



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES
BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL.: 842 8777

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1994

| <u>CONTENTS</u> | <u>PAGE NO.</u> |
|--|-----------------|
| ACTION PLAN TO HELP DISABLED IN EMPLOYMENT | 1 |
| GOVERNOR SPEAKS TO PRESS AFTER SUMMIT MEETING ON OPEN EMPLOYMENT FOR DISABLED PERSONS | 2 |
| SUMMIT MEETING TO PROMOTE OPEN EMPLOYMENT OF DISABLED | 5 |
| STATEMENT ON NEW AIRPORT PROPOSALS | 6 |
| PROPOSED INCREASES IN FIXED PENALTIES | 7 |
| HK AND DENMARK SIGN INVESTMENT PROTECTION AGREEMENT | 8 |
| SPECIAL REVIEW ARTICLE ON MORTALITY TRENDS IN HK 1971 - 1992 | 8 |
| TWO CAR PARK SITES TO LET | 9 |
| LAND REGISTRY CUSTOMER GROUP HOLDS FIRST MEETING | 10 |
| FIRE PREVENTION MESSAGE FOR FLOATING POPULATION | 11 |
| LUNAR NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS FOR WORKERS | 11 |
| STUDENTS INVITED TO JOIN DRAWING CONTEST | 12 |
| SPECIAL MAIL DELIVERY IN NEW YEAR HOLIDAY | 13 |
| FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETS ON FRIDAY | 13 |
| HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS .. | 14 |

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1994

- 1 -

ACTION PLAN TO HELP DISABLED IN EMPLOYMENT

* * * * *

THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, TODAY SETS OUT AN ACTION PROGRAMME WHICH THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO PURSUE FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE DISABLED OVER THE NEXT YEAR.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER CHAIRING THE SUMMIT MEETING ON OPEN EMPLOYMENT FOR DISABLED PERSONS, MR PATTEN SAID THE PROGRAMME INCLUDED:

* PUTTING MORE RESOURCES INTO EDUCATION AND COUNSELING ABOUT DISABILITY AND HANDICAP;

* PRODUCING BOOKLETS TO HELP THE DISABLED AT INTERVIEWS AND THOSE WHO WILL WORK WITH THE DISABLED UNDERSTAND THEIR POTENTIALS; AND

* INCREASING THE NUMBER OF CIVIL SERVICE VACANCIES FOR THE DISABLED.

THESE ARE WAYS TO HELP THE GOVERNMENT TAKE A LEAD IN EMPLOYING DISABLED PERSONS, THE GOVERNOR SAID.

MR PATTEN SAID REPRESENTATIVES FOR EMPLOYERS AND VOLUNTARY GROUPS HAD AGREED IN THE MEETING TO LOOK AT HIS PROPOSALS.

HE ALSO HOPES THAT EMPLOYERS CAN, FOR EXAMPLE, SET OUT IN THEIR ANNUAL REPORTS A FULL STATEMENT ON THEIR POLICY AND APPROACH TO EMPLOYING THE DISABLED.

ANOTHER WAY IS FOR EMPLOYERS TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO VOLUNTARY TARGETS AS THE GOVERNMENT HAS DONE TO INCREASE THE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DISABLED.

THE GOVERNMENT AIMS TO PUSH THE TARGET UP TO 4,000, THE GOVERNOR SAID.

TO SHARE THE EXPERIENCE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS OF COUNSELING AND REHABILITATION WORK, MR PATTEN INTENDS TO HOLD A SIMILAR MEETING NEXT YEAR TO REPORT ON PROGRESS.

"I THINK THESE ANNUAL SUMMITS WITH EMPLOYERS AND DISABILITY GROUPS ARE A VERY IMPORTANT WAY OF BROADENING OPPORTUNITY IN HONG KONG AND IN THAT WAY, WE ARE NOT ONLY GIVING PROPER JUSTICE TO THE DISABLED BUT WE ARE ALSO DOING OURSELVES A FAVOUR BY HELPING TO DEVELOP OUR ECONOMY," HE SAID.

MR PATTEN SAID HONG KONG COULD NOT AFFORD TO THROW AWAY THE ABILITIES OF THE DISABLED WHOSE SKILL COULD HELP THE TERRITORY DEVELOP AT ITS FASTEST POSSIBLE SPEED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/2

GOVERNOR SPEAKS TO PRESS AFTER SUMMIT MEETING
ON OPEN EMPLOYMENT FOR DISABLED PERSONS

* * * * *

GOVERNOR: GOOD MORNING. AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW JUST OVER A YEAR AGO, IN RESPONSE TO A SUGGESTION PUT UP AT ONE OF MY PUBLIC MEETINGS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DISABLED, WE HELD A SUMMIT BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THOSE WITH DISABILITIES AND TRANSPORT OPERATORS TO CONSIDER WHAT MORE COULD BE DONE TO MEET THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF THOSE WITH HANDICAP OR DISABILITY. THAT WAS A CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS AND WE ARE HOLDING A FOLLOW-UP TO SEE THE PROGRESS THAT'S BEEN MADE IN A FEW WEEKS' TIME.

WELL, I HAD A SIMILAR REQUEST AT MY PUBLIC MEETING IN SHA TIN IN THE AUTUMN. AGAIN, A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DISABLED, MR LEO LAM, ASKED ME IF I'D CALL A SIMILAR SUMMIT TO DISCUSS WITH THE EMPLOYERS AND THE ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTING THOSE WITH DISABILITY, IF I DISCUSS WITH THEM WAYS IN WHICH WE COULD IMPROVE THE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOSE WITH DISABILITY. WE ALL KNOW IT'S BOTH A PROBLEM AND A HUGE OPPORTUNITY, A PROBLEM FOR ALL SORTS OF REASONS, SOMETIMES IGNORANCE ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTIONS WHICH THOSE WITH DISABILITY CAN MAKE, SOMETIMES PREJUDICE, SOMETIMES THE FACT THAT WE ARE A FAST CHANGING ECONOMY AND SOME OF THE JOBS WHICH HAVE SOMETIMES IN THE PAST BEEN DONE BY THOSE WITH DISABILITIES DISAPPEAR. A JOB WHICH MANY BLIND PEOPLE HAVE DONE IS TO WORK AS TELEPHONE OPERATORS BUT MODERN TECHNOLOGY IS REDUCING THOSE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES. WE HAVE TO FIND OTHERS.

SO, FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS, THE DISABLED HAVE DIFFICULTIES IN GETTING THE JOBS WHICH THEY DESERVE. BUT THERE IS ANOTHER POINT WHICH ALL OF US SHOULD RECOGNISE IS THE COMMUNITY. WE CAN'T AFFORD, QUITE APART FROM THE REASONS OF HUMANITY, WE CAN'T AFFORD SIMPLY TO THROW AWAY THE ABILITIES, THE POTENTIAL OF THOSE WITH HANDICAP WHEN WE NEED EVERY SKILL WE CAN POSSIBLY GET IN HONG KONG TO DEVELOP AS FAR AND AS FAST AS WE'D LIKE. WE HAVE A VERY LOW UNEMPLOYMENT IN HONG KONG.

WE HAVE A VERY TIGHT LABOUR MARKET. WE HAVE SHORTAGES, SKILL SHORTAGES IN A NUMBER OF AREAS. SO WE NEED TO MAKE THE MAXIMUM USE OF ALL OUR TALENTS AND WE'VE BEEN FOCUSSED THIS MORNING ON THE REAL AND SUBSTANTIAL TALENTS OF THOSE WITH DISABILITY. WHAT'S BEEN VERY IMPRESSIVE IS TO HEAR STORIES AFTER STORIES FROM EMPLOYERS ABOUT THEIR SUCCESSES IN EMPLOYING SOME WITH DISABILITY. WE KNOW IN THE CIVIL SERVICE THAT THERE IS, FOR EXAMPLE, A LOWER TURNOVER, LESS WASTAGE WITH OUR DISABLED, OUR HANDICAPPED COLLEAGUES IN THE CIVIL SERVICE. WE'VE HEARD EXPRESSIONS FROM EMPLOYERS ABOUT THE LOYALTY, ABOUT THE COMMITMENT, ABOUT THE HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY WHICH THEY VERY OFTEN ACHIEVE WITH WORKERS WITH DISABILITY.

UPSTAIRS WE HAD A USEFUL EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE GROUPS REPRESENTING THE DISABLED AND EMPLOYERS AND I SET OUT AN ACTION PROGRAMME WHICH GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO PURSUE OVER THE NEXT YEAR. WE ARE GOING TO PUT MORE RESOURCES INTO EDUCATION ABOUT DISABILITY AND HANDICAP. WE ARE GOING TO PUT MORE RESOURCES INTO COUNSELLING. WE ARE GOING TO PRODUCE BOOKLETS TO HELP THE DISABLED AT INTERVIEWS AND TO HELP THOSE WHO WILL WORK WITH THE DISABLED UNDERSTAND THEIR POTENTIALS. WE ARE GOING TO COMMIT OURSELVES TO INCREASING THE NUMBER OF THOSE IN THE CIVIL SERVICE WHO ARE DISABLED AND OVER THE NEXT COUPLE OF YEARS. IN THOSE WAYS AND OTHERS WHICH I ELABORATED UPSTAIRS, WE ARE GOING TO, I HOPE, TAKE A LEAD.

I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT WE CAN ALSO SEE EMPLOYERS AND VOLUNTARY GROUPS CONTRIBUTING AND THEY'VE AGREED TO LOOK AT THE PROPOSALS I'VE PUT FORWARD. I THINK IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THOSE GROUPS REPRESENTING EMPLOYERS WOULD ADVISE THEIR MEMBERS TO SET OUT, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THEIR ANNUAL REPORTS, A FULL STATEMENT ON THEIR POLICY AND APPROACH TO EMPLOYING THE DISABLED. AND THERE IS ALSO A CASE, I THINK, FOR EMPLOYERS COMMITTING THEMSELVES TO VOLUNTARY TARGETS AS GOVERNMENT HAS DONE, NOT QUOTAS, NOTHING LAID DOWN CENTRALLY, NOTHING STATUTORY BUT A VOLUNTARY APPROACH TO INCREASE THE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DISABLED WHICH I THINK WOULD GIVE PERSONNEL MANAGERS IN ALL OUR FIRMS A REAL AND SUBSTANTIAL STEERING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. WE NEED FROM NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS THEIR HELP IN SHARING WITH US SOME OF THEIR EXPERIENCE OF COUNSELLING AND THEIR REHABILITATION WORK.

SO THOSE WERE A FEW OF THE PROPOSALS THAT WE DISCUSSED UPSTAIRS AND WHAT WE ARE INTENDING TO DO IS TO HOLD A SIMILAR MEETING NEXT YEAR SO WE CAN REPORT ON PROGRESS. I THINK THESE ANNUAL SUMMITS WITH EMPLOYERS AND DISABILITY GROUPS ARE A VERY IMPORTANT WAY OF BROADENING OPPORTUNITY IN HONG KONG AND IN THAT WAY, WE ARE NOT ONLY GIVING PROPER JUSTICE TO THE DISABLED BUT WE ARE ALSO DOING OURSELVES A FAVOUR BY HELPING TO DEVELOP OUR ECONOMY.

QUESTION: MR PATTEN, MANY PEOPLE ARE WORRIED THAT YOU WILL CUT THE BUDGET IN SOCIAL WELFARE IN ORDER TO MEET CHINA'S CONCERN ON AIRPORT WHICH YOU REFUSED TO DISCLOSE?

GOVERNOR: I PREFER THIS MORNING, IF I MAY, TO TALK ABOUT DISABILITY. BUT THERE ARE GOING TO BE NO CUTS IN OTHER PROGRAMMES IN ORDER TO PAY FOR THE AIRPORT. THAT'S NO WITH A CAPITAL N AND A CAPITAL O. NO CUTS IN ORDER TO MEET WHAT WE WANT TO DO ON THE AIRPORT. FORTUNATELY, WE ARE IN A STRONG ENOUGH POSITION FINANCIALLY IN THIS COMMUNITY, NOT THANKS TO THE GOVERNMENT, EXCEPT THAT WE'VE MANAGED THINGS I HOPE PRUDENTLY, BUT THANKS TO THE HARD WORK OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG. WE ARE IN A STRONG ENOUGH POSITION AND MANAGE TO INCREASE OUR SPENDING ON SOCIAL PROGRAMMES WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PUTTING MORE INTO OUR INFRASTRUCTURE. THAT IS SOMETHING WE DETERMINE TO DO.

QUESTION: WHY DO YOU STEER AWAY FROM QUOTA ON VACANCIES FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

GOVERNOR: WELL, I THINK IT WAS INTERESTING UPSTAIRS OF IT. IT WAS MENTIONED BY A COUPLE OF PEOPLE. BUT I THINK THE GENERAL FEELING WAS THAT IT WAS MORE IN LINE WITH THE HONG KONG APPROACH TO TRY TO ENCOURAGE VOLUNTARY EFFORT AND TO TRY TO ENCOURAGE COMMITMENT BY EMPLOYERS RATHER THAN TO DRIVE THEM INTO DOING SOMETHING STATUTORY. THAT WAS CERTAINLY THE FEELING IN THE MEETING UPSTAIRS. BUT I GUESS THAT IF WE DON'T MAKE A SUCCESS OF IT WITH VOLUNTARY TARGETS, THE ARGUMENTS FOR CENTRAL QUOTAS WOULD INCREASE IN STRENGTH AND VOLUME. THAT'S AN ARGUMENT FOR TRYING TO MAKE SURE THAT THE VOLUNTARY APPROACH WORKS.

QUESTION: MR PATTEN, HOW COME THE MEETING WAS HELD BEHIND CLOSED DOOR?

/GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR: I THINK IT'S SOMETIMES EASIER TO HAVE THAT SORT OF DISCUSSION WITHOUT NECESSARILY DOING IT WITH ALL THE CAMERAS. BUT WE ARE REPORTING TO YOU WHAT HAPPENED AND I'M SURE THAT MANY OF THOSE WHO TOOK PART IN THE MEETING WILL WANT TO LET YOU KNOW AS WELL EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED. AND I'LL BE REPORTING BACK TO THOSE WHO WEREN'T AT THE MEETING WHAT HAPPENED.

QUESTION: ON YOUR FOURTH PROPOSAL FOR THE AIRPORT FINANCIAL PROJECT, WILL THAT BE MAKING MAJOR CONCESSIONS TO THE CHINESE SIDE AND ?

GOVERNOR: I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO ADD TO WHAT I'D SAID YESTERDAY.

QUESTION: AND THAT WILL BE AT THE EXPENSE OF THE TAXPAYERS?

GOVERNOR: I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO ADD TO WHAT I SAID YESTERDAY AND I REPEAT WHAT I SAID EARLIER, THAT WE THANKS TO THE STRONG POSITION OF OUR FINANCIAL RESERVES IN HONG KONG, WE CAN AFFORD TO DO WHAT WE ARE SUGGESTING TO THE CHINESE.

QUESTION: WHAT IS THE VOLUNTARY TARGET IN THE CIVIL SERVICE?

GOVERNOR: WE HAVE AT PRESENT GOT ABOUT 3,000. WHEN I SAY ABOUT, THERE IS SOME ARGUMENT ABOUT THE DEFINITIONS USED. BUT THE CIVIL SERVICE BRANCH BELIEVE THAT WE ARE EMPLOYING 3,778 HANDICAPPED PEOPLE IN THE CIVIL SERVICE AND WE ARE AIMING TO PUSH THAT UP TO 4,000, AND CERTAINLY BY THE SUMMIT AFTER NEXT, WE WILL DO BETTER IF WE CAN.

QUESTION: THAT'S ...

