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## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1993

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1993

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JLG 27TH MEETING: JOINT COMMUNIQUE

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THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP HELD ITS TWENTY-SEVENTH MEETING IN PEKING FROM 14 TO 16 SEPTEMBER 1993.

THE GROUP HAD A FURTHER DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF LANDS WHICH ARE NOW IN USE FOR DEFENCE PURPOSES IN HONG KONG; MATTERS RELATING TO HONG KONG'S INTERNATIONAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS (IRO); HONG KONG'S AIR SERVICES AGREEMENTS; FRANCHISES AND CONTRACTS EXTENDING BEYOND 1997 AND RELATED MATTERS; INVESTMENT PROMOTION AND PROTECTION AGREEMENTS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND RELEVANT COUNTRIES; SURRENDER OF FUGITIVE OFFENDERS AGREEMENTS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND RELEVANT COUNTRIES; MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN CRIMINAL MATTERS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CERTAIN COUNTRIES; LOCALISATION OF LAWS; ADAPTATION OF LAWS; THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE JOINT DECLARATION RELATING TO THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG AFTER 1997; VISA ABOLITION AGREEMENTS; THE RECIPROCAL ENFORCEMENT OF JUDGMENTS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES; AND CIVIL SERVICE MATTERS.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP WILL TAKE PLACE IN LONDON IN DECEMBER 1993.

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MR ANTHONY GALSWORTHY'S OPENING STATEMENT TO THE PRESS:

I RECOGNISE THAT THE AGREED COMMUNIQUE WAS NOT VERY INFORMATIVE, AND WILL TRY TO MAKE UP FOR THAT.

WE HAVE AGREED THAT ONE FURTHER AIR SERVICES AGREEMENT - THAT WITH INDIA - SHOULD BE SIGNED. WE HAVE SIGNED MINUTES RECORDING AGREEMENT ON FOUR FRANCHISES WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN AGREED. HOWEVER WE MADE NO PROGRESS ON CONTAINER TERMINAL 9, DESPITE THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THIS PROJECT HAS FOR HONG KONG'S ECONOMY.

THE POSITION ON DEFENCE LANDS IS THAT THERE REMAIN SOME GAPS OF IMPORTANCE BETWEEN THE POSITIONS OF THE TWO SIDES, DESPITE THE REAL PROGRESS WHICH HAS BEEN MADE. I THINK THAT WE MAY HAVE MADE A LITTLE PROGRESS AT THIS MEETING IN IDENTIFYING POSSIBLE WAYS TO BRIDGE OUR REMAINING DIFFERENCES: THESE WILL BE FURTHER EXPLORED AT AN EXPERT MEETING NEXT MONTH.

OR IRO'S, WE AGREED THAT THREE MULTILATERAL INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS IN THE PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW CATEGORY WOULD CONTINUE IN FORCE AFTER 1997. THESE CONVENTIONS ESTABLISHED SYSTEMS UNDER WHICH CERTAIN PUBLIC DOCUMENTS (FOR EXAMPLE JUDICIAL AND NOTARIAL DOCUMENTS) ARE EXEMPT FROM OFFICIAL CERTIFICATION, LEGAL DOCUMENTS ISSUED IN ONE COUNTRY CAN BE SERVED IN ANOTHER AND EVIDENCE FROM ONE COUNTRY REQUIRED IN CIVIL JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS IN ANOTHER CAN BE OBTAINED.

THESE THREE CONVENTIONS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN ENSURING THAT LEGAL PROCESS AND CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE HONG KONG BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND THEIR TRADING PARTNERS ABROAD MAY BE EFFICIENTLY DISCHARGED.

/TWO OTHER .....

TWO OTHER CONVENTIONS WERE AGREED. ONE, DATING BACK TO THE LATE PART OF THE LAST CENTURY, IS CONCERNED WITH THE PROTECTION OF SUBMARINE CABLES. THE OTHER IS AIMED AT IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS AT SEA AND THEREBY INCREASING THE SAFETY AND EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF SHIPPING.

ON AGREEMENTS ON MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE THERE APPEAR TO BE NO FURTHER POINTS OUTSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES. HOWEVER THE CHINESE SIDE HAVE STILL WITHHELD FORMAL CONFIRMATION OF THE AGREEMENT REACHED BETWEEN THE DELEGATIONS LAST YEAR. THE CHINESE HAVE AGREED TO THE SIGNATURE OF ONE FURTHER BILATERAL AGREEMENT ON FUGITIVE OFFENDERS AND TWO ON INVESTMENT PROTECTION. HOWEVER, THEY HAVE ALSO EFFECTIVELY BROUGHT THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATING WITH THIRD COUNTRIES TO A HALT BY REFUSING TO AGREE TO THE NEGOTIATION OF AGREEMENTS WITH ANY FURTHER COUNTRIES.

NO PROGRESS WAS MADE ON LOCALISATION OF LAWS AND ADAPTATION OF LAWS, DESPITE THE FACT THAT PROPOSALS IN BOTH HAVE BEEN ON THE TABLE FOR A VERY LONG TIME. THE LOCALISATION PROGRAMME IS NOW EFFECTIVELY AT A STANDSTILL, WHICH CARRIES SERIOUS RISKS FOR HONG KONG.

WE DISCUSSED CERTAIN QUESTIONS RELATING TO RIGHT OF ABODE AND NATIONALITY. THE CHINESE ARE STILL CONSIDERING PROPOSALS WE HAVE MADE IN THIS REGARD, AND WE HAVE SUGGESTED THERE SHOULD BE EXPERT DISCUSSIONS.

