



14 JAN 1993

## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 1993

<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
WAITING TIME FOR HIGH COURT CRIMINAL TRIALS REDUCED .....	1
LEGAL SYSTEM SHOULD BE MORE RESPONSIBLE TO COMMUNITY NEEDS ..	4
OMBUDSMAN'S ROLE TO BE STRENGTHENED .....	7
COMMITMENT TO BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES .....	9
APPOINTMENT OF TELECOMS CONSULTANT .....	11
TAC BRIEFED ON UPDATED TRANSPORT STUDY .....	12
GOVERNOR TO ADDRESS LEGCO MEMBERS .....	13
DEVELOPMENT AND NATURE CONSERVATION CAN PROCEED IN TANDEM ...	14
SMALL INCREASE IN NUMBER OF COURT INSOLVENCIES .....	16
HK - LEADING FUND MANAGEMENT CENTRE IN SE ASIA .....	17
GOVT OFFICIALS VISIT BROADCASTING AUTHORITIES IN CHINA .....	17
MEXICO STOPS ANTI-DUMPING INVESTIGATION ON COTTON WOVEN FABRICS .....	18
SHENZHEN DELEGATION VISITS MARINE DEPARTMENT .....	18

LAN KWAI FONG INQUIRY .....	19
LEGCO MEETS ON WEDNESDAY .....	20
POST OFFICE INTRODUCES NEW LETTER SCALES .....	21
45 NEW BUILDING PLANS APPROVED IN OCTOBER .....	21
RATES FOR FIRST QUARTER DUE THIS MONTH .....	22
MORE WOULD VOTE IN ELECTIONS .....	24
WATER STORAGE FIGURE .....	24
HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS ..	25

WAITING TIME FOR HIGH COURT CRIMINAL TRIALS REDUCED

\* \* \* \* \*

DESPITE THE GREAT INCREASE IN CRIMINAL CASES IN HIGH COURT, THE JUDICIARY HAD REDUCED THE WAITING TIME FOR TRIAL FROM 12 TO EIGHT-AND-A-HALF MONTHS SINCE THE MIDDLE OF LAST YEAR, THE CHIEF JUSTICE, SIR TI LIANG YANG, SAID TODAY (MONDAY).

ADDRESSING THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 1993 LEGAL YEAR HELD AT THE CITY HALL, SIR TI LIANG SAID THE INCREASING TIME BETWEEN THE FILING OF CRIMINAL INDICTMENTS IN THE HIGH COURT AND THE FIRST DAY OF TRIAL HAD ATTRACTED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION IN THE LAST TWO YEARS.

"THERE HAS BEEN, AND CONTINUES TO BE, A CONSIDERABLE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CRIMINAL INDICTMENTS FILED IN EVERY YEAR.

"IN 1987, 234 INDICTMENTS WERE FILED AND IN 1992 THE NUMBER HAS RISEN TO OVER 400. IN EACH YEAR THE INCREASE HAS BEEN IN THE ORDER OF 15 PER CENT OVER THE YEAR BEFORE," HE SAID.

SIR TI LIANG MAINTAINED THAT THE REDUCTION OF WAITING TIME FROM 12 TO EIGHT-AND-A-HALF MONTHS WAS STILL NOT SATISFACTORY, BUT THIS WAS THE BEST THE JUDICIARY COULD DO AT THE MOMENT.

"BECAUSE OF THE NEED TO MOVE DISTRICT JUDGES TO SIT IN THE HIGH COURT AND MAGISTRATES TO SIT IN THE DISTRICT COURT, WAITING TIMES FOR CIVIL CASES IN THE HIGH COURT, AND FOR CASES IN THE COURT OF APPEAL, DISTRICT COURT, MAGISTRATES COURTS AND THE TRIBUNALS HAVE GONE UP SOMEWHAT BUT ARE STILL ACCEPTABLE BY INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS," HE SAID.

THE CHIEF JUSTICE POINTED OUT THAT IN THE COURSE OF LAST YEAR, THE JUDICIARY WAS ABLE TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SUBSTANTIVE JUDGES BY TWO FROM 20 TO 22, AND ONE SUPERNUMERARY.

HOWEVER, AS THE INCREASE IN WORK HAD CONTINUED, THAT NUMBER WAS CLEARLY INSUFFICIENT NOW AND APPLICATION WOULD BE MADE TO THE ADMINISTRATION FOR MORE POSTS TO BE CREATED.

"THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF JUDGES LAST YEAR WAS THE FIRST SINCE THE YEAR 1981 WHEN THE NUMBER WAS INCREASED FROM 15 TO 20," HE EMPHASISED.

SIR TI LIANG THEN ELABORATED ON THE MEASURES THAT HAD BEEN DECIDED ON OR IMPLEMENTED IN THE JUDICIARY'S LISTING SYSTEM SO AS TO ACHIEVE A MORE EFFICIENT USE OF COURT TIME.

"WE NOW HAVE A RUNNING LIST FOR SHORT CRIMINAL CASES WHERE THE ACCUSED IS REPRESENTED BY THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AID. THIS IS DESIGNED SO THAT SUCH CASES MAY BE DISPOSED OF EXPEDITIOUSLY AND DO NOT HAVE TO WAIT BEHIND LONG TRIALS.

"THE SYSTEM OF PRE-TRIAL REVIEW FOR CRIMINAL CASES APPEARS TO BE WORKING WELL. THIS SERVES TO TRIM OFF MANY SIDE OR PRELIMINARY ISSUES BEFORE THE ACTUAL TRIAL COMES ON. WE ARE NOW CONSIDERING THE FEASIBILITY OF PRE-TRIAL REVIEWS FOR CIVIL CASES.

"WHILST WE HAVE FOR MANY YEARS A SYSTEM OF APPOINTING LAWYERS IN PRIVATE PRACTICE SITTING AS DEPUTY JUDGES OR TEMPORARY MAGISTRATES, WE HOPE TO INSTITUTE A RECORDERSHIP SCHEME IN ORDER TO ATTRACT A NUMBER OF LAWYERS IN PRIVATE PRACTICE TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO SEVERAL WEEKS EACH YEAR HEARING CASES AS DEPUTY JUDGES," HE SAID.

THE CHIEF JUSTICE REVEALED THAT HE KEPT A TIGHT WATCH ON THE STATE OF THE HIGH COURT AND COURT OF APPEAL DIARIES WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE REGISTRAR AND THE LISTING MASTER.

"EACH FRIDAY, WE MEET WITH THE LISTING CLERKS TO KEEP OURSELVES ABREAST OF DEVELOPMENT AND TO DEAL WITH ANY PROBLEMS THAT MAY ARISE," HE ADDED.

ON THE BILL OF RIGHTS ORDINANCE, SIR TI LIANG SAID THE PASSING INTO LAW OF THE ORDINANCE HAD INEVITABLY INCREASED THE WORK OF THE JUDICIARY AT ALL LEVELS.

"IT HAS BEEN NECESSARY, ON OCCASION, TO GIVE PRIORITY TO APPELLATE MATTERS INVOLVING BILL OF RIGHTS POINTS, AS, VERY OFTEN, DECISION IS NEEDED URGENTLY NOT ONLY FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE LOWER COURTS BUT ALSO FOR THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES," HE EXPLAINED.

AS THE ORDINANCE ALSO PROVIDED THE IMPETUS TO THE ADMINISTRATION TO EXTEND THE DUTY LAWYER SCHEME IN THE MAGISTRACIES COVERING ALL OFFENCES AND NOT SIMPLY THE RESTRICTED OFFENCES EMBRACED IN THE PREVIOUS SCHEME, THE WORKLOAD OF THE MAGISTRACIES HAD INCREASED.

"I WOULD LIKE TO PAY SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO THE MAGISTRATES WHO, WITH NO INCREASE IN NUMBERS, HAVE ABSORBED THIS EXTRA WORK WITHOUT ANY SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN WAITING TIMES.

"WITH THE HELP AND CO-OPERATION OF THE MAGISTRATES AND THE DUTY LAWYERS, THE COURT DIARIES HAVE NOT BEEN SERIOUSLY AFFECTED," THE CHIEF JUSTICE SAID.

TURNING TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, SIR TI LIANG STATED THAT THE CONSULTANTS ENGAGED TO ADVISE ON THE INTRODUCTION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE JUDICIARY COMPLETED THEIR REPORT.

HAVING ACCEPTED THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS AS AN IMPORTANT STEP "IN GETTING AWAY FROM OUR OLD-FASHIONED LABOUR INTENSIVE SYSTEMS AND FOR MOVING INTO A NEW ERA", THE REPORT HAD BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE ADMINISTRATION, ACCORDING TO THE CHIEF JUSTICE.