GOVERNOR: THAT'S OVER 200. AND THAT WAS REGARDED ...

QUESTION: BUT THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF THEM...

GOVERNOR: SORRY?

QUESTION: THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF THEM IN HONG KONG ?

GOVERNOR: THERE ARE THOUSANDS BUT THE NUMBER WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED IS NOT KNOWN AND WE COMMITTED OURSELVES TO TRYING TO GET A MORE ACCURATE FIGURE, A MORE ACCURATE STATISTIC ON THOSE WHO ARE WITHOUT WORK IN THE DISABLED COMMUNITY. IT COULD WORK IF THE CHANCES WERE THERE. ANY MORE.

QUESTION: IS THERE ANY MEASURE TO ENCOURAGE THE EMPLOYERS TO EMPLOY THE DISABLED, FOR EXAMPLE, TAX EXEMPTION?

/GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR: I'VE MENTIONED EARLIER THAT WE HAVE SUGGESTED THAT EMPLOYERS, THOUGH IT'S FINALLY A MATTER FOR THEM, WE'VE SUGGESTED THAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD ALL SET OUT IN THEIR ANNUAL REPORTS WHAT THEIR POLICY IS ON RECRUITING AND EMPLOYING THE DISABLED. I THINK THAT WILL BE A VERY GOOD STEP FORWARD. IT'S CERTAINLY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO GIVE A LEAD. I HOPED THAT EVEN THOUGH THE FIGURE ISN'T AS GREAT AS YOU WOULD LIKE, THAT YOU WOULD RECOGNISE THAT IT'S CONSIDERABLY GREATER THAN IN ALMOST ANY OTHER SECTOR OF SOCIETY AND IT MAY BE YOU THINK THAT'S IN THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY OR IN THE MEDIA IN GENERAL, MORE OPPORTUNITIES COULD BE PROVIDED FOR THE DISABLED. AND IF YOU GOT UP TO THE PERCENTAGE IN THE CIVIL SERVICE YOU'LL BE DOING RATHER BETTER THAN AT THE MOMENT.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

SUMMIT MEETING TO PROMOTE OPEN EMPLOYMENT OF DISABLED

* * * * *

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR W K LAM, SAID WHILE MANY EMPLOYERS COMPLAINED ABOUT MANPOWER SHORTAGE, NOT MANY OF THEM THOUGHT ABOUT TAPPING A VERY VALUABLE SOURCE OF MANPOWER READILY AVAILABLE TO THEM.

HE WAS REFERRING TO THE DISABLED IN THE COMMUNITY.

SPEAKING AT THE SUMMIT MEETING ON OPEN EMPLOYMENT OF DISABLED PERSONS THIS (WEDNESDAY) MORNING, MR LAM NOTED THAT THERE WERE ABOUT 600 EMPLOYERS ON THE "WILLING" LIST OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT'S SELECTIVE PLACEMENT DIVISION.

THOUGH IT IS ENCOURAGING, IT IS STILL FAR FROM SATISFACTORY.

"WE HAVE A MUCH LARGER POOL OF NEARLY 250,000 EMPLOYERS," HE SAID. "IF MORE OF THEM ARE WILLING TO TAKE ON THE DISABLED, WE CAN DO MUCH BETTER IN ENHANCING THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE DISABLED AND AT THE SAME TIME IN ALLEVIATING THE MANPOWER SHORTAGE PROBLEM THAT WE FACE."

THE TWO-HOUR MEETING WAS CHAIRED BY THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN. ALSO ATTENDING WERE THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG; THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR MICHAEL SZE; AND REPRESENTATIVES OF DISABLED GROUPS AND EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATIONS.

ADDRESSING THE GATHERING, MRS WONG SAID OPEN EMPLOYMENT WAS ONE OF THE KEYS TO THE TRUE INTEGRATION OF DISABLED PERSONS INTO THE COMMUNITY.

IT BRINGS ABOUT SELF-RESPECT AND FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE, THE HELPING DISABLED PERSONS TO BECOME CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY.

BETWEEN NOW AND 1996/97, THE GOVERNMENT WILL SPEND ABOUT \$33 MILLION TO STRENGTHEN PUBLIC EDUCATION ON REHABILITATION. ABOUT \$2 MILLION WILL BE ALLOCATED TO THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT TO PROMOTE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE TALENTS AND WORKING ABILITIES OF DISABLED PERSONS.

MRS WONG SAID FUNDS HAD ALSO BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO DOUBLE THE SIZE OF THE MOBILE CREW FROM 30 TO 60 IN 1994/95 TO PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT FOR THE DISABLED.

SOME NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS HAVE RECENTLY COME UP WITH A NUMBER OF NEW INITIATIVES ON SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT.

"THESE HAVE PROVED TO BE VERY EFFECTIVE IN ENHANCING THE INTEGRATION OF DISABLED PERSONS," SHE SAID.

"WE WILL CONTINUE TO RENDER THE NECESSARY SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE IN THE PROCESS."

MR SZE, ON HIS SECOND DAY AS SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, SAID THE GOVERNMENT, BEING THE LARGEST EMPLOYER IN HONG KONG, AIMED TO PLACE DISABLED PERSONS IN APPROPRIATE JOBS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE WHEREVER POSSIBLE.

HE SAID THE NUMBER OF DISABLED PERSONS EMPLOYED IN THE CIVIL SERVICE IN THE LAST 10 YEARS HAD GROWN FROM 1,432 TO 3,778, AN INCREASE OF 164 PER CENT.

"AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL CIVIL SERVICE, IT HAS ALSO INCREASED FROM 0.86 PER CENT TO 2.07 PER CENT," MR SZE SAID.

"HOWEVER, I AM NOT SUGGESTING THAT WE SHOULD FEEL COMPLACENT. WE ARE ALWAYS PREPARED TO REVIEW WHAT WE ARE DOING TO SEE IF ANY IMPROVEMENT COULD BE MADE."

MR SZE ALSO REVEALED THAT A NUMBER OF MEASURES HAD BEEN TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO PROMOTE THE EMPLOYMENT OF DISABLED PERSONS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.

THESE INCLUDE A WIDE CIRCULATION OF VACANCY ADVERTISEMENTS TO DISABLED PERSONS THROUGH THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, CIVIL SERVICE BRANCH'S ATTENDANCE AT SELECTION INTERVIEWS AND REGULAR PROMOTIONAL VISITS BY THE CIVIL SERVICE BRANCH, HEALTH AND WELFARE BRANCH AND LABOUR DEPARTMENT TO INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENTS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

STATEMENT ON NEW AIRPORT PROPOSALS

* * * * *

IN ANSWER TO MEDIA QUESTIONS, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY):

"WE HAVE THIS AFTERNOON PASSED DETAILS OF OUR NEW FINANCING PROPOSALS FOR THE AIRPORT AND AIRPORT RAILWAY TO THE CHINESE SIDE. WE REPEATED OUR HOPE THAT THERE COULD BE AN EARLY MEETING OF THE AIRPORT COMMITTEE. WE ARE AWAITING THEIR RESPONSE."

- - - - 0 - - - -

PROPOSED INCREASES IN FIXED PENALTIES

* * * * *

APPROVAL WILL BE SOUGHT FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO INCREASE FIXED PENALTY FINES FOR TRAFFIC OFFENCES, IN LINE WITH INFLATION.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THE OBJECTIVE OF THE INCREASE WAS TO RESTORE THE DETERRENT EFFECT OF FIXED PENALTIES WHICH WERE LAST REVISED IN JULY 1989.

THE PRESENT AND PROPOSED FIXED PENALTIES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

| | PRESENT PENALTY | PROPOSED PENALTY |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| PARKING OFFENCES | \$200 | \$320 |
| MOVING OFFENCES | \$140 | \$230 |
| | \$200 | \$320 |
| | \$280 | \$450 |

THE SPOKESMAN SAID ILLEGAL PARKING HAD BECOME MUCH MORE SERIOUS RECENTLY. THIS WAS REFLECTED IN THE 41 PER CENT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PARKING TICKETS ISSUED LAST YEAR COMPARED WITH 1992.

THE DETERRENT EFFECT OF FIXED PENALTY FINES HAS BEEN ERODED BY INFLATION, RESULTING IN THE POLICE HAVING TO SPEND MUCH MORE RESOURCES TO CONTAIN THE SITUATION.

HE DISPELLED THE SUGGESTION THAT THE INCREASE IN PARKING OFFENCES IS DUE TO A REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES AVAILABLE.

"SURVEYS UNDERTAKEN BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SHOW THAT THE OVERALL NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES HAS INCREASED ROUGHLY IN LINE WITH THE RATE OF VEHICLE GROWTH."

APPROVAL WILL ALSO BE SOUGHT FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO INCLUDE AN ADDITIONAL OFFENCE IN THE FIXED PENALTY SCHEDULE.

THE EFFECT WOULD BE TO MAKE A TAXI DRIVER WHO FAILS TO SIT IN OR STAND BESIDE THE FIRST OR SECOND TAXI AT A TAXI STAND PUNISHABLE BY A FIXED PENALTY OF \$320 WHICH IS THE SAME AS FIXED PENALTIES FOR OTHER TAXI-RELATED OFFENCES.

THE PROPOSALS TO INCREASE THE FIXED PENALTIES AND TO EXPAND THE FIXED PENALTY SCHEDULE HAVE RECEIVED THE SUPPORT OF THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COUNCIL.

- - - - 0 - - - -

HK AND DENMARK SIGN INVESTMENT PROTECTION AGREEMENT

* * * * *

HONG KONG AND DENMARK TODAY (WEDNESDAY) SIGNED AN AGREEMENT FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF INVESTMENTS.

THE AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED IN COPENHAGEN BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR T H CHAU, ON BEHALF OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, AND THE MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND CO-OPERATION, MS MIMI JAKOBSEN, FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF DENMARK.

THIS IS THE THIRD AGREEMENT HONG KONG HAS SIGNED IN THE IMPORTANT AREA OF INVESTMENT PROMOTION AND PROTECTION. OTHER AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE WITH THE NETHERLANDS AND AUSTRALIA.

SUCH AGREEMENTS ARE BILATERAL INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS BINDING UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW, AIMING TO ENCOURAGE AND PROTECT, ON A RECIPROCAL BASIS, INVESTMENTS OF ONE CONTRACTING PARTY IN THE OTHER'S AREA.

SPEAKING AT THE SIGNING CEREMONY, MR CHAU SAID HONG KONG WELCOMED OVERSEAS AND LOCAL INVESTMENT ON EQUAL TERMS.

"THE AGREEMENT WILL OFFER DANISH INVESTORS THE ASSURANCE THAT THEIR INVESTMENTS IN HONG KONG WILL BE PROTECTED, NOT JUST DURING THE TRANSITION FROM BRITISH TO CHINESE SOVEREIGNTY, BUT FOR MANY YEARS BEYOND THAT."

"THE AGREEMENT GUARANTEES FAIR TREATMENT FOR DANISH INVESTMENTS IN HONG KONG AND VICE VERSA, PROPER COMPENSATION IF INVESTMENTS ARE EXPROPRIATED, AND THE FREE TRANSFER OF INVESTMENTS AND RETURNS ON INVESTMENT."

"IT ALSO PROVIDES FOR INVESTMENT DISPUTES TO BE SETTLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH LAID DOWN PROCEDURES," MR CHAU SAID.

THE AGREEMENT HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BY THE CHINESE SIDE IN THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP AND HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT.

THE AGREEMENT WILL ENTER INTO FORCE 30 DAYS AFTER SIGNATURE, AND WILL REMAIN EFFECTIVE FOR AN INITIAL PERIOD OF 15 YEARS. THEREAFTER, IT WILL REMAIN IN FORCE INDEFINITELY, UNLESS EITHER PARTY GIVES ONE YEAR'S NOTICE.

- - - - 0 - - - -

SPECIAL REVIEW ARTICLE ON MORTALITY TRENDS IN HK 1971 - 1992

* * * * *

HONG KONG EXPERIENCED SIGNIFICANT MORTALITY IMPROVEMENT BETWEEN 1971 AND 1992 AS INDICATED BY THE INCREASED LIFE EXPECTANCY OF THE POPULATION.

THE INFANT AND MATERNAL MORTALITY RATES ALSO DROPPED TO VERY LOW LEVELS, AGAIN POINTING TO SUBSTANTIAL MORTALITY DECLINE.

THESE FINDINGS WERE CONTAINED IN A SPECIAL REVIEW ARTICLE ENTITLED "MORTALITY TRENDS IN HONG KONG 1971 - 1992" IN THE NOVEMBER ISSUE OF THE HONG KONG MONTHLY DIGEST OF STATISTICS.

ALTHOUGH THE PATTERN OF THE CAUSES OF DEATH HAD CHANGED CONSIDERABLY DURING THE PERIOD, NEOPLASMS, DISEASES OF THE CIRCULATORY SYSTEM AND DISEASES OF THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM STILL ACCOUNTED FOR THE MAJORITY OF DEATHS.

THIS ARTICLE SUMMARISES MORTALITY TRENDS BY AGE AND SEX AND ALSO BY CAUSE OF DEATH.

THE TRENDS OF THE THREE MOST COMMONLY USED HEALTH INDICATORS, VIZ LIFE EXPECTANCY, INFANT MORTALITY RATE AND MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE, ARE ALSO DISCUSSED.

THE HONG KONG MONTHLY DIGEST OF STATISTICS IS NOW AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT \$48 A COPY.

PURCHASES CAN BE MADE AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, GROUND FLOOR, CONNAUGHT PLACE, HONG KONG AND AT THE PUBLICATIONS SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ON 19TH FLOOR, WANCHAI TOWER, 12 HARBOUR ROAD, WAN CHAI, HONG KONG.

- - - - 0 - - - -

TWO CAR PARK SITES TO LET
* * * * *

THE LANDS DEPARTMENT IS INVITING TENDERS FOR THE SHORT-TERM TENANCIES OF TWO LOTS OF GOVERNMENT LAND ON HONG KONG ISLAND AND IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THE LOT IN WESTERN PARK ROAD, WESTERN RECLAMATION, COVERING ABOUT 3,400 SQUARE METRES, MAY BE USED AS A FEE-PAYING PUBLIC CAR PARK FOR GOODS VEHICLES, EXCLUDING CONTAINER TRACTORS AND TRAILERS.

THE TENANCY IS FOR SIX MONTHS, RENEWABLE MONTHLY.

THE OTHER LOT AT MA ON SHAN ROAD, AREA 103, MA ON SHAN, SHA TIN, HAVING AN AREA OF ABOUT 6,500 SQUARE METRES, IS ALSO DESIGNATED AS A FEE-PAYING PUBLIC CAR PARK FOR PRIVATE CARS, LIGHT VANS, LORRIES, BUSES AND TRACTORS, EXCLUDING CONTAINERS AND TRAILERS.

IT CARRIES A TENANCY OF THREE YEARS, RENEWABLE QUARTERLY.

CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF TENDERS IS NOON ON FEBRUARY 18.

FORMS OF TENDER, TENDER NOTICE AND CONDITIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES AT HONG KONG WEST AND SHA TIN, THE LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD AND THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES KOWLOON, 10TH FLOOR, YAU MA TEI CARPARK BUILDING, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, KOWLOON.

TENDER PLANS CAN ALSO BE INSPECTED AT THE OFFICES.

- - - - 0 - - - -

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1994

- 10 -

LAND REGISTRY CUSTOMER GROUP HOLDS FIRST MEETING

* * * * *

THE LAND REGISTRY HAS WELCOMED SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS CUSTOMER LIAISON GROUP AT ITS FIRST MEETING TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

ONE SUGGESTION RELATES TO THE PROPOSED SERVICE TIME OF DIRECT ACCESS TO THE COMPUTERISED LAND REGISTER FROM TERMINALS AT CLIENTS' OFFICES. THIS SERVICE IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN IN MID-1994.