THE CHINESE RAISED SEVERAL MATTERS RELATING TO THE CIVIL SERVICE, INCLUDING THE 1990 CIRCULAR ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY BY CIVIL SERVANTS; AND THE RECENT INTERIM MEASURES ON RENEWAL OF CONTRACT FOR CERTAIN EXPATRIATE OFFICERS. WE EXPLAINED THAT NO MAJOR CHANGES WERE INVOLVED.

THAT CONCLUDES MY 14TH AND LAST SESSION OF THE JLG AS LEADER OF THE BRITISH SIDE. THERE WAS SOME PROGRESS, BUT IT WAS PRETTY THIN, AND THERE ARE SOME QUITE SERIOUS BLOCKAGES IN CERTAIN AREAS. I WISH MY SUCCESSOR BETTER LUCK.

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GOVERNOR VISITS TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT LICENSING OFFICE

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, TRIED HIS HAND AT PROCESSING AN APPLICATION FOR DRIVING LICENCE WHEN HE VISITED THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT'S HONG KONG LICENSING OFFICE TODAY (THURSDAY).

HE THEN HANDED A DRIVING LICENCE TO A BEARER MS CHAN LAI-PING.

ACCOMPANIED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, MR RAFAEL HUI, AND ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT (MANAGEMENT AND LICENSING), MR ERNEST LEE, MR PATTEN WAS SHOWN ROUND THE OFFICE TO INSPECT THE PROGRESS OF THE DEPARTMENT'S PERFORMANCE PLEDGE SCHEME.

THE GOVERNOR WAS TOLD THAT THE FOUR LICENSING OFFICES HANDLED MORE THAN 2.1 MILLION TRANSACTIONS IN 1992/93. THE HONG KONG LICENSING OFFICE ALONE HANDLED 42 PER CENT OF THE CASES.

TOTAL REVENUE COLLECTED IN 1992/93 WAS \$7,481 MILLION.

/MR PATTEN .....

MR PATTEN WITNESSED THAT ONE OF THE PROBLEMS THE HONG KONG LICENSING OFFICE FACED WAS THE LIMITED SPACE FOR QUEUING.

TO MAKE IT MORE COMFORTABLE FOR CUSTOMERS, SOME IMPROVEMENT WORKS WERE CARRIED OUT IN 1991.

THEY INCLUDED NEW-DESIGN COUNTERS, IMPROVEMENT TO LIGHTING, NEW FLOOR TILES WITH MATCHING COLOUR SCHEME, AND THE INSTALLATION OF A COIN-OPERATED TELEPHONE AND WATER COOLER.

THE GOVERNOR LEARNED THAT AS A LONG-TERM SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM, ALTERNATIVE PREMISES WOULD BE PROVIDED ON THE THIRD FLOOR OF UNITED CENTRE IN QUEENSWAY.

DESIGN FOR THE NEW OFFICE IS IN HAND. THERE WILL BE MORE USER-FRIENDLY FACILITIES FOR CUSTOMERS AND IMPROVED WORKING AREAS FOR STAFF.

THE GOVERNOR LEARNED THAT THE NEW HONG KONG LICENSING OFFICE WOULD BE ABOUT 40 PER CENT LARGER AND WAS EXPECTED TO BE OPERATIONAL BY JUNE NEXT YEAR.

CENTRALLY LOCATED AND WELL SERVED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT, THE NEW OFFICE SHOULD BE WELCOME BY THE PUBLIC.

ON THE PERFORMANCE PLEDGE SCHEME INTRODUCED IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR, THE GOVERNOR WAS BRIEFED THAT ON NORMAL DAYS, THE WAITING TIME WAS JUST ABOUT HALF THAT WAS PROMISED.

THE PLEDGED WAITING TIMES RANGED FROM 45 MINUTES TO 135 MINUTES DEPENDING ON INDIVIDUAL LICENSING OFFICES, TYPE OF TRANSACTION AND TIME OF THE DAY.

IF CUSTOMERS COME BETWEEN 9 AM AND 9.30 AM, THE WAITING TIME IS ONLY ABOUT 20 MINUTES.

SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE PERFORMANCE PLEDGE SCHEME, FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LICENSING OFFICES HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT.

THEY INCLUDED NAME PLATES FOR ALL STAFF, ADDITIONAL CHAIRS FOR THE WAITING PUBLIC, NEW SIGNS, DROP-IN BOXES, SUGGESTION BOXES, MORE NOTICE BOARDS AND NEW BOARDS FOR PUBLICISING PLEDGED TIMES.

THE GOVERNOR LEARNED THAT DURING THE PAST NINE MONTHS, NO SPECIFIC PUBLIC REQUESTS OR COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED. HOWEVER, THREE COMPLIMENTARY LETTERS WERE RECEIVED THROUGH THE SUGGESTION BOX. THE OPERATION OF THE SCHEME IS CLOSELY MONITORED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT PERSONALLY.

THE GOVERNOR WAS ALSO BRIEFED ON THE COMPUTERISED TELEPHONE ENQUIRY SYSTEM WHICH HANDLES ENQUIRIES ROUND-THE-CLOCK.

THE SYSTEM WAS INTRODUCED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE GOVERNMENT. IT CAN PROCESS 20 TELEPHONE CALLS SIMULTANEOUSLY, HENCE RELIEVING THE TELEPHONE OPERATORS FROM ANSWERING SIMPLE ENQUIRIES ABOUT LICENCE FEES.

