCALE FIELD OPERATION, A TOTAL OF 52 CENTRES HAVE BEEN SET UP THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY. A SPECIAL CENSUS HOLIDAY HAS ALSO BEEN DECLARED FOR SCHOOLS TO FACILITATE CENSUS WORK.

ENUMERATORS WILL VISIT ALL HOUSEHOLDS DURING THE 10-DAY CENSUS PERIOD BETWEEN MARCH 15 AND 24. EACH OF THEM WILL IDENTIFY HIMSELF DURING THE VISIT WITH A CENSUS OFFICER CERTIFICATE OF IDENTITY ISSUED BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

HOUSEHOLDS ARE ADVISED TO CHECK THE IDENTITY OF VISITING ENUMERATORS BEFORE ADMITTING THEM INTO THEIR PREMISES. IF IN DOUBT, THEY SHOULD VERIFY THE ENUMERATOR'S IDENTITY BY CALLING THE ENQUIRY HOTLINE 827 1234.

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TWO NOMINATIONS RECEIVED TODAY FOR UC/RC ELECTIONS

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A TOTAL OF TWO NOMINATIONS FOR THE URBAN COUNCIL AND REGIONAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS IN MAY WERE RECEIVED TODAY (THURSDAY).

THE TWO WERE FOR THE URBAN COUNCIL ELECTIONS AND NONE FOR THE REGIONAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

THIS BRINGS TO 18 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF NOMINATIONS FOR THE ELECTIONS.

SO FAR, THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED WAS IN THE KOWLOON CITY WEST CONSTITUENCY WITH TWO CANDIDATES.

NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES WILL LAST UNTIL MARCH 25.

CANDIDATES WILL BE CONTESTING 27 SINGLE SEAT CONSTITUENCIES - 15 IN THE URBAN COUNCIL AREA AND 12 THE REGIONAL COUNCIL AREA.

FOLLOWING ARE THE PERSONAL PARTICULARS OF THE CANDIDATES WHOSE NOMINATION FORMS WERE RECEIVED TODAY:

URBAN COUNCIL CONSTITUENCY AREA	NAME	SEX	AGE	OCCUPATION	CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER
YAU TSIM	WONG KWOK-TUNG	M	41	SOLICITOR	523 6934

/KOWLOON CITY .....

KOWLOON CITY EAST	PAO PING-WING	M	43	SOCIAL SERVICE CONSULTANT	765 6362

REGIONAL COUNCIL CONSTITUENCY AREA	NAME	SEX	AGE	OCCUPATION	CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER
... NIL ...					

FOLLOWING IS A STATISTICAL BREAKDOWN OF THE NOMINATIONS RECEIVED SO FAR:

URBAN COUNCIL CONSTITUENCY AREA	NO. OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED
1. CENTRAL AND WESTERN	NIL
2. WAN CHAI	1
3. NORTH POINT	1
4. SHAU KEI WAN	1
5. SOUTHERN	1
6. KOWLOON CITY WEST	2
7. KOWLOON CITY EAST	1
8. KWUN TONG WEST	1
9. KWUN TONG EAST	1
10. MONG KOK	NIL
11. SHAM SHUI PO EAST	NIL
12. SHAM SHUI PO WEST	1
13. WONG TAI SIN SOUTH	1
14. WONG TAI SIN NORTH	NIL
15. YAU TSIM	1
SUB-TOTAL:	12

REGIONAL COUNCIL CONSTITUENCY AREA	NO. OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED
1. ISLANDS	1
2. NORTH	1
3. SAI KUNG	1
4. SHA TIN EAST	1
5. SHA TIN WEST	1
6. TAI PO	NIL
7. TSUEN WAN	NIL
8. TUEN MUN EAST	NIL
9. TUEN MUN WEST	NIL
10. YUEN LONG	NIL
11. KWAI CHUNG EAST	1
12. KWAI CHUNG WEST AND TSING YI	NIL
SUB-TOTAL:	6

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VTC TO TAKE OVER TRAINING FOR THE DISABLED AND APPRENTICES

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THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL (VTC) WILL SOON TAKE OVER FROM THE GOVERNMENT THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF CO-ORDINATING VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR DISABLED PERSONS AND THE ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE APPRENTICESHIP ORDINANCE.

AT PRESENT, THESE FUNCTIONS ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND INDUSTRIAL TRAINING DEPARTMENT.

THE NECESSARY AMENDMENT BILLS ARE TO BE GAZETTED TOMORROW (MARCH 15). THESE BILLS SEEK THE APPROVAL OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO AMEND THE APPRENTICESHIP ORDINANCE AND THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL ORDINANCE TO EFFECT THE TRANSFER OF THE FUNCTIONS.

"THE TRANSFER OF THESE FUNCTIONS WILL NOT AFFECT THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF EMPLOYERS AND THEIR APPRENTICES UNDER THE APPRENTICESHIP ORDINANCE," A VTC SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE APPRENTICESHIP AMENDMENT BILL RECOMMENDS TO TRANSFER THE POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND INDUSTRIAL TRAINING TO A NEW DIRECTOR OF APPRENTICESHIP TO BE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR.

THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND INDUSTRIAL TRAINING DEPARTMENT IS NOW OPERATING THREE GOVERNMENT SKILLS CENTRES AND ADMINISTERING THREE SUBVENTED VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRES FOR DISABLED PERSONS WITH A TOTAL PROVISION OF ABOUT 1,000 FULL-TIME TRAINING PLACES.

THE VTC WILL TAKE OVER THE GOVERNMENT CENTRES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUBVENTED CENTRES AND WILL CONTINUE TO ESTABLISH NEW CENTRES AS REQUIRED FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR DISABLED PERSONS AGED 15 AND ABOVE FOR OPEN EMPLOYMENT.