THE LAND REGISTRY WOULD CONSIDER THIS SUGGESTION TO ACCOMMODATE CLIENTS' EXPECTATIONS.

THE LAND REGISTRAR, MR KENNETH PANG TSAN-WING, SAID: "THE CUSTOMER LIAISON GROUP IS A USEFUL FORUM FOR A DIRECT EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN CUSTOMERS AND THE LAND REGISTRY ON THE SERVICES PROVIDED."

"IT WILL IMPROVE THE REGISTRY'S UNDERSTANDING OF CUSTOMERS' NEEDS SO THAT SERVICES CAN BE ENHANCED TO MEET THEIR EXPECTATIONS. I AM PLEASED TO NOTE THAT ITS FIRST MEETING HAS PROVED TO BE SO CONSTRUCTIVE."

THE MEETING, CHAIRED BY THE REGISTRY MANAGER, MR P Y CHOY, WAS ATTENDED BY 12 REPRESENTATIVES FROM VARIOUS PROFESSIONAL BODIES AND ORGANISATIONS WHICH ARE REGULAR USERS OF THE LAND REGISTRY'S SERVICES.

THEY INCLUDE THE LAW SOCIETY OF HONG KONG, HONG KONG SOCIETY OF ACCOUNTANTS, HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF SURVEYORS, HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS, HONG KONG REAL ESTATE AGENCIES ASSOCIATION LTD AND SOCIETY OF HONG KONG REAL ESTATE AGENTS LTD.

AT THE MEETING, LAND REGISTRY REPRESENTATIVES BRIEFED MEMBERS ON THE REGISTRY'S SERVICES AND PERFORMANCE PLEDGES.

MR CHOY SAID SINCE LAUNCHING ITS PERFORMANCE PLEDGES ON AUGUST 2 LAST YEAR, THE LAND REGISTRY HAD BEEN ABLE TO MEET ITS PERFORMANCE TARGETS AND HAD NOT RECEIVED ANY COMPLAINT ABOUT NON-FULFILMENT OF A PLEDGE.

"THE REGISTRATION OF LAND DOCUMENTS CAN NOW BE COMPLETED WITHIN FIVE WEEKS; A COMPUTER PRINTOUT OR A DIAZO/PHOTOCOPY OF A LAND DOCUMENT PRODUCED WITHIN 30 MINUTES; AND A CERTIFIED COPY OF SUCH DOCUMENTS WITHIN ONE-AND-A-HALF WEEKS," HE NOTED.

MR CHOY SAID AT PEAK TIMES IT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE REGISTRY TO EMPLOY TEMPORARY STAFF OR FOR PERMANENT STAFF TO WORK OVERTIME TO DELIVER THE SERVICES ACCORDING TO THE PLEDGES.

"LAND REGISTRY STAFF ARE ALWAYS CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED TO WORK TO THE PLEDGES, AND THEIR DAILY PERFORMANCE IS CLOSELY MONITORED BY THE MANAGEMENT," HE NOTED.

/LIAISON GROUP

LIAISON GROUP MEMBERS WERE ALSO BRIEFED ON THE LATEST PROGRESS OF MAJOR NEW SERVICES COMING ON STREAM, INCLUDING THE COMPUTERISED DIRECT SEARCH FACILITIES WHICH WILL ENABLE USERS TO MAKE ON-LINE SEARCH OF THE LAND REGISTER THROUGH COMPUTER TERMINALS AT THEIR OFFICES, COMPUTERISATION OF THE NEW TERRITORIES LAND REGISTER, AND MICROFILMING/IMAGING OF LAND RECORDS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

AFTER THE MEETING, THE MEMBERS VISITED THE LAND REGISTRY OFFICES AND PUBLIC SEARCH AREAS ON THE 17TH AND 18TH FLOORS OF QUEENSWAY GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

- - - - 0 - - - -

FIRE PREVENTION MESSAGE FOR FLOATING POPULATION

* * * * *

THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT HAS, SINCE MONDAY, IMPLEMENTED A SERIES OF MEASURES IN TYPHOON SHELTERS TO PROMOTE GREATER AWARENESS OF FIRE PREVENTION AMONG FISHERMEN AND BOAT PEOPLE WITH THE APPROACH OF THE LUNAR NEW YEAR.

FIRE OFFICERS OF THE MARINE DIVISION HAVE BEEN VISITING TYPHOON SHELTERS IN ABERDEEN, SHAU KEI WAN, YAU MA TEI, CAUSEWAY BAY, CHEUNG CHAU, CHAI WAN AND TUEN MUN ON BOARD FIREBOATS TO CONVEY THE FIRE PREVENTION MESSAGE THROUGH BROADCAST AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLICITY BOOKLETS.

DURING THE PATROLS, THE OFFICERS ALSO ADVISE THE PEOPLE TO ENSURE THAT THE FAIRWAYS AND FIRE LANES IN THE TYPHOON SHELTERS ARE ADEQUATELY MAINTAINED AND CLEAR FOR OBSTRUCTION.

"WE THINK IT IS APPROPRIATE AT THIS TIME TO STEP UP THE FIRE PREVENTION PUBLICITY BECAUSE MOST FISHERMEN ARE RETURNING TO HONG KONG TO CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR AND THAT THE NUMBER OF FISHING BOATS IN TYPHOON SHELTERS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE SEVERAL TIMES MORE THAN THE NORMAL DAYS," A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT EXPLAINED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

LUNAR NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS FOR WORKERS

* * * * *

EMPLOYERS ARE REMINDED THAT THE LUNAR NEW YEAR'S DAY AND THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS OF THE YEAR OF THE DOG ON FEBRUARY 10, 11 AND 12 RESPECTIVELY ARE STATUTORY HOLIDAYS FOR WORKERS.

ALL EMPLOYEES, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR WAGE LEVELS, ARE ENTITLED TO THE HOLIDAYS AND MUST BE PAID FOR THE DAYS OFF IF THEY HAVE WORKED CONTINUOUSLY FOR THE SAME EMPLOYER FOR THREE MONTHS OR LONGER IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE STATUTORY HOLIDAYS.

DAILY HOLIDAY PAY SHOULD BE EQUIVALENT TO AN EMPLOYEE'S EARNINGS ON A FULL WORKING DAY AND SHOULD INCLUDE BASIC WAGES AS WELL AS ALLOWANCES THAT CAN BE EXPRESSED IN MONEY TERMS SUCH AS MEALS AND COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCES.

WHERE THE EARNINGS VARY FROM DAY TO DAY, THE HOLIDAY PAY SHOULD BE THE AVERAGE DAILY EARNINGS DURING EVERY COMPLETE WAGE PERIOD, WHICH SHOULD BE BETWEEN 28 DAYS AND 31 DAYS PRECEDING THE HOLIDAYS.

IF AN EMPLOYEE IS REQUIRED TO WORK ON A STATUTORY HOLIDAY, HE MUST BE GIVEN AN ALTERNATIVE DAY OFF WITHIN 60 DAYS BEFORE OR AFTER THE HOLIDAY.

FURTHER ENQUIRIES ABOUT STATUTORY HOLIDAYS CAN BE MADE ON 717 1771.

- - - - 0 - - - -

STUDENTS INVITED TO JOIN DRAWING CONTEST

* * * * *

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY STUDENTS ARE BEING INVITED TO JOIN THE HONG KONG FLOWER SHOW 1994 DRAWING COMPETITION TO BE HELD AT VICTORIA PARK ON MARCH 19.

THEY ARE REQUIRED TO DRAW ANY EXHIBITS FROM LIVE WITH PENCILS, BRUSHES, WATER COLOUR AND PASTELS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SAID: "THE COMPETITION IS AIMED TO PROMOTE STUDENTS' INTEREST IN LIVE DRAWING AND HELP THEM APPRECIATE THE BEAUTY OF A WIDE RANGE OF FLOWERS AND FLORAL DISPLAYS."

LAST YEAR ABOUT 3,000 STUDENTS - 1,000 PRIMARY AND 2,000 SECONDARY STUDENTS - TOOK PART IN THE COMPETITION.

THE EVENT IS ORGANISED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S CULTURAL CRAFTS CENTRE AND THE HONG KONG FLOWER SHOW 1994 ORGANISING COMMITTEE.

THE COMPETITION WILL BE DIVIDED INTO PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL GROUPS.

THE FIRST 10 WINNERS IN EACH DIVISION WILL BE AWARDED CERTIFICATES OF MERITS AND BOOK COUPONS WORTH FROM \$150 TO \$300. THEIR DRAWINGS WILL BE DISPLAYED DURING THE FLOWER SHOW.

APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE MADE THROUGH SCHOOLS TO THE ART AND CRAFT SECTION, CULTURAL CRAFTS CENTRE, 4 PAK FUK ROAD, NORTH POINT, BEFORE MARCH 2.

FURTHER ENQUIRIES MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S ART AND CRAFT SECTION, CULTURAL CRAFTS CENTRE, ON 563 6756 OR 562 1967.

- - - - 0 - - - -

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1994

- 13 -

SPECIAL MAIL DELIVERY IN NEW YEAR HOLIDAY

* * * * *

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL, MR MIKE PAGLIARI, ANNOUNCED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT A SPECIAL MAIL DELIVERY WOULD BE PROVIDED ON FEBRUARY 12 (THIRD DAY OF THE LUNAR NEW YEAR).

NO DELIVERY WOULD BE MADE ON FEBRUARY 10, 11 AND 13.

ALL POST OFFICES WOULD BE CLOSED DURING THE LUNAR NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETS ON FRIDAY

* * * * *

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE WILL HOLD A MEETING AT 2.30 PM THIS FRIDAY (FEBRUARY 4) AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO OBSERVE THE PROCEEDINGS FROM THE PUBLIC GALLERY. THEY MAY RESERVE SEATS BY CALLING 869 9492.

- - - - -

ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE MEETING.

ADVANCE COPIES OF THE PAPERS FOR THE MEETING WILL BE AVAILABLE AFTER 2.30 PM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) IN THE PRESS ROOM OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BUILDING, JACKSON ROAD, CENTRAL. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CONTENTS OF THE PAPERS ARE NOT FOR USE UNTIL THE MEETING IS OVER.

- - - - 0 - - - -

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1994

- 14 -

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

* * * * *

\$ MILLION

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT | 3,950 |
| REVERSAL OF LAF | +50 |
| BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF | 4,000 |
| NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY | NIL |
| EFFECT OF LAF TODAY | -1,234 |
| CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT | 2,766 |
| LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER | TWI 126.5 *+0.5* 2.2.94 |

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

| EF BILLS | | EF NOTES/HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS | | | | |
|-----------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| TERMS | YIELD | TERM | ISSUE | COUPON | PRICE | YIELD |
| 1 WEEK | 2.71 | 16 MONTHS | 2505 | 3.75 | 100.07 | 3.73 |
| 1 MONTH | 2.90 | 19 MONTHS | 2508 | 4.265 | 101.11 | 3.91 |
| 3 MONTHS | 3.01 | 22 MONTHS | 2511 | 4.15 | 100.16 | 4.10 |
| 6 MONTHS | 3.15 | 33 MONTHS | 3610 | 4.20 | 99.19 | 4.57 |
| 12 MONTHS | 3.48 | 36 MONTHS | 3701 | 4.60 | 100.02 | 4.65 |

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 16,060 MN

CLOSED 2 FEBRUARY 1994

----- 0 -----



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES
BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL.: 842 8777

SUPPLEMENT

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1994

CONTENTS

PAGE NO.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL:

| | |
|--|----|
| SPEECH BY SECRETARY FOR SECURITY IN MOTION DEBATE ON FREEDOM OF TRAVEL IN LEGCO | 1 |
| SPEECH BY SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE IN MOTION DEBATE ON COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE IN LEGCO | 3 |
| BANK FIRE UNDER INVESTIGATION | 7 |
| SUITABLE PROFESSIONAL OFFICER TO BE IDENTIFIED FOR DIRECTOR POST | 7 |
| GOVT INTENDS TO COMPLETE AIRPORT RAILWAY BY MID-1997 | 8 |
| AIRPORT FACILITIES UNDERGO IMPROVEMENT | 9 |
| NEW AIRPORT TERMINAL WELCOMES DISABLED | 10 |
| GOVT IMPLEMENTS UNINTERRUPTED POWER SUPPLY SYSTEMS POLICY ... | 11 |
| GOVT RESOURCES USED EFFECTIVELY FOR SLOPE MAINTENANCE | 12 |
| PUBLIC HOUSING SECURITY MEASURES BEING STUDIED | 12 |
| MANDATORY SAVING SCHEMES NOT RECOMMENDED | 13 |
| TWO WAYS TO TACKLE STUDENT DRUG ABUSE | 14 |
| COMPLAINTS INFORMATION HELPS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT | 14 |

/AIR TRAFFIC

CONTENTS

PAGE NO.

| | |
|---|----|
| AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL AGREEMENT PROMOTES CO-OPERATION | 15 |
| REFURBISHMENT WORK AT VICTORIA HOUSE NECESSARY | 16 |
| CONSUMER COUNCIL HANDLES COMPLAINTS ON MEDICAL SERVICES | 16 |
| AG EXPLAINS BEST WAYS TO PROMOTE USE OF CHINESE IN LAW | 17 |
| EVIDENCE ON TIN TIN DAILY NEWS CASE ADMISSIBLE, SUBSTANTIAL AND RELIABLE | 18 |
| OVERSEAS DEGREES ARE ASSESSED INDIVIDUALLY | 18 |
| CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL AUTOTOLL SYSTEM WORKING WELL | 19 |
| SITE IDENTIFIED FOR RELOCATION OF VEGETABLE MARKET | 19 |
| CONVICTIONS ON ONLY TWO CATEGORIES OF CASES QUASHED LAST YEAR: AG | 20 |
| COPYRIGHT PROTECTION FOR SUBSCRIPTION TV SERVICE PROPOSED ... | 22 |
| POWERS AND PRIVILEGES BILL INTRODUCED TO LEGCO | 23 |
| INDEPENDENT MANAGEMENT OF WAR GRAVES | 23 |
| BILL TO MERGE SPORTS BODIES PASSED | 24 |
| LEGCO PASSES TWO MOTIONS | 25 |

SPEECH BY SECRETARY FOR SECURITY IN MOTION DEBATE
ON FREEDOM OF TRAVEL IN LEGCO

* * * * *

MR PRESIDENT,

IT IS CLEAR FROM THE SPEECHES THIS EVENING THAT THIS IS A SUBJECT ON WHICH THERE IS A LARGE MEASURE OF AGREEMENT AMONG MEMBERS. THE ADMINISTRATION SHARES THE VIEW THAT FOR HONG KONG PEOPLE, FREEDOM OF TRAVEL IS BOTH A NORM AND A NECESSITY. THEREFORE, WE SUPPORT THE MOTION THAT EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO ENSURE THAT HOLDERS OF HONG KONG TRAVEL DOCUMENTS CONTINUE TO ENJOY A HIGH DEGREE OF FREEDOM OF TRAVEL. FREEDOM OF TRAVEL AS I POINTED OUT IN A PREVIOUS DEBATE IN THIS COUNCIL IS A RIGHT GUARANTEED IN THE JOINT DECLARATION AND IN THE BASIC LAW. BUT IN ORDER TO GIVE PRACTICAL EFFECT TO FREEDOM OF TRAVEL AND TO ENSURE EASE OF TRAVEL, PARTICULARLY OVER THE 1997 TRANSITION, IT IS NECESSARY ALSO, FIRST TO ESTABLISH CLEARLY IN HONG KONG LEGISLATION WHO WOULD HAVE RIGHT OF ABODE HERE AFTER 30 JUNE 1997. AS A NUMBER OF MEMBERS HAVE POINTED OUT THE EASE OF TRAVEL ACCORDED TO HONG KONG RESIDENTS BY OTHER COUNTRIES DEPENDS CRUCIALLY ON ASSURANCES THAT THEY HAVE THE RIGHT OF RETURN TO HONG KONG. RETURNABILITY IN TURN DEPENDS UPON RIGHT OF ABODE. SECONDLY, TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS NO HIATUS IN ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ISSUE OF HONG KONG TRAVEL DOCUMENTS WHICH ARE RECOGNISED AND ACCEPTED INTERNATIONALLY. AND THIRDLY, TO OBTAIN AS FAR AS POSSIBLE VISA-FREE ACCESS TO OTHER COUNTRIES FOR HOLDERS OF HONG KONG TRAVEL DOCUMENTS. MEMBERS HAVE RIGHTLY EMPHASISED THE IMPORTANCE OF ALL THREE ISSUES AND I SHALL DEAL WITH EACH IN TURN.