CUSTOMERS CAN ALSO OBTAIN LICENCE APPLICATION FORMS BY FAX 24 HOURS DAILY AND SEVEN DAYS A WEEK.

MORE PEOPLE ARE NOW USING THE SYSTEM WITH ABOUT 1,300 CALLS A DAY AND EACH CALL LASTING AN AVERAGE OF ABOUT 100 SECONDS.

MOST CALLS ARE MADE DURING OFFICE HOURS. MOST ENQUIRIES ARE ON LICENCE FEES, FOLLOWED BY DRIVING LICENCE MATTERS. AN AVERAGE OF ABOUT 80 LICENSING FORMS A DAY ARE SENT OUT BY FAX.

IN ADDITION TO THE COMPUTERISED TELEPHONE SERVICE, A DEDICATED UNIT FORMED BY FOUR CLERICAL OFFICERS IS AVAILABLE TO ANSWER TELEPHONE ENQUIRIES DURING OFFICE HOURS.

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SHA COMMENTS ON NT PROPERTY SUCCESSION

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ASKED BY MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ABOUT THE APPLICATION OF THE NEW TERRITORIES ORDINANCE (NTO), THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SUEN, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY) THAT PROPERTY OWNERSHIP IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, WHETHER HELD BY A WOMAN OR A MAN WAS IN NO WAY AFFECTED BY THE NEW TERRITORIES ORDINANCE.

MR SUEN EMPHASISED THAT THE ORDINANCE WAS IRRELEVANT INSOFAR AS OWNERSHIP WAS CONCERNED; THE FACT THAT A WOMAN WAS THE OWNER WAS IMMATERIAL.

REFERRING TO RECENT PUBLIC CONCERN OVER INHERITANCE OF PROPERTY, HE SAID THE MATTER SHOULD BE SEEN IN ITS PROPER CONTEXT.

AND THIS WOULD NOT BE A MATTER OF PRESSING CONCERN FOR MOST PROPERTY OWNERS.

THE GOVERNMENT WILL COME UP WITH SUITABLE MEASURES TO REMOVE ANY DOUBT WHICH MAY EXIST IN THIS REGARD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

ACCORDING TO LEGAL ADVICE RECEIVED WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT, THE ORDINANCE ITSELF MAKES NO MENTION OF PRECLUDING FEMALE FAMILY MEMBERS OF PROPERTY OWNERS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES FROM INHERITING.

"THE NTO PROVIDES FOR CUSTOMARY RULES OF SUCCESSION TO APPLY TO LAND NOT EXEMPTED UNDER THE ORDINANCE UNLESS PROBATE OR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION ARE OBTAINED WITHIN THREE MONTHS OF THE DEATH OF THE PROPERTY OWNER."

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE MADE A WILL, SUCCESSION WOULD TAKE PLACE ACCORDING TO THE TERMS OF THE WILL BY FOLLOWING THE PRESCRIBED PROCEDURES.

AS FOR SUCCESSION TO PROPERTIES IN THE ABSENCE OF A WILL, THE PRACTICE IS FOR PRIVATE SOLICITORS TO OBTAIN LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION ON INTESTACY IN THE USUAL WAY.

"WHEN THE PROPERTY IS SOLD, IT IS A MATTER FOR THE PURCHASER'S SOLICITOR TO SATISFY HIMSELF THAT THE TITLE OF THE PROPERTY IS GOOD. I HAVE NO DOUBT PRIVATE SOLICITORS HAVE BEEN DOING THIS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR USUAL HIGH-PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS," HE SAID.

MR SUEN SAID HE KNEW OF VERY FEW PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THE NTO SINCE ITS ENACTMENT IN 1910 AND PROPERTY OWNERS SHOULD NOT BE UNDULY WORRIED.

IN ANY CASE, THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A SPECIFIC DECISION BY A COURT AS TO WHETHER CUSTOMARY LAW WOULD APPLY TO AN OWNER OF PROPERTY, WHETHER OR NOT HE IS AN INDIGENOUS RESIDENT OF THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THE ONLY AUTHORITATIVE COURT DECISION IN RESPECT OF THE APPLICATION OF CHINESE CUSTOMARY LAW TO LAND IN THE NEW TERRITORIES WAS MADE IN 1970 AND THEN IT WAS ONLY MADE IN THE CONTEXT OF LAND HELD BY A TSO - A PARTICULAR CUSTOMARY CHINESE ORGANISATION.

"CERTAINLY, THERE HAS NEVER BEEN ANY DECISION BY THE COURTS ON WHETHER SUCH CUSTOMARY RULES WOULD BE MANDATORY IN THE CASE OF MODERN MULTI-STOREY DEVELOPMENTS," MR SUEN SAID.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONTINUING TO EXAMINE VARIOUS OPTIONS TO ALLAY PUBLIC ANXIETY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

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AIRPORT PROJECT - BIGGEST SINCE BUILDING PYRAMIDS: CS  
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THE NEW AIRPORT PROJECT IS NO LESS THAN A STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG'S INFRASTRUCTURE INTO THE NEXT CENTURY, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR DAVID FORD, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE LUNCHEON OF THE BELGIAM BUSINESS ASSOCIATION, SIR DAVID SAID THE DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE HAD BEEN DESCRIBED AS THE BIGGEST PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT SINCE THE BUILDING OF THE PYRAMIDS.

"IT IS AN ADVENTUROUS PROJECT. BUT IT IS ONE WORTH COMMITTED TO," HE SAID.