"ALL VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WHICH OPERATE SKILLS CENTRES FOR THE DISABLED AND EMPLOYERS WHO EMPLOY REGISTERED APPRENTICES WILL BE INFORMED OF THESE CHANGES BY THE DEPARTMENT," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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REPRINTS OF DEFINITIVE STAMPS AVAILABLE FROM APRIL 2

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THE REPRINTS OF 14 CURRENT DEFINITIVE STAMPS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR SALE FROM APRIL 2 AT SEVEN PHILATELIC OFFICES, THE POSTMASTER GENERAL, MR DOMINIC S.W. WONG, ANNOUNCED TODAY (THURSDAY).

THE SEVEN PHILATELIC OFFICES ARE:

AIRPORT POST OFFICE
BEACONSFIELD HOUSE POST OFFICE
GENERAL POST OFFICE
GRANVILLE ROAD POST OFFICE
PEAK POST OFFICE
SHA TIN CENTRAL POST OFFICE
TSIM SHA TSUI POST OFFICE

THE REPRINTED STAMPS COMPRISE THE FOLLOWING DENOMINATIONS: 10-CENT, 50-CENT, 60-CENT, 70-CENT, 80-CENT, 90-CENT, $1, $1.70, $1.80, $2, $5, $10, $20 AND $50.

DEFINITIVE STAMPS OF THE NEW DENOMINATIONS OF $1.20 AND $2.30 WILL ALSO BE ISSUED ON THE SAME DAY.

OFFICIAL FIRST DAY COVERS WILL NOT BE ISSUED. A HAND-BACK SERVICE WILL BE PROVIDED AT PHILATELIC OFFICES FOR PRIVATE COVERS BEARING A "FIRST DAY" INDICATION.

STAMP COLLECTORS WISHING TO BUY PREFERRED BLOCKS OF STAMPS MAY NOW ORDER THEM AT ANY POST OFFICE.

ORDERS RECEIVED ON OR BEFORE MARCH 23 WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION AT PHILATELIC COUNTERS ON APRIL 12. LATE ORDERS WILL BE ACCEPTED, BUT STAMPS CAN ONLY BE COLLECTED AFTER APRIL 30.

TWO PRESENTATION PACKS OF DEFINITIVE STAMPS WILL BE INTRODUCED -- A LARGE PACK CONTAINING A COMPLETE SET OF DEFINITIVE STAMPS WILL BE SOLD AT $130 EACH, AND A SMALL PACK CONTAINING THE LOW-VALUE DEFINITIVE STAMPS WILL BE SOLD AT $26 EACH.

BOTH PACKS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT PHILATELIC OFFICES FROM APRIL 2.

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ILLEGAL STRUCTURES CLEARED IN KWUN TONG
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SEVENTY ILLEGAL STRUCTURES AT A REAR LANE IN KWUN TONG WERE CLEARED THIS (THURSDAY) MORNING.

THE CLEARANCE WAS PART OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME INITIATED BY THE KWUN TONG DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.

IT WAS JOINTLY CARRIED OUT BY THE KWUN TONG DISTRICT OFFICE, THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE POLICE.

LOCATED AT THE REAR LANE OF 33-55 NGAU TAU KOK ROAD, 45 OF THE STRUCTURES WERE DOMESTIC UNITS AND THE OTHER 25 STRUCTURES WERE USED FOR STORAGE PURPOSES.

OF THE 134 PEOPLE AFFECTED, 56 WERE REHOUSED IN PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES, AND THE OTHER 78 PERSONS WERE ALLOCATED TEMPORARY HOUSING UNITS.

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CENTRALISATION OF LABOUR AND SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNALS
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FIVE COURTS OF THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL - TWO CURRENTLY LOCATED IN TSIM SHA TSUI CENTRE, TWO IN WESTERN MAGISTRACY AND ONE IN TUEN MUN MAGISTRACY - WILL BE RELOCATED TO THE EASTERN LAW COURTS BUILDING AT 29 TAI ON STREET, SAI WAN HO ON SATURDAY (MARCH 16).

ON THE SAME DAY, TWO OTHER LABOUR TRIBUNAL COURTS NOW OPERATING IN KWUN TONG MAGISTRACY WILL MOVE TO SHA TIN MAGISTRACY.

OPERATION OF ALL THESE COURTS WILL RESUME ON MONDAY (MARCH 18).

IN FUTURE, THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL COURTS IN THE EASTERN LAW COURTS BUILDING WILL DEAL WITH HONG KONG AND KOWLOON CASES WHILE THOSE AT SHA TIN MAGISTRACY WILL HANDLE NEW TERRITORIES CASES.

ALSO ON SATURDAY, FOUR SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL COURTS PRESENTLY LOCATED AT SHA TIN LAW COURTS AND TSIM SHA TSUI CENTRE WILL MOVE TO WAN CHAI LAW COURTS BUILDING, WAN CHAI TOWER I, 12 HARBOUR ROAD.

OPERATION OF THESE COURTS WILL RESUME ON MONDAY (MARCH 18).

MEANWHILE, A SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL COURT WILL CONTINUE TO OPERATE AT TSUEN WAN MAGISTRACY.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE JUDICIARY SAID TODAY (THURSDAY) THAT THE RELOCATION IS INTENDED TO FACILITATE THE CENTRALISATION OF COURT SERVICES AND TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM UTILISATION OF STAFF RESOURCES.

"THE OPERATION OF COURTS IN RENTED COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS CAN ALSO BE DISCONTINUED," HE SAID.

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