FIRST, RIGHT OF ABODE. THIS IS A COMPLEX AND TECHNICAL SUBJECT, NOT LEAST BECAUSE OF THE DIFFERENCES IN THIS RESPECT BETWEEN THE PRESENT IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE AND THE FUTURE BASIC LAW. I DO NOT INTEND TO TRY TO EXPLAIN THE DETAILS OF THIS SUBJECT TODAY. BUT I SHOULD LIKE TO REITERATE THAT IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN AND REMAINS OUR INTENTION TO AMEND THE IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE TO GIVE EFFECT FROM 1 JULY 1997 TO ARTICLE 24 OF THE BASIC LAW CONCERNING THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION. TO THIS END, WE HAVE PUT COMPREHENSIVE PROPOSALS TO THE CHINESE THROUGH THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP. THIS IS AN ESSENTIAL STEP BECAUSE APART FROM EVERYTHING ELSE, RIGHT OF ABODE FROM 1 JULY 1997 CAN BE DETERMINED ONLY BY REFERENCE TO A PERSON'S NATIONALITY, AND ONLY THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT CAN CLARIFY CHINESE NATIONALITY LAW. THE AIMS OF THE PROPOSALS WE HAVE PUT FORWARD ARE FIRST, TO ENABLE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE PERSONS WHO NOW HAVE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG TO CONTINUE TO ENJOY THAT RIGHT AFTER 30 JUNE 1997. SECONDLY, TO ENABLE THOSE WHO WILL LOSE THEIR RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG ON 1 JULY 1997 TO REGAIN IT IN AS SIMPLE A WAY AS POSSIBLE. I BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE BOUND TO BE SOME IN THIS CATEGORY, ALTHOUGH I WOULD CAUTION AGAINST ESTIMATES OF THEIR NUMBERS. WE SIMPLY ARE NOT ABLE AT PRESENT TO QUANTIFY THOSE AFFECTED WITH ANY ACCURACY. THIRDLY, TO ENABLE FOREIGN NATIONALS WHO HAVE LONG BEEN SETTLED IN HONG KONG TO ACQUIRE THE RIGHT OF ABODE HERE IF THEY SO WISH THROUGH A SIMPLE AND STRAIGHTFORWARD PROCEDURE. WE HAVE ALREADY HELD INFORMAL TALKS WITH THE CHINESE ON THESE SUBJECTS AND FURTHER TALKS WOULD BE HELD IN HONG KONG LATER THIS MONTH. I LOOK FORWARD TO PROGRESS BEING MADE ON THIS VERY IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

/SECOND, TRAVEL

SECOND, TRAVEL DOCUMENTS. HERE AGAIN WE HAVE PUT PROPOSALS TO THE CHINESE IN THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP ON TRAVEL DOCUMENTS FOR HONG KONG PEOPLE BEFORE 1997 OVER THE TRANSITION IN 1997 AND AFTER 1997. THERE HAS ALREADY BEEN CO-OPERATION AND PROGRESS ON THIS SUBJECT. FOR EXAMPLE, THE BNO PASSPORT HAS ACHIEVED FULL INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION SINCE ITS INTRODUCTION IN 1987. NOT ONLY IS IT RECOGNISED BY ALL OF THE COUNTRIES, BUT ALSO OFFERS REASONABLE EASE AND CONVENIENCE OF TRAVEL. 70 COUNTRIES ALLOW BNO PASSPORT HOLDERS VISA-FREE ACCESS. CRUCIAL TO THIS HAS BEEN THE ASSURANCE THAT FOREIGN IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES OF THE RETURNABILITY OF BNO PASSPORT HOLDERS THROUGH THE INCLUSION IN EACH BNO PASSPORT OF A STATEMENT THAT THE HOLDER HAS RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG. THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THIS WERE AGREED IN THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP. SECONDLY, OTHER RESIDENTS OF HONG KONG WHO HOLD CERTIFICATES OF IDENTITY HAVE ALSO HAD THEIR RETURNABILITY GUARANTEED IN THEIR TRAVEL DOCUMENTS SINCE 1987 BY THE INCLUSION OF THE SAME STATEMENT ON THE HOLDER'S RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG. WE HAVE AGREED WITH THE CHINESE IN THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP THAT CERTIFICATES OF IDENTITY ISSUED BEFORE 1 JULY 1997 WILL HAVE A 10-YEAR VALIDITY AND MAY CONTINUE TO BE USED AFTER THAT DATE UNTIL THEY ARE EXPIRING. THE SAME ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR DOCUMENTS OF IDENTITY. THESE ARRANGEMENTS ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR A BROAD CHANGE ON 1 JULY 1997. HOLDERS OF THESE TRAVEL DOCUMENTS NEED NOT RUSH TO OBTAIN NEW SAR TRAVEL DOCUMENTS UPON THE CHANGE OF SOVEREIGNTY. BUT AS MEMBERS HAVE POINTED OUT WE ALSO NEED TO MAKE TIMELY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ISSUE OF TRAVEL DOCUMENTS BY THE HONG KONG SAR GOVERNMENT. TO THIS END, WE HAVE DRAWN UP PROPOSALS ON THE TYPES OF TRAVEL DOCUMENTS THAT THE SAR GOVERNMENT WILL NEED TO ISSUE AND ELIGIBILITY FOR THEM. WE HANDED THIS PROPOSAL TO THE CHINESE SIDE OF THE JLG IN THE MIDDLE OF LAST YEAR. WE HOPE TO HAVE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CHINESE ON THIS IMPORTANT MATTERS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THE INTERESTS OF HONG KONG WILL BE BEST SERVED BY BOTH SIDES WORKING IN CO-OPERATION ON THIS IMPORTANT TRANSITIONAL MATTER. I WOULD NOT AT THIS STAGE WISH TO GO INTO GREATER DETAIL ON WHAT ARRANGEMENTS MIGHT BE MADE FOR THE ISSUE OF THESE TRAVEL DOCUMENTS. THAT WILL DEPEND UPON OUR DISCUSSION WITH THE CHINESE. BUT THERE ARE CLEAR ADVANTAGES FOR A SMOOTH TRANSITION IN HONG KONG TRAVEL DOCUMENTS CONTINUING TO BE ISSUED BY THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT. THEY HAVE THE EXPERIENCE, THE EXPERTISE AND THE RECORDS NECESSARY FOR THIS TASK.

/THIRD, VISA

THIRD, VISA-FREE TRAVEL. SOME MEMBERS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN AT THE INCONVENIENCE OF CERTIFICATES OF IDENTITY HOLDERS EXPERIENCE WHEN THEY NEED TO TRAVEL. WE HAVE WORKED AND IMPROVED THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THE CERTIFICATES OF IDENTITY AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, BUT IT IS INEVITABLE THAT MANY COUNTRIES WOULD REQUIRE VISAS FOR HOLDERS OF TRAVEL DOCUMENTS NOT CONFERRING A NATIONAL STATUS. NEVERTHELESS, SOME COUNTRIES HAVE AGREED VISA-FREE ACCESS FOR HOLDERS OF CERTIFICATES OF IDENTITY WHICH AS I HAVE MENTIONED CONFIRM THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG. FOR THE FUTURE, THE QUESTION IS WHETHER THE HOLDERS OF BNO PASSPORTS AND OTHER HONG KONG TRAVEL DOCUMENTS INCLUDING THE HONG KONG SAR PASSPORTS WOULD ENJOY VISA-FREE TRAVEL TO A LARGE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES AFTER 1997. IT IS OUR AIM TO MAINTAIN AND EXTEND THE VISA-FREE TRAVEL NOW ENJOYED BY BNO PASSPORT HOLDERS AND TO MAKE SIMILAR ARRANGEMENTS FOR HOLDERS OF OTHER HONG KONG TRAVEL DOCUMENTS INCLUDING FUTURE SAR PASSPORT HOLDERS. WE HAVE PUT FORWARD PROPOSALS TO THE CHINESE SIDE OF THE JLG ON HOW THIS MIGHT BE DONE AND LOOK FORWARD TO DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IT IS I BELIEVE A SUBJECT WHERE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE CHINESE AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS IS ESSENTIAL IF THERE IS TO BE ANY SUBSTANTIAL ACHIEVEMENT. BOTH BRITISH AND SAR TRAVEL DOCUMENTS ARE INVOLVED. AND IN ANY DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS ON POSSIBLE VISA ABOLITION AGREEMENTS, THE QUESTION OF RECIPROCITY AND RETURNABILITY WILL BE IMPORTANT FACTORS. THESE AFTER 1997 ARE MATTERS FOR THE FUTURE SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENT.

MR PRESIDENT, THE ADMINISTRATION SUPPORTS THE MOTION. FREEDOM OF TRAVEL IS ESSENTIAL TO HONG KONG'S CONTINUING SUCCESS IN THE FUTURE. AND WE MUST MAKE CONCRETE ARRANGEMENTS TO GIVE EFFECT TO IT. WE HAVE LONG RECOGNISED ITS IMPORTANCE AND AS I HAVE EXPLAINED PUT FORWARD COMPREHENSIVE PROPOSALS TO TRY TO ENSURE THAT IT REMAINS A REALITY IN THE FUTURE. AGREEMENT ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES HAS ALREADY BEEN REACHED IN THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP. MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE BUT I AM ENCOURAGED THAT THERE IS TO BE EARLY DISCUSSIONS ON THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES. I HOPE TO SEE PROGRESS ON THIS IMPORTANT SUBJECT IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

- - - - 0 - - - -

SPEECH BY SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE IN MOTION DEBATE
ON COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE IN LEGCO

* * * * *

MR PRESIDENT,

I AM GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEBUNK A FEW MYTHS SURROUNDING SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS.

FIRST, THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF SOCIAL SECURITY IN HONG KONG IS TO PROVIDE FOR THE BASIC AND SPECIAL NEEDS OF THE MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY WHO ARE IN NEED OF FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL ASSISTANCE. THIS IS ENSHRINED IN THE WHITE PAPER ON SOCIAL WELFARE INTO THE 1990S AND BEYOND, WHICH WAS WELL-GROUNDED ON EXTENSIVE PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND SUPPORT.

COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE SCHEME

THE EXISTING COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE SCHEME (CSSA) PROVIDES A STRONG SAFETY NET FOR INDIVIDUALS OR FAMILIES SUFFERING FROM FINANCIAL HARDSHIP FOR REASONS SUCH AS OLD AGE, DISABILITY, ILLNESS, UNEMPLOYMENT AND LOW EARNINGS.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS HAVE ASKED FOR PEGGING OF THE STANDARD RATE FOR A SINGLE PERSON TO 30% OF THE MEDIAN WAGE. THE CURRENT MEDIAN WAGE IS \$7,421 PER MONTH AND 30% OF THAT WILL MEAN \$2,226 A MONTH. HONOURABLE MEMBERS WILL WISH TO KNOW THAT BECAUSE OUR CSSA SCHEME MEETS INDIVIDUAL NEEDS, THE STANDARD RATE FOR A SINGLE PERSON REQUIRING CONSTANT ATTENDANCE IS ALREADY \$3,055 A MONTH. PLEASE CONSIDER WHETHER IT IS RIGHT FOR SUCH SINGLE PERSON TO GET A REDUCED AMOUNT. I ASK YOU HONOURABLE MEMBERS, IS THIS RIGHT?

SECONDLY, IT IS ALSO A MYTH THAT THE STANDARD RATE IS ALL THAT A CSSA CLIENT CAN GET: A CSSA CLIENT COULD GET MUCH MUCH MORE. THIS IS A FACT. INDEED, THIS FACT IS BORNE OUT BY A RECENT PRESS RELEASE OF THE HONG KONG COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE NO LESS. THE PRESS RELEASE INDICATED THAT A TOTAL AMOUNT OF \$2,808 PER MONTH COULD BE RECEIVED BY A SINGLE ELDERLY PERSON "INCLUDING STANDARD RATE OF \$1,550, RENT ALLOWANCE OF \$1,118, A LONG TERM SUPPLEMENT OF \$95 AND SPECIAL ALLOWANCES OF \$45 UNDER THE CSSA SCHEME". THIS IS SO BECAUSE OUR CSSA SCHEME IS TAILORED TO THE INDIVIDUAL CLIENT'S PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

IT IS CONVENIENT TO FORGET THAT WE NOW PAY OUT BROADLY 24 TYPES OF SPECIAL GRANTS COVERING, FOR EXAMPLE, EXPENSES ON RENT; EXPENSES ON EDUCATION INCLUDING SCHOOL FEES, SCHOOL UNIFORMS, TEXTBOOKS, REFERENCE

BOOKS, STATIONERY, MEALS IN SCHOOLS, AFTER-SCHOOL CARE PROGRAMME; FAMILY RELATED EXPENSES INCLUDING BABY-SITTING CHARGES, FEES FOR NURSERIES AND DAY CRECHES, CHARGES FOR OCCASIONAL CHILD CARE; EXPENSES ON TRAVELLING AND SPECIAL AIDS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES; AND OTHER EXPENSES INCLUDING SPECIAL SURGICAL APPLICANCES, MEDICAL EXPENSES, SPECIAL DIETS, NOT FORGETTING FOR ONE MOMENT, THE TELEPHONE EXPENSES AND IN THE CASE OF PEOPLE WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT, EXPENSES ON FAX MACHINES. WITH SPECIAL GRANTS, THE AVERAGE MONTHLY CSSA PAYMENT TO AN ELDERLY PERSON IS SOME \$2,000 PER MONTH, WHICH REPRESENTS 32% OF AN AVERAGE MANUFACTURING WORKER'S WAGE OR 27% OF THE MEDIAN WAGE. LET US NOT FORGET THAT THOSE WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS ARE GETTING MORE THAN THE AVERAGE. ALSO, A FAMILY OF FOUR IS GETTING SOME \$5,900 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE, WHICH IS 93% OF AN AVERAGE MANUFACTURING WORKER'S WAGE, OR 80% OF THE MEDIAN WAGE.

OUR SAFETY NET IS DESIGNED IN SUCH A WAY THAT THOSE WHO NEED MORE DUE TO SOCIAL OR PERSONAL FACTORS CAN BE TAKEN CARE OF; WHILE THOSE WHO NEED LESS WILL NOT BE GIVEN MORE THAN WHAT THEY REQUIRE. THE STRENGTH OF OUR SAFETY NET IS THAT IT IS SENSITIVE TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND EQUITABLE TO INDIVIDUALS.