IN BUILDING A NEW AIRPORT AT CHEK LAP KOK, A BRAND NEW TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE WILL BE PRODUCED.

THIS INFRASTRUCTURE WILL OPEN UP THE WHOLE OF NORTH LANTAU FOR DEVELOPMENT AND RELIEVE ALL THE CONGESTION ON NATHAN ROAD AS WELL AS PROVIDING NEW LINKS TO CHINA THROUGH THE HUGE PROJECT OF ROUTE THREE.

THE STRATEGY WILL HELP HONG KONG OPEN UP PORT DEVELOPMENT TOO, HE SAID.

THE LAND TO BE RECLAIMED OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS WILL AMOUNT TO HALF AS MUCH RECLAMATION CREATED IN THE WHOLE OF HONG KONG'S HISTORY.

SIR DAVID ALSO PAID TRIBUTE TO THE EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE AIRPORT PROJECT.

HE SAID EUROPE'S SHARE OF CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS AMOUNTED TO NO LESS THAN 41 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL BY VALUE WITH COMPANIES COMING FROM FRANCE, BELGIUM, HOLLAND, THE UNITED KINGDOM, DENMARK, ITALY AND GERMANY.

"THE IDEA THAT THE UNITED KINGDOM IS GETTING THE LION'S SHARE OF THE WORK IS NOT TRUE," HE SAID.

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SHA FURTHER EXPOUNDS SEXUAL EQUALITY

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IN TERMS OF LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION, REMUNERATION AND EDUCATION ATTAINMENT, THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN HONG KONG COMPARES FAVOURABLY WITH THOSE IN ASIAN COUNTRIES, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SUEN, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

HOWEVER, MR SUEN SAID THE PRESENT STATUS OF WOMEN IN HONG KONG WAS NOT A REASON FOR COMPLACENCY.

HE WAS SPEAKING AT THE LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE ZONTA CLUB OF HONG KONG EAST.

HE SAID IT HAD LONG BEEN THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO PROMOTE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEN AND WOMEN.

"WE HAVE TAKEN THE LEAD TO INTRODUCE EQUAL PAY IN THE CIVIL SERVICE 18 YEARS AGO.

"IN 1989 AMENDMENTS WERE MADE TO THE INLAND REVENUE ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR SEPARATE TAXATION FOR MARRIED WOMEN, AND GOVERNMENT IS IN THE PROCESS OF REVIEWING OUR LEGISLATION WHICH CURRENTLY PROVIDE FOR DIFFERENT TREATMENTS FOR WOMEN AND MEN."

ON A SUBJECT THAT RELATES STRONGLY TO THE PERCEPTION AND VALUES OF PEOPLE IN SOCIETY, MR SUEN NOTED THE IMPORTANCE OF FOCUSING PUBLIC ATTENTION ON AND DRAWING COMMUNITY-WIDE RECOGNITION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES.

AND AS THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY IS ULTIMATELY DETERMINED BY THE ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF ITS MEMBERS, HE BELIEVED THAT IN A FREE SOCIETY THAT TREASURED THE RIGHTS OF AN INDIVIDUAL, IT WAS NOT FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ENGINEER PERSONAL CHOICES NOR TO PRESCRIBE SOCIAL ATTITUDES OR NORMS.

HOWEVER, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THERE WAS NOTHING THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO.

HENCE THE RECENTLY PUBLISHED GREEN PAPER ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND MEN SETS OUT A NUMBER OF MEASURES TO FURTHER PROMOTE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES.

MR SUEN SAID THE ADMINISTRATION WAS KEEN TO HEAR VIEWS ON THE PROPOSALS.

THESE INCLUDE STEPPING UP PUBLIC EDUCATION ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN AND THE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO THEM, DEVELOPING A CHARTER FOR WOMEN, INTRODUCING EQUAL PAY AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION, EXTENDING THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN TO HONG KONG (CEDAW) OR SETTING UP A WOMEN'S COMMISSION.

IN ORDER TO PRESENT A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW TO THE PUBLIC AND TO FACILITATE PUBLIC DELIBERATION, THE GREEN PAPER ALSO GIVES A FACTUAL DESCRIPTION OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT MEASURES.

FOR EXAMPLE, THE GREEN PAPER POINTED OUT THAT IN PRACTICAL TERMS, HONG KONG SHOULD BE WELL-POSITIONED TO MEET THE AIMS OF CEDAW.

HOWEVER, THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE WIDE-RANGING OBLIGATIONS THAT COME WITH THE EXTENSION OF CEDAW TO THE TERRITORY WILL HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED.

SUCH NEW OBLIGATIONS INCLUDE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED BY ENACTING LEGISLATION PROHIBITING SEX DISCRIMINATION BY INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS.

A MACHINERY TO CO-ORDINATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION WOULD ALSO BE REQUIRED, MR SUEN SAID.

AS TO INTRODUCING EQUAL PAY LEGISLATION, MR SUEN SAID, THIS WOULD OFFER AN AVENUE FOR REDRESS FOR AGGRIEVED FEMALE EMPLOYEES BUT THIS COULD RESULT IN A CERTAIN DEGREE OF GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN REGULATING THE LABOUR MARKET.

THE CONSULTATION PERIOD ON THE GREEN PAPER WILL LAST UNTIL THE END OF THIS YEAR. MR SUEN SAID HE HOPED TO SEE LIVELY DEBATES.