DISREGARDED EARNINGS

I SHALL TRY TO DEBUNK ANOTHER MYTH. LET US NOT FORGET THAT IN DETERMINING THE ASSISTANCE PAYABLE TO INDIVIDUAL CSSA CLIENTS, THE EARNINGS OF THOSE IN EMPLOYMENT ARE DISREGARDED UP TO \$775 PER MONTH PER PERSON. TO TAKE THE EXAMPLE OF A WORKING ADULT IN RECEIPT OF CSSA, HIS MONTHLY INCOME COULD AMOUNT TO \$2,260, MADE UP OF \$1,035 AS THE STANDARD RATE AND \$450 AS SPECIAL GRANTS PAYABLE UNDER THE CSSA SCHEME, PLUS \$775 RETAINED AS DISREGARDED EARNINGS. THIS INCOME IS ALREADY IN EXCESS OF 30% OF THE MEDIAN WAGE WHICH HONOURABLE MEMBERS IN THIS DEBATE APPEAR TO BE ADVOCATING.

FOR A SAFETY NET SCHEME WHICH IS DESIGNED TO MEET INDIVIDUAL NEEDS, IT IS INAPPROPRIATE AND ARBITRARY TO SAY THE LEAST, TO STANDARDISE THE RATES BY PEGGING THEM TO THE MEDIAN WAGE. PEGGING WOULD MEAN CLIENTS WITH DIFFERENT NEEDS WOULD RECEIVE THE SAME LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE. THOSE WITH MORE THAN THE AVERAGE NEEDS WOULD LOSE OUT. MOREOVER, AS WAGES MAY FLUCTUATE ACCORDING TO THE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, A CLIENT'S NEEDS MIGHT NOT BE FULLY SATISFIED IN THE EVENT OF AN ECONOMIC DOWNTURN AFFECTING THE LEVEL OF WAGES.

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SCHEME

SOCIAL SECURITY IS A PERENNIAL PRESSURE POINT IN EVERY COUNTRY. HONG KONG IS NO EXCEPTION. THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN POPULAR CALLS FOR HIGHER LEVELS OF ASSISTANCE PARTICULARLY IN A SOCIETY WITH ECONOMIC PROSPERITY. THIS IS RIGHT. FIRST, WHILE THE MAJORITY WHO ARE IN GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT CAN ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF A PROSPEROUS ECONOMY, THERE ARE ALWAYS SOME PEOPLE WHO, DUE TO SOCIAL OR PERSONAL FACTORS, ARE UNABLE TO SHARE THE INCREASE IN SOCIETY'S WEALTH. SECONDLY, AS THE LIVING STANDARD OF A SOCIETY RISES, THE DEFINITION OF WHAT CONSTITUTES A BASIC AND AN ACCEPTABLE LIVING STANDARD WILL CHANGE.

INDEED, IT IS RECOGNISED THAT THE LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE SHOULD MAKE REFERENCE TO THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF A SOCIETY. OVER THE YEARS, OUR SAFETY NET HAS EVOLVED FROM ONE CATERING FOR BASIC SUBSISTENCE TO NOW, ONE WHICH IS CAPABLE OF MEETING NOT ONLY BASIC NEEDS BUT ALSO SPECIAL NEEDS. ADDITIONALLY, PAYMENT RATES ARE ADJUSTED AS REQUIRED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT INFLATION AND SOCIAL CHANGES.

INFLATION

HERE, I WOULD LIKE TO DEBUNK YET ANOTHER MYTH. I WOULD LIKE TO LAY TO REST ONCE AND FOR ALL, THE NOTION THAT SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS HAVE FAILED TO KEEP UP WITH INFLATION. ONCE MORE, USING THE EXAMPLE OF A SINGLE PERSON, THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS THE STANDARD RATE HAS INCREASED BY 14 TIMES OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES WHEREAS INFLATION AS MEASURED BY THE CPI(A) INDEX HAS INCREASED BY A MERE SIX TIMES OVER THE SAME PERIOD.

OUR TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON SOCIAL SECURITY PAYMENTS NOW AMOUNTS TO ABOUT \$6 BILLION ANNUALLY, REPRESENTING A GROWTH OF OVER 3.5 TIMES OVER THE LEVEL OF EXPENDITURE 10 YEARS AGO. THIS RATE OF INCREASE IS ABOUT 1.5 TIMES HIGHER THAN THAT OF INFLATION DURING THE SAME PERIOD.

THE WELFARE STATE

A STANDARD PEGGING TO THE MEDIAN WAGE AT 30% WILL MEAN A FUNDAMENTAL DEPARTURE FROM OUR CSSA SCHEME BY REMOVING THE ELEMENT TO MEET THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS. AND SOME OF THE INDIVIDUALS COULD GET MUCH MUCH LESS. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE ARGUMENT IS NOT ONLY TO PEG THE STANDARD RATES AT 30% BUT ALSO TO RETAIN THE SPECIAL GRANTS, A FAMILY OF FOUR COULD GET AN AVERAGE OF \$11,000 A MONTH. WHERE THEN IS THE INCENTIVE TO WORK? INDEED, WHY BOTHER TO WORK AT ALL WHEN OTHERS PAY YOUR WAY! AND AN AVERAGE WORKER GETS MUCH MUCH LESS! THIS THEN IS WELFARE STATE. THIS THEN IS DEPENDENCY CULTURE.

MR PRESIDENT, I SHOULD PERHAPS REPORT AT THIS JUNCTURE THAT ONE OF MY COLLEAGUES HAS JUST ATTENDED AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON "THE FUTURE OF THE WELFARE STATE". WELFARE STATES HAVE NO FUTURE. THIS IS THE FEEDBACK. WELFARE STATES ARE NOW FACING FISCAL CRISES. THEY CAN NO LONGER AFFORD TO PAY FOR THE WELFARE BENEFITS. IF THE CSSA, BEING THE PIVOTAL CENTRE OF OUR SOCIAL SECURITY, SHOULD BE CHANGED TO ONE PEGGED TO EARNINGS AND NOT NEEDS, HONG KONG WILL BE PROPELLED DOWN THE ROAD OF THE WELFARE STATE. THIS ROAD HAS BEEN TAKEN BY MANY POST-WAR WESTERN SOCIETIES WHERE THE WELFARE STATE WAS ONCE HERALDED AS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE CENTURY. THESE SAME SOCIETIES ARE NOW UNDERGOING A VERY PAINFUL PROCESS OF CHANGE. THE NEW WISDOM "IS THAT THE STATE SHOULD BE THE REGULATOR AND ENABLER RATHER THAN THE SOLE PROVIDER." THIS IS A SOBERING THOUGHT.

OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME

HONOURABLE MEMBERS WHO PLEA SO PASSIONATELY FOR MORE SUPPORT TO THOSE IN NEED ARE WELL ADVISED ALSO TO SUPPORT THE CONTRIBUTORY AND DEFINABLE PENSION SCHEME FOR THE ELDERLY, IN ADDITION TO THE CURRENT CSSA SCHEME. LET US NOT CONFUSE THESE TWO SCHEMES WHICH ARE NOT ONLY COMPLEMENTARY TO EACH OTHER, BUT WOULD BE IN LINE WITH THE NEW WISDOM, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO HELPING THE ELDERLY PEOPLE IN OUR SOCIETY.

PUBLIC FINANCE

IN RECENT YEARS OUR PUBLIC FINANCES HAVE BEEN IN A VERY HEALTHY STATE THANKS TO THE STRENGTH OF THE ECONOMY. BUT WE MUST REMEMBER THAT WE ARE VULNERABLE TO EXTERNAL EVENTS. A BUDGET SURPLUS IN ONE YEAR, RESULTING IN PART FROM VOLATILE REVENUE SOURCES SUCH AS STAMP DUTY, CAN EASILY DISAPPEAR AND MAY EVEN BECOME A BUDGET DEFICIT IN THE NEXT. IT WOULD BE FOOLHARDY TO TRY TO USE ONE-OFF SURPLUSES TO FINANCE PERMANENT AND SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN OUR RECURRENT EXPENDITURE. IF WE WISH TO CONTINUE LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS, GOVERNMENT SPENDING MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO GROW AT A FASTER RATE THAN THE ECONOMY.

CONCLUSION

IN CONCLUSION, I QUOTE FROM THE GOVERNOR'S 1992 POLICY ADDRESS: THE STRENGTH OF HONG KONG LIES IN THE FACT THAT "HONG KONG IS NOT A WELFARE STATE BUT WE ARE A SOCIETY THAT CARES DEEPLY ABOUT THE STATE OF WELFARE". WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO BE CONSTANTLY VIGILANT AND ENSURE THAT THOSE IN NEED WILL BE LOOKED AFTER BY OUR SOCIETY.

MR PRESIDENT, I REST ON THAT STATEMENT.

----- 0 -----

BANK FIRE UNDER INVESTIGATION

* * * * *

A SPECIAL INVESTIGATION TEAM SET UP BY THE DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES IS LOOKING INTO THE CAUSE OF THE RECENT FIRE AT THE SHEKKIPMEI BRANCH OF THE HONGKONG BANK AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE CASUALTIES.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE TEAM WILL CONSIDER AND RECOMMEND WHETHER ANY IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD BE MADE TO FIRE PROTECTION MEASURES IN SIMILAR COMMERCIAL PREMISES.

MR ASPREY SAID A REVIEW NOW UNDER WAY WOULD COVER NOT ONLY BANK PREMISES, BUT ALSO COMMERCIAL PREMISES OF A SIMILAR DESIGN AND LAYOUT, SUCH AS OFF-COURSE BETTING CENTRES, PAWNSHOPS AND JEWELLERY SHOPS.

"ONCE THE REVIEW IS COMPLETED, WE WILL BE ABLE TO DECIDE WHAT ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN," HE SAID.

MEANWHILE, THE DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES HAS BEEN LIAISING CLOSELY WITH THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS AND HAS BEEN PROVIDING ADVICE TO THE BANKING INDUSTRY ON IMMEDIATE MEASURES TO ENHANCE FIRE SAFETY IN BANK PREMISES.

THESE MEASURES INCLUDE THE FORMULATION OF EMERGENCY PROCEDURES, TRAINING OF STAFF IN BASIC EMERGENCY PRECAUTIONS, PROVISION OF PORTABLE AND CHEMICAL-BASED FIRE EXTINGUISHERS AND INSTALLATION OF MANUAL FIRE ALARMS AT STRATEGIC LOCATIONS WITHIN THE PREMISES.

----- 0 -----

SUITABLE PROFESSIONAL OFFICER TO BE IDENTIFIED
FOR DIRECTOR POST

* * * * *

ALL ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES IN THE PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS AND WORKS GROUP OF DEPARTMENTS HAD BEEN CONSIDERED FOR THE DIRECTOR POST IN THE NEW BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT.

HOWEVER, AS NO ONE WAS CONSIDERED FULLY READY TO TAKE UP THE POST AT THIS STAGE, IT WAS DECIDED TO APPOINT AN EXPERIENCED ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER TO HEAD THE DEPARTMENT AS AN INTERIM SOLUTION.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR MICHAEL SZE, WHEN REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON EDWARD HO SING-TIN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR SZE STRESSED THAT THE APPOINTMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER SHOULD NOT AFFECT THE PROMOTION PROSPECTS OF THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF IN THE DEPARTMENT.

"AS HAS BEEN EXPLAINED TO SENIOR PROFESSIONAL STAFF IN THE DEPARTMENT, THESE ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BE NECESSARY ONLY UNTIL SUCH TIME AS A SUITABLE PROFESSIONAL OFFICER CAN BE IDENTIFIED AND GROOMED TO TAKE OVER," HE SAID.

MR SZE NOTED THAT THE BEST CANDIDATE FOR THE JOB WOULD NEED TO POSSESS ALL-ROUND LEADERSHIP QUALITIES, WELL-DEVELOPED MANAGEMENT SKILLS, AND CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL ACUMEN.

IT WOULD ALSO BE DESIRABLE FOR THE PERSON SELECTED TO HAVE A PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND, HE ADDED.

THE DIRECTOR OF BUILDINGS IS A NEW POST RESULTING FROM THE REORGANISATION OF THE FORMER BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT WHOSE LAST TWO SUBSTANTIVE DIRECTORS WERE BOTH ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

GOVT INTENDS TO COMPLETE AIRPORT RAILWAY BY MID-1997

* * * * *

IT REMAINS THE GOVERNMENT'S FIRM INTENTION TO COMPLETE THE AIRPORT RAILWAY PROJECT TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE BY MID-1997 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) CONCERNING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW AIRPORT.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LEE WING-TAT.

MR BARMA SAID: "THE DELAY IN THE AWARD OF THE CENTRAL RECLAMATION CONTRACT MEANS THAT IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO COMPLETE THE HONG KONG CENTRAL STATION BEFORE MID-1998."

BUT IT REMAINS THE GOVERNMENT'S AIM TO HAVE THE SECTION FROM KOWLOON TO CHEK LAP KOK AND TUNG CHUNG OF THE AIRPORT RAILWAY COMPLETED AND IN OPERATION BY MID-1997.

ON THE QUESTION WHETHER DELAY WOULD INCREASE COST, MR BARMA SAID: "THE DELAY IN THE AWARD OF THE CENTRAL RECLAMATION CONTRACT HAS RESULTED IN AN INCREASE IN THE MONEY-OF-THE-DAY (MOD) COST ESTIMATE FOR THE RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION FROM \$33.5 BILLION TO \$34 BILLION.

"INDICATIONS ARE THAT EVERY SIX MONTHS' DELAY IN REACHING AGREEMENT WOULD RESULT IN AN EXTRA \$2 BILLION IN CONSTRUCTION COSTS FOR THE AIRPORT RAILWAY."

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS TAKING EVERY POSSIBLE STEP IN KEEPING WITH THE MOU TO ENSURE THAT WORKS CONTINUED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE.

"PAPERS HAVE BEEN ISSUED SEEKING FINANCE COMMITTEE APPROVAL THIS FRIDAY FOR A FURTHER \$328 MILLION (MOD) FOR ADVANCE WORKS TO PROTECT THE RAILWAY ALIGNMENT, SO AS TO MINIMISE INCREASE IN COSTS FOR THE PROJECT AND AVOID DISRUPTION TO ACP WORKS ALONG THE RAILWAY ROUTE."

THE AIRPORT RAILWAY WILL PROVIDE TWO SERVICES: A FAST DIRECT SERVICE TO THE AIRPORT; AND A DOMESTIC SERVICE FROM HONG KONG CENTRAL TO TUNG CHUNG VIA TSING YI.

MR BARMA SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD CONSIDERED THE OPTION OF CONSTRUCTING THE CENTRAL-TSING YI SECTION FIRST, BUT THE FACT REMAINS THAT THIS SECTION ALONE WOULD HAVE A NEGATIVE RATE OF RETURN SINCE THE BULK OF PASSENGERS WOULD BE DRAWN FROM THE EXISTING TSUEN WAN LINE.

"AS SUCH THE MTRC WOULD FACE TREMENDOUS DIFFICULTY IN RAISING LOANS WITHOUT AGREEMENT FROM THE CHINESE FOR THE ENTIRE FINANCIAL PACKAGE."

"WE, THEREFORE, BELIEVE THAT THE BEST WAY FORWARD AT THIS STAGE IS STILL TO REACH AN EARLY AGREEMENT WITH THE CHINESE ON THE AIRPORT RAILWAY AS A WHOLE."

MR BARMA SAID: "THERE ARE GOOD PROSPECTS, PROVIDED AGREEMENT IS REACHED SOON, FOR THE KOWLOON TO CHEP LAP KOK SECTION TO BE COMPLETED WHEN THE AIRPORT ITSELF IS READY FOR OPERATION.