ALL THE COMMENTS, HE SAID, WOULD BE ANALYSED AND RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD BE MADE TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ON THE WAY FORWARD.

"AFTER A DECISION IS TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, WE WILL TAKE THE NECESSARY STEPS TO PUT THE NECESSARY MEASURES IN PLACE," HE CONCLUDED.

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CUSTOMER LIAISON GROUP TO BE SET UP

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THE POSTMASTER GENERAL, MR M PAGLIARI, ANNOUNCED TODAY (THURSDAY) THAT A HONG KONG POST OFFICE CUSTOMER LIAISON GROUP WOULD BE SET UP IN NOVEMBER TO PROMOTE BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE POST OFFICE AND ITS CUSTOMERS.

MR PAGLIARI SAID: "THE HONG KONG POST OFFICE IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING AN EFFICIENT POSTAL SERVICE.

"THE PURPOSE OF THE GROUP IS TO ASSIST IN THE EFFECTIVE MONITORING OF POST OFFICE PERFORMANCE PLEDGES AND TO PROVIDE FEEDBACKS AND VIEWS ON POSTAL SERVICES SUCH THAT THE POST OFFICE CAN RESPOND BETTER TO THE NEEDS OF CUSTOMERS"

THERE WILL BE THREE REGIONAL SUB-GROUPS NAMELY HONG KONG INCLUDING OUTLYING ISLANDS, KOWLOON AND NEW TERRITORIES.

EACH SUB-GROUP WILL HAVE 20 MEMBERS SELECTED BY BALLOT IF NECESSARY FROM APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC. EACH SUB-GROUP WILL MEET QUARTERLY AND THE MEETINGS WILL BE CHAIRED BY A SENIOR CONTROLLER OF POSTS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POSTAL SERVICES OF THAT REGION.

A MAIN CUSTOMER LIAISON GROUP COMPRISING THESE THREE SUB-GROUPS WILL MEET ONCE A YEAR.

A MEMBER OF THE DIRECTORATE FROM THE POST OFFICE HEADQUARTERS WILL CHAIR THE MEETING.

LEAFLETS PROVIDING DETAILS OF THE CUSTOMER LIAISON GROUP AND APPLICATION FORMS ARE OBTAINABLE FROM ANY POST OFFICE. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER CAN APPLY BY COMPLETING AND RETURNING THE APPLICATION FORM ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 22.

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SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT VISITS KCRC

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THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR K Y YEUNG, TODAY (THURSDAY) VISITED THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION (KCRC) TO SEE FOR HIMSELF THE OPERATIONS OF BOTH HEAVY AND LIGHT RAILS IN HONG KONG.

ACCOMPANIED BY THE KCRC CHAIRMAN, MR KEVIN HYDE, AND THE ACTING DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT (TRANSPORT SERVICES), MR ISAAC Y N CHOW, MR YEUNG TOOK A RIDE ON A LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT (LRT) VEHICLE AND TOURED THE LRT OPERATIONS CONTROL CENTRE AND DEPOT.

THE PARTY PROCEEDED TO LO WU STATION WHERE MR YEUNG WAS GIVEN A CONDUCTED TOUR OF RAIL FACILITIES THERE AND WAS BRIEFED ON WAYS TO HANDLE THE INCREASING FREIGHT AND PASSENGER TRAFFIC ACROSS THE BORDER.

THEY THEN TRAVELLED BY TRAIN TO SHA TIN STATION TO INSPECT THE STATION IMPROVEMENT WORK BEING UNDERTAKEN BY KCRC FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PASSENGERS.

MR YEUNG WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THE OPERATION OF A CUSTOMER SERVICES CENTRE AND LIGHT EMITTING DIODE INFORMATION DISPLAY PANELS.

THROUGHOUT THE VISIT, MR YEUNG WAS BRIEFED BY MR HYDE ON KCRC'S PLANS TO UPGRADE ITS SERVICES WHICH INCLUDED A \$900 MILLION PROGRAMME TO REFURBISH AND EXPAND THE KOWLOON STATION TO COPE WITH THE ANTICIPATED GROWTH IN RAIL TRAFFIC.

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1993

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UK HEALTH SECRETARY VISITS BOYS' HOME

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UK SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HEALTH, THE RT HON MRS VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY THIS (THURSDAY) AFTERNOON VISITED THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT'S PUI CHI BOYS' HOME, A GAZETTED INSTITUTION UNDER THE PROBATION OF OFFENDERS ORDINANCE FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS.

ACCOMPANIED BY THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MRS LOUISE WONG, MRS BOTTOMLEY TOURED THE THREE-STOREY BUILDING WHERE SHE MET RESIDENTS IN GROUPS LEARNING MUSIC AND COOKING.

MRS WONG TOLD HER THAT THE OBJECTIVE OF PROVIDING SERVICES FOR OFFENDERS WAS TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE DIRECTIONS OF THE COURTS ON THE TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS BY SOCIAL WORK METHODS.

THESE ARE DONE THROUGH PROBATION SUPERVISION, COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDERS, RESIDENTIAL TRAINING AND AFTERCARE SERVICES.

"THE AIM IS TO REINTEGRATE OFFENDERS INTO THE COMMUNITY," MRS WONG ADDED.

INCLUDING THE PUI CHI BOYS' HOME, RESIDENTIAL TRAINING FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS IS PROVIDED IN SIX INSTITUTIONS, WITH A TOTAL OF 420 PLACES.

RESIDENTIAL PERIODS USUALLY RANGE FROM SIX TO 12 MONTHS. TRAINING PROGRAMMES SUCH AS ACADEMIC STUDIES AND PREVOCATIONAL TRAINING AND SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMMES ARE PROVIDED.

MRS BOTTOMLEY WAS IMPRESSED WHEN SHE MET A GROUP OF BOYS LEARNING COMPUTER-AIDED ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS, AND A GIRLS' COMMUNITY SERVICE GROUP PREPARING FOR VISITS TO SICK CHILDREN IN THE PRINCE OF WALES HOSPITAL.

SHE ALSO WATCHED A VIDEO ON THE HOME'S SERVICE PROJECT IN HELPING SINGLETON OLD PEOPLE. THE BOYS JOINED A GROUP OF MENTALLY HANDICAPPED YOUTH TO CLEAN THE HOMES OF THE ELDERLY AND BROUGHT THEM OUT FOR FUN.

BEFORE WINDING UP THE VISIT, MRS BOTTOMLEY PRAISED THE DEPARTMENT FOR RUNNING A COMPREHENSIVE RESIDENTIAL TRAINING AND PROBATION SERVICE FOR JUVENILE OFFENDERS, AND EMPHASISING ON LINKAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY.

"STAFF AND STUDENTS OF THE HOME WERE ENCOURAGED BY THE SECRETARY'S SUPPORT FOR OUR THERAPEUTIC APPROACH EMPHASISING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT," MRS WONG NOTED.

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UK HEALTH CHIEF VISITS QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL  
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THE VISITING UK SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HEALTH, THE RT HON MRS VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY, TOURED QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL (QMH) THIS (THURSDAY) MORNING.

MRS BOTTOMLEY WAS GREETED ON ARRIVAL BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG; DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS OF THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY, DR E K YEOH; AND HOSPITAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF QMH, DR VIVIAN WONG.

SHE WAS BRIEFED ON HONG KONG'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, THE STRUCTURE OF THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY AND THE OPERATION OF QMH.

MRS BOTTOMLEY SAID SHE WAS IMPRESSED BY HONG KONG'S HALTH CARE SYSTEM AND PRAISED THE HOSPITAL FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF SERVICES IT PROVIDED AND THE HIGH PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF THE STAFF.

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UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT  
STATISTICS FOR MAY - JULY  
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THE SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR MAY - JULY 1993 WAS 2.1%, AND THE UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATE WAS 1.8%, ACCORDING TO THE LATEST LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS RELEASED TODAY (THURSDAY) BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

THE PROVISIONAL SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR THE PERIOD JUNE - AUGUST 1993 WAS 2.1%, WHILE THE PROVISIONAL UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATE WAS 1.5%.

THE LATEST FIGURES SUGGEST THAT THE LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS SEEMED TO HAVE TIGHTENED UP SLIGHTLY IN THE MORE RECENT MONTHS, AFTER HAVING REMAINED RELATIVELY STABLE IN THE EARLY PART OF THIS YEAR.

DURING THE PERIOD MAY - JULY 1993, THE NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED PERSONS, ADJUSTED FOR VARIATIONS IN THE NUMBER OF FIRST-TIME JOB-SEEKERS, WAS ESTIMATED AT 59,900, WHILE THE NUMBER OF UNDEREMPLOYED PERSONS WAS ESTIMATED AT 49,900.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT STATISTICS WERE OBTAINED FROM A CONTINUOUS GENERAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

THE SURVEY FOR MAY - JULY 1993 COVERED A QUARTERLY SAMPLE OF SOME 11,900 HOUSEHOLDS OR 41,600 PERSONS, SELECTED SCIENTIFICALLY TO REPRESENT THE LAND-BASED CIVILIAN NON-INSTITUTIONAL POPULATION IN HONG KONG.

RELEVANT DATA WAS OBTAINED IN THE SURVEY BY INTERVIEWING EACH INDIVIDUAL MEMBER AGED 15 AND ABOVE IN THE HOUSEHOLDS SAMPLED.

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IN THE SURVEY, THE DEFINITIONS USED IN MEASURING UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT FOLLOW CLOSELY THOSE RECOMMENDED BY THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION.

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS IS GIVEN IN THE REPORT ON THE GENERAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY WHICH IS PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES A YEAR. THE NEXT REPORT COVERING THE QUARTER ENDING JUNE 1993 WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GROUND FLOOR, GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, CONNAUGHT PLACE, CENTRAL BY THE END OF THIS MONTH AT \$23.50 A COPY.

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#### DAYA BAY CONTINGENCY PLAN LEAFLETS FOR PUBLIC

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS PUBLISHED A BILINGUAL LEAFLET ON THE GUANGDONG DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER STATION CONTINGENCY PLAN, WHICH WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE PUBLIC THROUGH DISTRICT OFFICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATE OFFICES FROM TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

COPIES ARE ALSO BEING SENT TO SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH THEIR SCHOOLS.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THE POWER STATION, SCHEDULED TO START OPERATING TOWARDS THE END OF 1993, WAS BUILT IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

THE RISK OF ANY SERIOUS NUCLEAR ACCIDENT WAS EXTREMELY SMALL, HE SAID.

"NONETHELESS, THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAS PREPARED A COMPREHENSIVE CONTINGENCY PLAN, WHICH WOULD IMMEDIATELY COME INTO OPERATION IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT AT THE POWER STATION LEADING TO A RELEASE OF RADIOACTIVITY," HE SAID.