"HOWEVER, SHOULD A DELAY OCCUR, ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS WOULD INCLUDE THE ENHANCEMENT OF BUS AND FERRY SERVICES, AND OTHER TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES, SO AS TO MEET PASSENGER DEMAND."

- - - - 0 - - - -

AIRPORT FACILITIES UNDERGO IMPROVEMENT

* * * * *

A MAJOR PROGRAMME OF EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT TO FACILITIES AT KAI TAK HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN AS THE AIRPORT REACHES ITS DESIGN CAPACITY OF 24 MILLION PASSENGERS A YEAR.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ELIZABETH BOSHER, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TIMOTHY HA IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SINCE 1988, NEARLY \$3 BILLION HAS BEEN SPENT ON REFURBISHMENT OF THE AIRPORT TERMINAL, EXTENSIONS TO THE APRON AND AIRCRAFT PARKING BAYS, AND OTHER TRANSPORT FACILITIES, SHE ADDED.

THIS YEAR THERE WILL BE FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS TO THE TERMINAL APPROACH ROADS AND ROAD TRAFFIC CIRCULATION. THE AIRSIDE DEPARTURE LOUNGES WILL ALSO BE SUBSTANTIALLY EXPANDED.

"EVERY ATTEMPT HAS BEEN MADE TO MAXIMISE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIVATISATION OF AIRPORT SERVICES," SHE SAID.

EXAMPLES ARE CARGO AND BAGGAGE HANDLING SERVICES, AIRPORT CAR PARKS, CLEANING, CATERING AND RETAIL BUSINESSES.

THE AIRPORT GENERAL MANAGER IS HELPED IN THE DAY TO DAY MANAGEMENT OF SERVICES BY THE AIRPORT FACILITATION COMMITTEE WHICH INCLUDES REPRESENTATIVES FROM AIRLINES, COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING SERVICES IN THE TERMINAL, HONG KONG TOURIST ASSOCIATION, THE CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENTS.

THE COMMITTEE ACTS PROMPTLY ON SUGGESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO SERVICE STANDARDS AND FACILITIES ARE IMPLEMENTED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, SHE SAID.

THE AVIATION ADVISORY BOARD, CHAIRED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION AND COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE AVIATION AND TOURISM INDUSTRIES AS WELL AS THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ALSO TAKES A CLOSE INTEREST IN THE FACILITIES AND STANDARDS OF SERVICE.

- - - - 0 - - - -

NEW AIRPORT TERMINAL WELCOMES DISABLED

* * * * *

THE NEW AIRPORT PASSENGER TERMINAL WILL BE USER-FRIENDLY TO THE DISABLED WHO WOULD FIND IT SIMPLE TO USE.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ELIZABETH BOSHER, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE PROVISIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY (PAA) HAD TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE DESIGN OF THE TERMINAL OBJECTIVES OUTLINED IN THE 1992 GREEN PAPER ON REHABILITATION POLICIES AND SERVICES.

THE NEED TO COMPLY WITH RECOGNISED INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CONCERNING FACILITIES FOR THE DISABLED IS ALSO CONSIDERED.

MRS BOSHER, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ERIC LI KA-CHEUNG, SAID THE PAA'S POLICY HAD BEEN TO ESTABLISH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DISABLED AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW AIRPORT.

ALL CATEGORIES OF DISABILITY ARE BEING CONSIDERED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS, SHE SAID.

THESE INCLUDE PROVISION FOR THOSE WITH WALKING DIFFICULTIES, THE WHEELCHAIR-BOUND, THE BLIND AND PARTIALLY SIGHTED, AND THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING.

MRS BOSHER ALSO OUTLINED A WIDE RANGE OF FEATURES WHICH HAD BEEN INCORPORATED IN THE DESIGN OF THE TERMINAL TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEEDS OF THE DISABLED.

MORE, THE PAA IS MAKING SIMILAR PROVISIONS FOR THE DISABLED IN THE DESIGN OF PUBLIC AREAS OUTSIDE THE TERMINAL, INCLUDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR ACCESS TO TRANSPORT FACILITIES TO AND FROM THE NEW AIRPORT.

TO ENSURE THAT THE NEEDS OF THE DISABLED CAN BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN PLANNING THE TERMINAL FACILITIES, THE PAA HAS IN RECENT MONTHS HELD A SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH SEVERAL SOCIETIES REPRESENTING THE DISABLED IN HONG KONG.

/THESE SOCIETIES

THESE SOCIETIES INCLUDED THE HONG KONG SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND, THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF AND REHABAID.

MRS BOSHER SAID THE PAA WAS ALSO LIAISING WITH THE ACCESS AND TRANSPORT SUBCOMMITTEE UNDER THE REHABILITATION DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE.

"THESE VARIOUS MEETINGS HAVE PROVED VERY HELPFUL TO THE PAA IN PLANNING THE DESIGN OF THE TERMINAL AND LIAISON WILL CONTINUE AS THE PLANNING PROCESS GOES FORWARD," SHE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

GOVT IMPLEMENTS UNINTERRUPTED POWER SUPPLY SYSTEMS POLICY

* * * * *

THE CURRENT POLICY TO PROVIDE UNINTERRUPTED POWER SUPPLY (UPS) SYSTEMS FOR ALL COMPUTER HARDWARE INSTALLATIONS IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS WHICH CARRY, OR ARE EXPECTED TO CARRY, CRITICAL SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS IS FULLY IMPLEMENTED.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ROGER LUK KOON-HOO IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR TREASURY, MR DONALD TSANG, SAID:

"THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CRITICALITY OF THE APPLICATIONS TO BE RUN ON THE HARDWARE IS MADE BY THE USER DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED DURING THE SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT STAGE OF A COMPUTER SYSTEM.

"GUIDELINES HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR ALL SYSTEM DESIGNERS TO FOLLOW."

THE POLICY IS FULLY IMPLEMENTED IN THE GOVERNMENT, EXCEPT IN THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES DEPARTMENT, WHICH RECENTLY EXPANDED ITS PRODUCTION BUREAU IN WANCHAI TOWER GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

CERTAIN CRITICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE EXPANDED BUREAU ARE YET TO BE SUPPORTED BY UPS, SAID MR TSANG.

"HOWEVER, THE NECESSARY UPS EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN ORDERED AND IS EXPECTED TO BE DELIVERED AND INSTALLED IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS," HE ADDED.

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY NOW DEPENDS ON EMERGENCY GENERATOR POWER IN CASE OF POWER FAILURE. THIS PROVIDES FOR RESTORATION OF POWER WITHIN A FEW MINUTES.

"HOWEVER, AS THE AUTHORITY IS NOW IN THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING AN ON-LINE SYSTEM TO HOUSING ESTATES, IT IS ASSESSING THE CRITICALITY OF THE SYSTEM AND THE NEED FOR UPS," HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

GOVT RESOURCES USED EFFECTIVELY FOR SLOPE MAINTENANCE

* * * * *

THE CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR SLOPE MAINTENANCE IS DESIGNED TO ENSURE THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S RESOURCES ARE DEPLOYED IN THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE MANNER POSSIBLE, THE SECRETARY FOR WORKS, MR JAMES BLAKE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TSO SHIU-WAI, MR BLAKE SAID UNDER THE ARRANGEMENTS, SLOPES FORMED BY THE GOVERNMENT FALLING WITHIN LAND ALLOCATED TO GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WOULD BE MAINTAINED BY THE DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED.

SLOPES WHICH ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PRIVATE LOT OWNERS WILL BE MAINTAINED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONDITIONS FOR THE SALE OF THE LOT.

THERE IS NO REGULAR MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME FOR OTHER SLOPES, BUT URGENT REPAIRS WILL BE CARRIED OUT BY THE GOVERNMENT IF NECESSARY.

SUCH ARRANGEMENT IS REVIEWED EVERY FEW YEARS AND IS CURRENTLY BEING REVIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF THE EXPERIENCE GAINED.

CONCERNING THE CUT SLOPES BEHIND ALPINE GARDEN IN TUEN MUN, MR BLAKE SAID THEY WERE INSPECTED AND THEIR DESIGN REVIEWED AFTER THE FLOODING INCIDENT ON NOVEMBER 5 LAST YEAR.

THE INVESTIGATION CONFIRMED THAT THEIR OVERALL STABILITY IS SATISFACTORY AND IT DOES NOT POSE A RISK TO LIFE OR PROPERTY.

- - - - 0 - - - -

PUBLIC HOUSING SECURITY MEASURES BEING STUDIED

* * * * *

THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT HAS SET UP A WORKING GROUP TO STUDY THE PROVISION OF SECURITY MEASURES IN EXISTING PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES, INCLUDING LINEAR BLOCKS.

THE STUDY WILL BE COMPLETED THIS SUMMER.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LI WAH-MING.

ON THE PRESENT SECURITY MEASURES IN THE LINEAR BLOCKS, MR EASON SAID ALL THE WINDOWS OF FLATS IN SUCH PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES BUILT BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WERE PROVIDED WITH ANTI-BURGLARY BARS.

A MOVABLE ANTI-BURGLARY GRILLE CUM DRYING RACK, WHICH CAN BE PADLOCKED, IS INSTALLED ON EACH BALCONY TO PROVIDE A FIRE ESCAPE OR RESCUE POINT AS REQUIRED BY THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT.

/"IT IS

"IT IS FOR THE TENANTS TO ENSURE THAT THE WINDOWS ARE SHUT AND GRILLES LOCKED WHEN THEIR FLATS ARE UNATTENDED.

AS FURTHER MEASURES TO PREVENT BURGLARS FROM CLIMBING OVER EXTERNAL WALLS TO GAIN ACCESS TO ADJACENT FLAT, THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT HAS ERECTED ANTI-BURGLARY GRILLES ON THE FIRST FLOOR AND ADDITIONAL GRILLE BLOCK WALLS IN THE LIFT LOBBY AREAS OF LINEAR BLOCKS, HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

MANDATORY SAVING SCHEMES NOT RECOMMENDED

* * * * *

HONG KONG IS CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS WHICH DIFFER CONSIDERABLY FROM THE LONG-TERM EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE, FOR EXAMPLE THAT OF THE UNITED STATES.

SHOULD SUCH ECONOMIC CONDITIONS REMAIN UNCHANGED FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, THAT IS, ASSUMING THAT PRICE INFLATION WOULD REMAIN AT NINE PER CENT AND SALARY INCREASE AT 11 PER CENT, THE ESTIMATE IS THAT A LOW-RISK INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO COULD YIELD A PENSION AS LOW AS 12.7 PER CENT OF MONTHLY SALARY.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR W K LAM, WHEN REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HENRY TANG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

EXPLAINING THE RATIONALE BEHIND THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION NOT TO PROCEED WITH MANDATORY SAVING SCHEMES, THE ACTING SECRETARY SAID THAT GIVEN THE PREVAILING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN HONG KONG, IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT LOW-RISK INVESTMENT PORTFOLIOS WOULD YIELD MEANINGFUL RETURNS.

"SIGNIFICANT EXPOSURE TO HIGH-YIELD INVESTMENTS SUCH AS EQUITIES WOULD, ON THE OTHER HAND, LEAD TO VOLATILITY AND HIGHER RISK OF INVESTMENT LOSSES, FOR WHICH THERE IS NO VIABLE INSURANCE COVER," SAID MR LAM.

BESIDES, AS MANDATORY SAVING SCHEMES TOOK THREE TO FOUR DECADES TO MATURE, THE BULK OF THE POPULATION WOULD NOT HAVE ANY MEANINGFUL BENEFIT UNDER SUCH SCHEMES FOR A LONG TIME TO COME.

HE SAID EVEN AFTER A FEW DECADES, LOW-INCOME CONTRIBUTORS WOULD STILL BE WORSE OFF UNDER MANDATORY SAVING SCHEMES THAN UNDER OLD-AGE PENSION SCHEME, AND THAT HALF OF THE POPULATION WOULD REMAIN UNPROTECTED AS THEY WERE OUTSIDE THE WORKFORCE.

MANDATORY SAVING SCHEMES IMPOSE A HEAVY ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN ON EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES, WITHOUT THE GUARANTEE OF COMMENSURATE BENEFITS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

TWO WAYS TO TACKLE STUDENT DRUG ABUSE

* * * * *

THE GOVERNMENT IS USING TWO WAYS TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM OF STUDENTS INVOLVED IN DRUG ABUSE CASES ON SCHOOL PREMISES, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

PREVENTIVE EDUCATION IS OFFERED TO INFORM STUDENTS OF THE DANGERS OF DRUG ABUSE AND HELP THEM REFUSE DRUGS.

AND SCHOOL AUTHORITIES ARE HELPED TO RESPOND APPROPRIATELY TO DRUG CASES ON SCHOOL PREMISES.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHEUNG MAN-KWONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR ASPREY SAID: "DRUG EDUCATION IS INTEGRATED INTO THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM IN SEVERAL PLACES."

TEACHERS ARE ADVISED NOT JUST TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ITS EFFECTS, BUT ALSO TO GIVE EMPHASIS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTHY AND POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND THE LEARNING OF LIFE SKILLS SUCH AS HANDLING OF PEER PRESSURE.

THE NARCOTICS DIVISION HOLDS REGULAR TALKS IN ALL SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND PRIMARY 6 CLASSES TO REINFORCE THESE MESSAGES.

TO ASSIST THE SCHOOL AUTHORITIES, MR ASPREY SAID THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WAS DRAFTING A SET OF GUIDELINES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON THE HANDLING OF DRUG ABUSE CASES.

THE GUIDELINES COVER SIGNS THAT INDICATE DRUG ADDICTION, PREVENTIVE AND OTHER MEASURES TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS IN SCHOOL, AND THE RESOURCES AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO SCHOOLS, HE ADDED.

"THE GOVERNMENT ALSO ENCOURAGES STUDENTS CONFRONTED WITH DRUG PROBLEMS TO APPROACH SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS FOR COUNSELLING AND ASSISTANCE," HE SAID.

LAST YEAR, THERE WAS ONE PROSECUTION OF SIX STUDENTS FOR SUPPLYING DANGEROUS DRUGS ON SCHOOL PREMISES. IN 1992 AND 1991, THERE WERE THREE AND TWO PROSECUTIONS RESPECTIVELY.

- - - - 0 - - - -

COMPLAINTS INFORMATION HELPS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

* * * * *

TEN OF THE 36 DEPARTMENTS THAT HAVE PUBLISHED PERFORMANCE PLEDGES RECEIVED 62 COMPLAINTS CONCERNING MAINLY ABOUT WAITING AND RESPONSE TIMES TO CORRESPONDENCE, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON MRS ANSON CHAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

DEPARTMENTS ALSO RECEIVE COMPLAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS ON A WIDE RANGE OF TOPICS, FROM STAFF ATTITUDES TO WORK PROCESSES.

MRS CHAN SAID INFORMATION ON COMPLAINTS WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO USERS COMMITTEES MONITORING MATTERS COVERED BY A PLEDGE.

"ANY TREND OF COMPLAINTS PROVIDES DEPARTMENTS WITH VALUABLE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION AS A GUIDE TO WHERE SERVICES NEED TO BE IMPROVED AS THEY REVIEW PERFORMANCE AGAINST THEIR PLEDGES EACH YEAR," SHE SAID.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TIK CHI-YUEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MRS CHAN SAID: "ACTION IS TAKEN WHERE POSSIBLE TO IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF SERVICE WHERE COMPLAINTS REVEAL SHORTCOMINGS."