THE LEAFLET EXPLAINS IF THERE EVER WAS AN ACCIDENT, HOW HONG KONG MIGHT BE AFFECTED. IT OUTLINES WHAT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WOULD DO, AND WHAT MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC SHOULD DO IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES.

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#### ACTION AGAINST UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURES IN VILLAGES

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THE BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT IS TAKING STRONG ACTION TO WEED OUT UNAUTHORISED BUILDINGS IN VILLAGE AREAS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THE BUILDINGS HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED WITHOUT APPROVAL OR EXEMPTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT, IN BREACH OF THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE (APPLICATION TO THE NEW TERRITORIES).

THE DEPARTMENT TODAY (THURSDAY) SERVED ORDERS TO THE OWNERS OF TWO SUCH BUILDINGS IN YUEN LONG, REQUIRING THEM TO DEMOLISH THE STRUCTURES WITHIN 60 DAYS.

THE STRUCTURES ARE BUILT ON DEMARCATION DISTRICT LOTS IN WONG NAI TUN TSUEN IN SHAP PAT HEUNG AND FAN TIN TSUEN IN SAN TIN.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID IF THE OWNERS DID NOT COMPLY WITH THE ORDERS, THE DEPARTMENT WOULD ARRANGE FOR A GOVERNMENT CONTRACTOR TO CARRY OUT THE DEMOLITION WORK, AND WOULD RECOVER THE NECESSARY COST INCLUDING SUPERVISION CHARGES FROM THE OWNERS.

HE REMINDED THOSE PLANNING TO CARRY OUT BUILDING WORKS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES TO OBTAIN APPROVAL FROM DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES OR THE BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID ACTION AGAINST UNAUTHORISED VILLAGE BUILDINGS WOULD CONTINUE.

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OPERATION TO STAMP OUT ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS  
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A 24-HOUR OPERATION AGAINST ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION JOINTLY MOUNTED BY THE POLICE AND THE LABOUR DEPARTMENTS THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY HAS RESULTED IN THE ARRESTS OF 115 PERSONS.

THE OPERATION WAS PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ONGOING EFFORT TO FLUSH OUT ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

THE 115 PERSONS ARRESTED BY THE POLICE HAD BEEN REFERRED TO THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT. THOSE FOUND TO BE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WILL BE REPATRIATED.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN REITERATED TODAY (THURSDAY) THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF ANY AMNESTY FOR ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

"OUR LATEST OPERATION SHOULD DRIVE HOME THE POINT THAT THERE WILL BE NO CHANGE TO THIS POLICY. ANYONE FOOLISH ENOUGH TO BELIEVE OTHERWISE IS ONLY CHEATING HIMSELF," HE SAID.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID APART FROM CONTINUOUS CHECKS THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY, THERE WAS NO LET-UP IN ANTI-ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION EFFORTS AT THE BORDER.

"A HIGH STATE OF VIGILANCE WILL CONTINUE TO BE MAINTAINED BY THE POLICE AND THE SECURITY FORCES BOTH AT THE LAND AND SEA BORDERS," HE SAID.

DURING THE JOINT OPERATION, WHICH BEGAN AT 5 AM YESTERDAY (WEDNESDAY) AND ENDED AT 5 AM TODAY (THURSDAY), THE POLICE HAD STEPPED UP THEIR IDENTIFICATION SPOT CHECKS IN PUBLIC PLACES AND CARRIED OUT CHECKS AT SUSPICIOUS LOCATIONS.

AS A RESULT, A TOTAL OF 11,245 PERSONS AND 3,025 VEHICLES WERE STOPPED FOR IDENTIFICATION CHECKS.

ON THE LABOUR FRONT, INSPECTORS OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT VISITED 2,459 ESTABLISHMENTS TO WEED OUT ANY ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WHO MAY BE WORKING, AND TO CHECK THAT EMPLOYERS FULFIL THEIR LEGAL OBLIGATION OF KEEPING PROPER RECORDS OF THEIR EMPLOYEES.

A TOTAL OF 8,964 EMPLOYEES HAD THEIR PROOF OF IDENTITY CHECKED DURING THE OPERATION.

SIXTEEN ESTABLISHMENTS WERE FOUND NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE A RECORD OF EMPLOYEES FOR INSPECTION.

THE SPOKESMAN REMINDED EMPLOYERS THAT THEY COULD BE FINED UP TO \$250,000 AND JAILED FOR UP TO THREE YEARS IF THEY WERE FOUND TO BE EMPLOYING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND  
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION
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OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,700
REVERSAL OF LAF	+300
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	2,000
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-95
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,905
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	TWI 111.8 *-0.4* 16.9.93

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS		EF NOTES/ HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS				
TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.72 PCT	14 MONTHS	2411	4.625	101.46	3.36
1 MONTH	2.73 PCT	17 MONTHS	2502	4.75	101.72	3.52
3 MONTHS	2.83 PCT	20 MONTHS	2505	3.75	100.01	3.78
6 MONTHS	3.01 PCT	23 MONTHS	2508	4.625	101.39	3.90
12 MONTHS	3.26 PCT					
TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 9,920MN						
CLOSED 16 SEPTEMBER 1993						

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EXCO MEMBER APPOINTED

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RIGHT HONOURABLE CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, HAS TODAY (FRIDAY) APPOINTED MR JOHN GRAY, THE CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE HONG KONG AND SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION, AS A NON-OFFICIAL MEMBER OF HIS EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. MR GRAY WILL JOIN THE COUNCIL IMMEDIATELY AND THERE WILL BE NO FIXED TERM FOR HIS APPOINTMENT.

MR GRAY HAS A DISTINGUISHED RECORD OF PUBLIC SERVICE. HE IS CURRENTLY CHAIRMAN OF THE PORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD, A MEMBER OF THE PROVISIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY, A MEMBER OF THE GOVERNOR'S BUSINESS COUNCIL AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG BUSINESS SCHOOL.

IN ANNOUNCING THE APPOINTMENT, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "I AM VERY PLEASED TO WELCOME JOHN GRAY TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. HIS WIDE EXPERIENCE IN BUSINESS AND FINANCE, AND HIS IMPRESSIVE RECORD OF PUBLIC SERVICE, WILL ENABLE HIM TO PROVIDE THE IMPARTIAL AND AUTHORITATIVE ADVICE WHICH IS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL."

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TROPICAL STORM ROUNDUP

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PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN HONG KONG IS GRADUALLY RETURNING TO NORMAL WITH THE LOWERING OF THE NO. 8 SIGNAL.

BUS SERVICES ON HONG KONG ISLAND, KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES HAVE LARGELY RESUMED.

AS AT 4.15 PM, MTR WAS OPERATING AT FIVE-MINUTE INTERVALS. THE KCR WAS RUNNING AT SIX-MINUTE INTERVALS.

THE LRT HAS RESUMED SERVICE AND IS OPERATING AT 10 MINUTE INTERVALS. ALL ITS FEEDER BUS ROUTES HAVE RESUMED OPERATION.

TRAMS ON HONG KONG ISLAND WERE OPERATING A LIMITED SERVICE BECAUSE OF OBSTRUCTION AT WHITTY STREET.

THE PEAK TRAM AND FERRY SERVICES OPERATED BY THE STAR FERRY AND YAUMATI FERRY WERE STILL SUSPENDED.

AT THE AIRPORT, A TOTAL OF 14 FLIGHTS - SEVEN INCOMING AND SEVEN OUT-GOING - HAVE BEEN CANCELLED. 39 ARRIVALS AND 44 DEPARTURES WERE DELAYED. FOURTEEN IN-COMING FLIGHTS WERE RE-DIRECTED TO OTHER DESTINATIONS.

A TAXI DRIVER WAS KILLED AND 130 OTHERS WERE INJURED DURING THE PASSAGE OF BECKY.

THE 46-YEAR-OLD TAXI DRIVER WAS INVOLVED IN A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT IN CLEARWATER BAY ABOUT 10.30 AM. HE WAS TAKEN TO THE UNITED CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL WHERE HE WAS CERTIFIED DEAD.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1993

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OF THOSE INJURED, 33 WERE ADMITTED TO HOSPITALS WHILE 97 WERE TREATED AND DISCHARGED.

AT THE HEIGHT OF THE STORM, A TOTAL OF 123 PEOPLE HAD SOUGHT REFUGE IN THE 47 SHELTERS OPENED BY THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION. SEVENTEEN OF THEM STAYED IN SHELTERS ON HONG KONG ISLAND, 85 IN KOWLOON AND 21 IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

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#### SCAFFOLD SAFETY URGED AFTER TYPHOON

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THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT TODAY (FRIDAY) REMINDED SITE CONTRACTORS OF THEIR OBLIGATIONS TO ENSURE THAT THEIR SCAFFOLDS ARE IN SAFE WORKING CONDITION IN PARTICULAR BAMBOO SCAFFOLDS AFTER EXPOSURE TO POOR WEATHER CONDITIONS SUCH AS TYPHOON AND RAINSTORM.

"UNDER THE CONSTRUCTION SITES (SAFETY) REGULATIONS, A CONTRACTOR HAS TO ENSURE THAT HIS SCAFFOLDS ARE OF GOOD CONSTRUCTION, MADE OF STRONG AND SOUND MATERIALS, FREE FROM PATENT DEFECTS AND PROPERLY MAINTAINED, IN ADDITION, THE SCAFFOLDS SHOULD ALSO BE SECURED AND FIXED IN POSITION TO PREVENT ACCIDENTAL DISPLACEMENT," CHIEF FACTORY INSPECTOR, MR CHAN TAT-KING SAID.

"IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT THAT SCAFFOLDS SHOULD NOT BE USED AFTER EXPOSURE TO ADVERSE WEATHER UNLESS IT HAS BEEN INSPECTED BY A COMPETENT PERSON AND HAS BEEN CERTIFIED TO BE IN SAFE WORKING CONDITION," MR CHAN ADDED.

HE WENT ON TO URGE ALL CONTRACTORS TO TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO MAKE GOOD ALL THOSE DEFECTIVE SCAFFOLDS IN THEIR SITE AFTER TYPHOON BECKY. MR CHAN WARNED THAT CONTRACTORS SHOULD PERSISTENTLY MAINTAIN THEIR SCAFFOLDS IN THE SAFEST CONDITION AND EXERCISE STRICT SUPERVISION TO ENSURE THAT THE SCAFFOLDS ARE USED SAFELY.

THE FACTORY INSPECTORATE WILL CLOSELY MONITOR THE SITUATION AND WILL TAKE OUT PROSECUTION AGAINST THOSE CONTRACTORS WHO TURN A BLIND EYE TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF SAFETY REGULATIONS, MR CHAN ADDED.

ENQUIRIES RELATING TO SCAFFOLD SAFETY CAN BE MADE TO THE FACTORY INSPECTORATE DIVISION OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT ON 815 0678.

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