EXAMPLES ARE TRAINING SCHEMES FOR FRONT-LINE STAFF, AND PROVISION OF EASIER PAYMENT METHODS LIKE AUTOPAY AND PAYMENT BY TELEPHONE.

UNDER THE PERFORMANCE PLEDGE SCHEME, A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC IS ENTITLED TO A FULL AND PROMPT EXPLANATION FROM THE DEPARTMENT CONCERNED IF HE FINDS THE STANDARD OF SERVICE DOES NOT MEET THE SET TARGET.

HE MAY ALSO WRITE TO THE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT IF HE THINKS THAT HIS CASE HAS NOT BEEN HANDLED ADEQUATELY.

CASES MAY ALSO BE REFERRED TO THE COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE HAS BEEN ANY MALADMINISTRATION.

- - - - 0 - - - -

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL AGREEMENT PROMOTES CO-OPERATION

* * * * *

AN AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISH AN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL EXCHANGE TRAINING PROGRAMME WILL MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO PROMOTING FURTHER CO-OPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL STAFF AND AVIATION AUTHORITIES IN HONG KONG AND CHINA.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ELIZABETH BOSHER, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HUANG CHEN-YA IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CIVIL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION OF CHINA YESTERDAY.

SHE SAID PROXIMITY OF A NUMBER OF EXISTING AND PLANNED AIRPORTS IN THE PEARL RIVER DELTA REGION WOULD NECESSITATE INCREASINGLY CAREFUL CO-ORDINATION OF AIRSPACE MANAGEMENT.

"A JOINT AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTRE IS ONE OF SEVERAL OPTIONS WHICH WILL BE EXPLORED."

SHE SAID AGREED PROCEDURES HAD ALREADY BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR KAI TAK AND SHENZHEN AIRPORTS AND THERE WAS DIRECT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE TWO AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTRES.

"REGULAR MEETINGS ARE ALSO HELD BETWEEN HONG KONG AND GUANGZHOU AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL MANAGERS TO ENHANCE CO-ORDINATION," SHE ADDED.

MRS BOSHER REITERATED THE COMMITMENT TO MAINTAINING THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF SAFETY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF HONG KONG'S AIRSPACE.

THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION IS ADOPTING A NUMBER OF MEASURES, INCLUDING REGULAR REVIEW AND UPDATING OF OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES AND UPGRADING OF AIR NAVIGATIONAL SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT.

MRS BOSHER SAID FROM 1993 TO 1995, SOME \$245 MILLION HAD BEEN EARMARKED FOR THE PURCHASE OF NEW AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL EQUIPMENT.

ALSO, STAFFING STANDARDS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT TRAINING FOR AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS ARE BEING ENHANCED.

ADDITIONAL FUNDS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED TO THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION TO RECRUIT AND TRAIN ADDITIONAL AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL STAFF BOTH TO COPE WITH THE INCREASING NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT MOVEMENTS AT KAI TAK AND TO PREPARE FOR THE OPENING OF THE NEW AIRPORT AT CHEK LAP KOK.

- - - - 0 - - - -

REFURBISHMENT WORK AT VICTORIA HOUSE NECESSARY

* * * * *

THE REFURBISHMENT WORK AT THE CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICIAL RESIDENCE, VICTORIA HOUSE, IS BOTH NECESSARY AND REASONABLE.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON EMILY LAU WAI-HING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR TREASURY, MR DONALD TSANG, SAID THE ESTIMATED COST OF THE WORK WAS \$3.1 MILLION.

THIS WORK IS PRINCIPALLY REQUIRED FOR NECESSARY MAINTENANCE WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT EARLIER, BUT WHICH FOR THE SAKE OF CONVENIENCE WAS DEFERRED UNTIL THERE WAS A CHANGE OF RESIDENT, MR TSANG SAID.

THIS INVOLVES THE REPLACEMENT OF THE AIR-CONDITIONING PLANT AND DUCTING, UPGRADING AND REPLACEMENT OF ELECTRICAL WORKS, THE REPLACEMENT OF DEFECTIVE FLOOR TILES AND PAVING, THE REPLACEMENT OF CEILINGS AND DEFECTIVE WOOD PANELLING, THE EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL REDECORATION, AS WELL AS OTHER MINOR WORKS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

CONSUMER COUNCIL HANDLES COMPLAINTS ON MEDICAL SERVICES

* * * * *

THE CONSUMER COUNCIL WOULD FOLLOW UP ON COMPLAINTS ABOUT SERVICES PROVIDED BY MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS IF IT CONSIDERS SUCH COMPLAINTS TO BE JUSTIFIED.

THE CONSUMER COUNCIL HANDLES COMPLAINTS IN RESPECT OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY DOCTORS, DENTISTS, PRACTITIONERS OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE, CHIROPRACTORS AND VETERINARIANS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MRS REGINA IP, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MICHAEL HO MUN-KA IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MRS IP SAID FOR COMPLAINTS INVOLVING PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT OF DOCTORS OR DENTISTS, THE CONSUMER COUNCIL WOULD NORMALLY REFER THE COMPLAINT TO THE RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, THE MEDICAL COUNCIL AND THE DENTAL COUNCIL.

FOR CASES NOT INVOLVING COMPLAINTS ABOUT PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT BUT ON WHICH EXPERT OPINION IS REQUIRED, THE COUNCIL WOULD CONSULT THE RELEVANT BODIES SUCH AS THE HONG KONG MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, THE DENTAL ASSOCIATION AND OTHER CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINAL ASSOCIATIONS, SHE SAID.

GENERALLY SPEAKING, MRS IP SAID, IN HANDLING THESE COMPLAINTS, THE COUNCIL WOULD FIRST REQUEST THE PARTY UNDER COMPLAINT TO PROVIDE AN EXPLANATION.

"IF IN THE LIGHT OF THE EXPLANATION THE CONSUMER COUNCIL CONSIDERS THE COMPLAINT TO BE JUSTIFIED, THE COUNCIL WOULD TAKE FOLLOW-UP ACTION ON BEHALF OF THE COMPLAINANT WITH A VIEW TO SECURING APPROPRIATE REMEDIES," SHE SAID.

THE COUNCIL HAD RECEIVED A TOTAL OF 158 COMPLAINTS INVOLVING THESE MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS IN THE PAST THREE YEARS. IT HAD DEALT WITH ALL THOSE COMPLAINTS (INCLUDING REFERRAL CASES) WHICH FELL WITHIN ITS PURVIEW, SHE ADDED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

AG EXPLAINS BEST WAYS TO PROMOTE USE OF CHINESE IN LAW

* * * * *

THE ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERS THAT THE BEST WAY IT CAN PROMOTE THE GREATER USE OF CHINESE IN THE TEACHING AND PRACTICE OF LAW IS BY COMPLETING ITS BILINGUAL LAWS PROGRAMME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND BY SUPPORTING STUDIES BY TWO WORKING PARTIES ESTABLISHED BY THE JUDICIARY.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON SIMON IP, MR MATHEWS SAID THOSE WORKING PARTIES WERE CONSIDERING NOT ONLY THE PROMOTION OF BILINGUALISM IN THE COURTS BUT ALSO THE PROMOTION OF THE GREATER USE OF CHINESE IN THE LAW GENERALLY.

HE SAID BOTH THE BILINGUAL LAWS PROGRAMME AND THE STUDIES OF THE WORKING PARTIES WOULD HAVE SIGNIFICANT RAMIFICATIONS.

"AS MORE AND MORE OF OUR LEGISLATION BECOMES BILINGUAL, AUTHENTIC CHINESE EQUIVALENTS OF ENGLISH LEGAL EXPRESSIONS WILL EMERGE, AND THIS WILL FACILITATE THE GREATER USE OF CHINESE IN THE TEACHING AND PRACTICE OF LAW," MR MATHEWS SAID.

"SIMILARLY, THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TWO WORKING PARTIES ARE LIKELY TO HAVE SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS FOR THOSE WHO TEACH AND PRACTISE LAW," HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

EVIDENCE ON TIN TIN DAILY NEWS CASE ADMISSIBLE,
SUBSTANTIAL AND RELIABLE

* * * * *

ON THE MATERIAL THAT WAS AVAILABLE TO THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT, IT WAS CONSIDERED THAT THERE WAS SUFFICIENT ADMISSIBLE, SUBSTANTIAL AND RELIABLE EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THE CHARGES IN A CASE IN WHICH THE DEFENDANTS WERE CHARGED FOR CONSPIRACY TO DEFRAUD TIN TIN DAILY NEWS (INTERNATIONAL) LIMITED, ITS SHAREHOLDERS AND CREDITORS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHIM PUI-CHUNG, MR MATHEWS SAID FOLLOWING A POLICE INVESTIGATION, A DECISION TO PROSECUTE WAS MADE WITHIN THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES SET OUT IN THE BOOKLET "PROSECUTION POLICY: GUIDANCE FOR CROWN COUNSEL" PUBLISHED IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR.

HE SAID: "THE CHARGES WERE LAID BY A DEPUTY CROWN PROSECUTOR, FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS AND ME.

"THE FACT THAT THE CASE RESULTED IN ACQUITTALS DOES NOT MEAN THAT MISTAKES WERE MADE EITHER IN THE DECISION TO PROSECUTE OR IN THE CONDUCT OF THE PROSECUTION."

MR MATHEWS SAID THE PROSECUTION OF THIS CASE WAS CONDUCTED BY A SENIOR AND EXPERIENCED COUNSEL WHO WAS PRESENT THROUGHOUT THE TRIAL.

"I SEE NO REASON TO CARRY OUT A REVIEW OF THE CASE."

HE SAID THE COST OF THE PROSECUTION, IN TERMS OF THE STAFF COST OF PROSECUTING COUNSEL DURING THE TRIAL, WAS ABOUT \$565,000.

THE DEFENCE COSTS, WHICH THE CROWN WAS ORDERED TO PAY, HAD NOT YET BEEN AGREED, MR MATHEWS NOTED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

OVERSEAS DEGREES ARE ASSESSED INDIVIDUALLY

* * * * *

FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPOINTMENT TO CIVIL SERVICE POSTS THAT REQUIRE A LOCAL DEGREE FOR ENTRY, THE GOVERNMENT ACCEPTS DEGREES FROM OVERSEAS TERTIARY INSTITUTES IF THEIR STANDARD IS COMPARABLE TO THAT AWARDED BY LOCAL INSTITUTES.

HOWEVER, ASSESSMENT ARE MADE ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS HAVING REGARD TO THE STANDING OF THE INSTITUTE, THE CONTENT OF THE DEGREE PROGRAMME, AS WELL AS ADVICE OF THE ACCREDITATION AUTHORITY IN THE COUNTRY OF THE INSTITUTE IN QUESTION.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR MICHAEL SZE, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON FREDERICK FUNG KIN-KEE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

/MR SZE

MR SZE ALSO SAID HE WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY FORMAL ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION EXERCISES UNDERTAKEN BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS IN RESPECT OF DEGREE COURSES IN CHINA AND TAIWAN.

"EVEN IF SUCH ARRANGEMENTS EXIST, IT WOULD STILL BE NECESSARY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ASSESS THESE DEGREES INDIVIDUALLY TO ENSURE THAT THEIR STANDARD IS COMPARABLE TO THAT OF LOCAL DEGREES," HE ADDED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL AUTOTOLL SYSTEM WORKING WELL

* * * * *

REGULAR CHECKS CARRIED OUT BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT HAVE REVEALED THAT TRAFFIC QUEUES IN THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL'S NON AUTOTOLL LANES ARE NO WORSE THAN BEFORE AUTOTOLL WAS INTRODUCED, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, TOLD THE LEGISLATION COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON CONRAD LAM KUI-SHING, MR BARMA SAID: "THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS ARE WORKING WELL."

HE SAID THE AUTOTOLL SYSTEM HAD BEEN IMPLEMENTED BY THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL CO LTD ON ITS OWN INITIATIVE AS A COST-EFFECTIVE MEANS OF COLLECTING TUNNEL TOLLS, AND IT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH ANY ELECTRONIC ROAD PRICING SCHEME.

"INDEED THE LATTER IS BUT ONE OF THE MANY PROPOSALS THAT WILL BE STUDIED IN DECIDING HOW TO TACKLE THE TRAFFIC CONGESTION PROBLEM," HE SAID.

THERE IS AN AVERAGE OF 21,600 VEHICLES USING THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL AUTOTOLL LANES DAILY WHILE 104,400 VEHICLES ARE USING THE OTHER LANES. SEVEN TOLL LANES ARE PROVIDED IN EACH DIRECTION.

"FOR HONG KONG-BOUND TRAFFIC, ONLY THE LANE AT THE EXTREME LEFT OF THE TOLL PLAZA IS DESIGNATED FOR AUTOTOLL USE WHILE THERE ARE TWO SUCH LANES, ONE AT EITHER END OF THE TOLL PLAZA, FOR KOWLOON-BOUND TRAFFIC.

"TWO AUTOTOLL LANES ARE NECESSARY FOR THE KOWLOON-BOUND TRAFFIC BECAUSE OF THE CONFIGURATION OF THE ROAD SYSTEM AT THAT END OF THE TUNNEL, AND THE NEED TO AVOID EXTENSIVE LANE CHANGING BY VEHICLES, HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

SITE IDENTIFIED FOR RELOCATION OF VEGETABLE MARKET

* * * * *

A TEMPORARY SITE HAS RECENTLY BEEN IDENTIFIED AS SUITABLE FOR THE RELOCATION OF THE TIN KWONG HUI, A VEGETABLE WHOLESALE MARKET IN YUEN LONG WHICH HAS BEEN CAUSING ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRAFFIC PROBLEMS.

THE SITE IS IN TUNG TAU INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, WHICH IS CURRENTLY A PLAYGROUND MANAGED BY THE REGIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

/CONSULTATIONS WITH

CONSULTATIONS WITH THE VEGETABLE TRADERS AND NEARBY RESIDENTS ON THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THE RELOCATION WILL BE CARRIED OUT SOON.

THE APPROVAL OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL TO USE THE SITE TEMPORARILY WILL ALSO BE REQUIRED.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON TANG SIU-TONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR EASON SAID IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE AT THIS STAGE TO CONFIRM THE EXACT TIMING OF THE RELOCATION BECAUSE IT WAS SUBJECT TO AGREEMENT BEING REACHED WITH THE VEGETABLE TRADERS ON THE LATEST SITE, THERE BEING NO SERIOUS OBJECTIONS FROM RESIDENTS IN THE VICINITY AND THE APPROVAL OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL.

MR EASON SAID A PERMANENT SITE NEAR THE YUEN LONG LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT TERMINUS IS RESERVED IN THE YUEN LONG OUTLINE ZONING PLAN FOR A PERMANENT VEGETABLE WHOLESALE MARKET.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAYOUT PLAN WOULD REQUIRE THE RESUMPTION OF PRIVATE LOTS, AND THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE COMPLETION DATE OF THE PERMANENT MARKET WAS THE YEAR 2000.

MR EASON NOTED THAT THE EXISTING MARKET HAD BEEN IN OPERATION FOR MORE THAN 10 YEARS.

WITH RAPID DEVELOPMENT IN THE VICINITY IN RECENT YEARS, THE MARKET'S OPERATIONS HAVE CAUSED ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRAFFIC PROBLEMS.

AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP, CHAIRED BY THE DISTRICT OFFICER (YUEN LONG) AND COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED, WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1987 TO IDENTIFY SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS AND CONSIDER THE RELOCATION OF THE MARKET.

A POSSIBLE SITE IN MA TIN ROAD WAS IDENTIFIED IN 1992 FOR THE TEMPORARY RELOCATION OF THE MARKET BUT THIS PROPOSAL WAS DROPPED LAST YEAR ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE MARKET WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE OPERATION OF A CIVIC CENTRE TO BE BUILT ADJACENT TO THE SITE.

- - - - 0 - - - -

CONVICTIONS ON ONLY TWO CATEGORIES OF CASES QUASHED LAST YEAR: AG

* * * * *

CONVICTIONS WERE QUASHED AS A RESULT OF LEGAL ERRORS IN TWO CATEGORIES OF CASES LAST YEAR, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THESE WERE AMONG THE 2,211 CRIMINAL TRIALS IN THE HIGH COURT AND DISTRICT COURT, AND 445,623 SUMMONSES ISSUED AND 129,363 CASES LISTED IN THE MAGISTRACY, MR MATHEWS SAID, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MOSES CHENG.

MR MATHEWS SAID AMONG THE TWO CATEGORIES OF CASES, ONE CONVICTION FOR A FORGERY OFFENCE WAS QUASHED BECAUSE THE CHARGE HAD BEEN BROUGHT UNDER A LEGISLATIVE PROVISION THAT HAD BEEN REPEALED AND REPLACED.

/"I WOULD

"I WOULD ADD, FOR THE SAKE OF COMPLETENESS THAT A TOTAL OF 18 CONVICTIONS FOR FORGERY OFFENCES, ALL RECORDED IN 1992, WERE THE SUBJECT OF PARDONS BY THE GOVERNOR FOR THE SAME REASON," HE SAID.

IN THE OTHER CATEGORY OF CASES, 142 CONVICTIONS, MAINLY FOR IMMIGRATION OFFENCES, WERE QUASHED BECAUSE THE GOVERNOR'S CONSENT TO PROSECUTE HAD NOT BEEN OBTAINED, MR MATHEWS SAID.

APART FROM THESE, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SAID HE WAS UNAWARE OF ANY OTHER CASES WHERE DEFENDANTS WERE ACQUITTED OR CONVICTIONS QUASHED THROUGH ERRORS OF LAW OR LEGAL PROCEDURES ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT SUCH AS A FAILURE TO OBTAIN A NECESSARY CONSENT TO PROSECUTE, OR THROUGH A DEFECTIVE INDICTMENT OR CHARGE.

AS REGARDS CIVIL CASES, MR MATHEWS SAID 400 JUDGMENTS INVOLVING THE GOVERNMENT WERE DELIVERED LAST YEAR, OF WHICH ALL BUT 42 WERE IN FAVOUR OF THE GOVERNMENT.

"WE HAVE REVIEWED ALL 42 CASES. NONE OF THEM INVOLVED LEGAL ERROR ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES," HE NOTED.

MR MATHEWS SAID REMEDIAL ACTIONS HAD BEEN TAKEN BY THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT TO AVOID RECURRENCE OF SIMILAR CASES.

IN RELATION TO THE FORGERY CASES, THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS ISSUED CIRCULARS TO ALL STAFF ABOUT RELEVANT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES WHENEVER THEY OCCUR, HE SAID.

HE ADDED: "IN RELATION TO THE REQUIREMENT TO OBTAIN THE GOVERNOR'S CONSENT TO CERTAIN PROSECUTIONS, ALL PROSECUTORS AND RELEVANT OFFICERS IN THE POLICE, IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENTS WERE INFORMED IN MARCH 1993 OF THE NEED TO OBTAIN THIS CONSENT."

IN ADDITION, ARRANGEMENTS WERE MADE FOR THE GOVERNOR TO DELEGATE TO THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS, THE DEPUTY CROWN PROSECUTOR AND THE SENIOR ASSISTANT CROWN PROSECUTOR IN CHARGE OF IMMIGRATION MATTERS THE POWER TO GIVE THE NECESSARY CONSENT.

ON COURT COSTS, MR MATHEWS SAID HE WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY CASES IN WHICH COSTS WERE AWARDED AGAINST THE CROWN AS A RESULT OF COUNSEL FOR THE CROWN NOT ATTENDING COURT AT THE APPOINTED TIME.

ALSO, NO ORDERS FOR COSTS WERE MADE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT IN THE CASES CONCERNING THE TWO CATEGORIES OF CASES IN WHICH CONVICTIONS WERE QUASHED, HE SAID.

COPYRIGHT PROTECTION FOR SUBSCRIPTION TV SERVICE PROPOSED

* * * * *

A BILL THAT SEEKS TO PROVIDE COPYRIGHT PROTECTION FOR THE WHARF CABLE'S SUBSCRIPTION TELEVISION SERVICE PENDING THE ENACTMENT OF AN OMNIBUS COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE SECOND READING OF THE COPYRIGHT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1994 WAS MOVED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR PAUL S W LEUNG.

HE SAID THE BILL WAS INTENDED TO INTRODUCE A REGIME FOLLOWING CLOSELY WHAT WAS INTRODUCED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM BY THE CABLE AND BROADCASTING ACT 1984, MAKING NECESSARY AMENDMENTS ONLY WHERE THEY WERE REQUIRED TO SUIT THE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF HONG KONG.

"THE BILL WOULD ACHIEVE LARGELY THE SAME PURPOSE AS WOULD HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED IF THE 1984 ACT WERE TO BE EXTENDED TO HONG KONG BY AN ORDER IN THE PRIVY COUNCIL AS ORIGINALLY ENVISAGED," HE SAID.

HOWEVER, MR LEUNG EMPHASISED THAT THE BILL WOULD NOT AFFECT THE FINAL SHAPE OF THE OMNIBUS LOCALISED COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION INTENDED TO BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN DUE COURSE.

THE PROPOSED BILL INCORPORATES INTO HONG KONG COPYRIGHT LAW PROVISIONS OF THE 1984 ACT CONCERNING COPYRIGHT IN CABLE PROGRAMMES; INCLUSION OF COPYRIGHT WORKS IN CABLE PROGRAMMES; THE RIGHT OF CABLE OPERATORS TO SIMULTANEOUSLY RE-TRANSMIT COPYRIGHT WORKS, INCLUDING BROADCASTS, IN THEIR SERVICES; AND MINOR AND CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO THE COPYRIGHT ORDINANCE.

THE INTERESTS OF TELEVISION VIEWERS WILL ALSO BE PROTECTED IN THAT THE EXISTING RIGHTS OF NON-SUBSCRIBERS TO WHARF CABLE'S SERVICE WILL BE PRESERVED.

THESE NON-SUBSCRIBERS MAY CONTINUE TO RECEIVE TVB, ATV AND SATELLITE BROADCASTS THROUGH COMMUNAL AERIAL BROADCAST DISTRIBUTION OR SATELLITE MASTER ANTENNA TELEVISION SYSTEMS, OR BROADCAST RELAY SERVICES CURRENTLY OPERATED BY REDIFFUSION (HONG KONG) LTD.

IN ADDITION, THE BILL PROVIDES CONSUMER CONVENIENCE TO WHARF CABLE'S SUBSCRIBERS SO THAT THEY MAY SELECT TVB/ATV AND WHARF CABLE PROGRAMMES FROM A SINGLE DECODER AND THEREFORE THERE IS NO NEED FOR DUPLICATE ENTRY CABLES INTO THEIR HOMES.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

POWERS AND PRIVILEGES BILL INTRODUCED TO LEGCO

* * * * *

A BILL SEEKING TO EXTEND THE IMMUNITIES AND PRIVILEGES ENJOYED BY LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS TO THE GOVERNOR AND DESIGNATED PUBLIC OFFICERS WHEN THEY ATTEND SITTINGS OF THE COUNCIL AND ITS COMMITTEES WAS INTRODUCED TO THE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (POWERS AND PRIVILEGES) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1994, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON MRS ANSON CHAN, SAID LEGCO MEMBERS WERE GIVEN IMMUNITIES AND PRIVILEGES TO HELP THEM CARRY OUT THEIR PARLIAMENTARY DUTIES.

THESE INCLUDE THE IMMUNITY FROM CIVIL OR CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS FOR WORDS SPOKEN BEFORE, OR WRITTEN IN A REPORT TO, THE COUNCIL OR A COMMITTEE; IMMUNITY FROM ARREST FOR ANY CIVIL DEBT WHILST GOING TO, ATTENDING OR RETURNING FROM A SITTING OF THE COUNCIL OR A COMMITTEE AND FOR ANY CRIMINAL OFFENCE WHILST ATTENDING A SITTING OF THE COUNCIL OR A COMMITTEE.

THE GOVERNOR AND BRANCH SECRETARIES USED TO ENJOY SUCH IMMUNITIES WHEN THEY WERE LEGCO MEMBERS.

ALTHOUGH THEY ARE NO LONGER LEGCO MEMBERS, THEY STILL NEED TO ATTEND SITTINGS OF THE COUNCIL AND ITS COMMITTEES TO TRANSACT GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

"THEREFORE, WE CONSIDER IT APPROPRIATE TO EXTEND THE ABOVE IMMUNITIES AND PRIVILEGES TO THEM WHEN THEY ATTEND THE SITTINGS OF THE COUNCIL AND ITS COMMITTEES," SHE SAID.

THE BILL ALSO SEEKS TO COVER PROCEEDINGS OF LEGCO PANELS AND SUB-COMMITTEES UNDER THE ORDINANCE.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

INDEPENDENT MANAGEMENT OF WAR GRAVES

* * * * *

A BILL TO ENABLE THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION TO CONTINUE ITS INDEPENDENT OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF ITS CEMETERIES IN HONG KONG WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1994, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SUEN, SAID THE COMMISSION MAINTAINED TWO WAR CEMETERIES IN THE TERRITORY.

THEY ARE THE SAI WAN CEMETERY AND THE STANLEY MILITARY CEMETERY.

SINCE 1954, THE DIRECTOR OF URBAN SERVICES HAS ACTED AS THE COMMISSION'S AGENT IN RESPECT OF THE DAY-TO-DAY ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS OF THE TWO CEMETERIES.

/MR SUEN

MR SUEN POINTED OUT THAT ALL CEMETERIES IN HONG KONG, WHETHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE, WERE REGULATED BY AND CONTROLLED UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES ORDINANCE AND ITS SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION.

LITTLE DISTINCTION IS MADE BETWEEN THE POWERS OF THE AUTHORITIES IN RESPECT OF PUBLIC CEMETERIES AND THOSE OF THE COMMISSION IN RESPECT OF ITS CEMETERIES.

"HOWEVER, IN PRACTICE, THERE HAS NEVER BEEN ANY INTERFERENCE WITH THE COMMISSION'S INDEPENDENT OPERATION.

"ALL ESSENTIAL OPERATIONAL AND MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS RELATING TO THE RUNNING OF THE TWO CEMETERIES IN QUESTION ARE DETERMINED BY THE COMMISSION," MR SUEN SAID.

THE AMENDMENT BILL, THEREFORE, IS INTENDED TO GIVE LEGISLATIVE EFFECT TO THIS ESTABLISHED PRACTICE, HE ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

BILL TO MERGE SPORTS BODIES PASSED

* * * * *

THE HONG KONG SPORTS DEVELOPMENT BOARD (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993 WHICH SEEKS TO MERGE THE HONG KONG SPORTS DEVELOPMENT BOARD (SDB) AND THE HONG KONG SPORTS INSTITUTE (HKSI), WAS PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR PAUL LEUNG, SAID THE MERGE PROVIDED FOR AN EFFICIENT AND COST-EFFECTIVE MACHINERY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS IN HONG KONG.

THE SEPARATE IMAGE AND IDENTITY OF THE HKSI WOULD ALSO BE PRESERVED, HE SAID.

THE HKSI WILL BE GOVERNED BY THE SDB THROUGH A MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WHOSE CHAIRMAN WILL BE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR. ITS MEMBERS CAN BE DRAWN FROM BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE SDB.

"THE INSTITUTE WILL BE ABLE TO OPERATE INDEPENDENTLY WITHIN THE OVERALL POLICY PARAMETERS LAID DOWN BY THE SDB," MR LEUNG SAID.

"IT WILL CONTINUE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE AMATEUR SPORTS FEDERATION AND OLYMPIC COMMITTEE OF HONG KONG (ASF&OC) AS WELL AS THE NATIONAL SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS (NSAS) IN THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE IN SPORTS."

DESPITE THE MERGER, MR LEUNG CONTINUED, THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF ASF&OC AND NSAS AS THE SOLE REPRESENTATIVES OF HONG KONG SPORTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA WOULD BE UPHELD AND THEIR INDEPENDENCE WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED.

TURNING TO THE SDB'S INTERFACE WITH THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS, MR LEUNG SAID THE WORK OF THE SDB WOULD COMPLEMENT RATHER THAN INFRINGE OR DUPLICATE THE COUNCILS' FUNCTIONS.

THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS WILL CONTINUE TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROMOTION OF SPORTS AND RECREATION AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL AND FOR THE PROVISION AND MANAGEMENT OF FACILITIES IN THEIR RESPECTIVE REGIONS.

ON THE SDB MEMBERSHIP, THE ACTING SECRETARY SAID IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO HAVE A GOOD MIX OF PEOPLE REPRESENTING A WIDE CROSS-SECTION OF THE SPORTS COMMUNITY.

"A BALANCED MEMBERSHIP IS INDEED WHAT WE HAVE AT PRESENT," HE SAID, ADDING THAT THIS POLICY WOULD BE FOLLOWED WHEN CONSIDERING FUTURE APPOINTMENTS.

MR LEUNG ALSO NOTED THE CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY MEMBERS OVER THE DEVELOPMENT AND DISPOSAL OF ITS LAND BY THE SDB.

HE SAID THERE WERE ALREADY ADEQUATE MEASURES TO ENSURE THAT ANY LAND DEVELOPMENT WAS UNDERTAKEN WITH PRUDENCE.

TO FURTHER ADDRESS THEIR CONCERNS, HE PROPOSED AN AMENDMENT AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE TO REQUIRE THE SDB TO SEEK THE APPROVAL OF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IF IT WISHED TO DEVELOP OR DISPOSE OF ANY LAND IT HELD, AND IF THE DEVELOPMENT INVOLVED THE SALE OR DISPOSAL OF ANY IMMOVABLE PROPERTY.

ANOTHER AMENDMENT PROPOSED WAS TO EXPAND THE SIZE OF THE COMMITTEE OF TRUSTEES TO INCLUDE TWO NON-SDB MEMBERS SO AS TO ALLOW FOR GREATER IMPARTIALITY IN THE INVESTMENT AND APPLICATION OF THE HKSI TRUST FUND WHICH WAS SET UP WITH A GENEROUS ENDOWMENT BY THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB.

- - - - 0 - - - -

LEGCO PASSES TWO MOTIONS

* * * * *

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TONIGHT (WEDNESDAY) PASSED TWO MOTIONS ON COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE AND FREEDOM OF TRAVEL.

THIRTEEN MEMBERS DEBATE FOR MORE THAN ONE HOUR IN THE FIRST MOTION WHICH WAS MOVED BY THE HON WONG WAI-YIN. THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, REPLIED FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

THE SECOND MOTION WAS PROPOSED BY THE HON. HOWARD YOUNG. A TOTAL OF 16 MEMBERS TOOK PART IN THE DEBATE. THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, RESPONDED TO THE POINTS RAISED.

THE HONG KONG SPORTS DEVELOPMENT BOARD (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993 WAS PASSED WITH AMENDMENTS.

THREE BILLS WERE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS AND DEBATES ON THEM WERE ADJOURNED. THEY WERE: LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (POWERS AND PRIVILEGES) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1994, PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1994 AND COPYRIGHT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1994.

- - - - 0 - - - -