"THIS YEAR HAS ALSO SEEN THE INTRODUCTION INTO THE MAGISTRACIES OF THE CASEMAN SYSTEM FOR THE ISSUE AND PROCESSING OF SUMMONSES AND CHARGES WHERE PROCEEDINGS ARE INITIATED BY EITHER THE POLICE, CUSTOMS AND EXCISE OR ONE OF THE OTHER RELEVANT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS," HE ADDED.

THE CASEMAN SYSTEM ENABLES THE PROSECUTING AUTHORITIES TO FEED IN THE SUMMONSES AND CHARGES FROM THEIR OWN TERMINAL AND FOR THAT PROCESS TO BE ISSUED AUTOMATICALLY IN THE MAGISTRACY.

SERVICE AND FOLLOW-UP, AFTER ANY SUBSEQUENT CONVICTION, ARE ALSO DEALT WITH BY THE COMPUTER SYSTEM AND THOSE WHO HAVE INCURRED FINES MAY NOW PAY THEM AT ANY MAGISTRACY BUILDING AND DO NOT HAVE TO GO TO THE ONE THAT IMPOSED THE PENALTY.

IN HIS SPEECH, THE CHIEF JUSTICE ALSO TOUCHED ON THE ISSUE OF "LOCALS".

"MUCH HAS BEEN SAID OF THE DESIRABILITY OF INCREASING THE NUMBER OF LOCAL PEOPLE IN THE JUDICIARY. MUCH HAS BEEN DONE IN THAT REGARD AND IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT IN 1987, 45 NUMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY WERE EMPLOYED ON LOCAL TERMS BUT TODAY THE NUMBER IS 61.

"THIS SHOWS AN INCREASE, IN PERCENTAGE TERMS, OF FROM 30 PER CENT TO 38.61 PER CENT," HE SAID.

SIR TI LIANG STRESSED: "ALTHOUGH LOCALS OF ABILITY AND INTEGRITY OUGHT TO BE GIVEN FIRST PRIORITY WHEN RECRUITED, ONCE INSIDE THE JUDICIARY, BOTH LOCALS AND EXPATRIATES SHOULD BE TREATED EQUALLY, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF CAREER ADVANCEMENT, WITH FAVOURABLE CONSIDERATION BEING GIVEN FOR A KNOWLEDGE OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE AND OF LOCAL CONDITIONS.

"IN THIS REGARD, I HAVE PLACED, AND WILL CONTINUE TO PLACE, GREAT EMPHASIS ON THE THREE CRITERIA BY WHICH I BELIEVE MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY ARE PROPERLY JUDGED.

"THE OFTEN REPEATED CRITERIA ARE COMPETENCE IN LAW, JUDICIAL TEMPERAMENT AND PROPRIETY OF CONDUCT.

"FOR CAREER ADVANCEMENT, IT IS THESE CRITERIA WHICH I REGARD AS VITAL AND NOT WHETHER A PERSON IS, OR IS NOT, REGARDED AS A LOCAL."

NOTING THAT THERE WAS NOW MUCH LOCAL INTEREST FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN THE MAGISTRACY AND SUPREME COURT BENCH, THE CHIEF JUSTICE HOPED THAT THE JUDICIARY, IN FUTURE, WOULD NO LONGER NEED TO LOOK TO ENGLAND FOR APPOINTMENTS TO THE MAGISTRATES COURTS.

"I AM ALSO MUCH ENCOURAGED BY THE INTEREST SHOWN BY A NUMBER OF QUEEN'S COUNSEL FOR THE SUPREME COURT AND HOPE THAT SOME MORE LOCAL APPOINTMENTS MAY BE MADE FOR FUTURE VACANCIES," HE SAID.

EARLIER, SIR TI LIANG ACKNOWLEDGED IN HIS SPEECH THE RETIREMENT OF MR JUSTICE CLOUGH FROM THE COURT OF APPEAL AND MR JUSTICE HOOPER FROM THE HIGH COURT WHO HAD MADE IMMENSE CONTRIBUTION TO THE JUDICIARY.

HE ALSO REFERRED TO THE IMPENDING DEPARTURE OF THREE HIGHLY RESPECTED COURT OF APPEAL JUDGES - SIR DEREK CONS, MR JUSTICE FUAD AND MR JUSTICE KEMPSTER.

ALSO SPEAKING AT THE CEREMONY WERE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, MR JEREMY MATHEWS; THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HONG KONG BAR ASSOCIATION, MISS JACQUELINE LEONG; AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF HONG KONG, MR AMBROSE LAU.

THE CEREMONIAL OPENING OF THE LEGAL YEAR, WHICH WAS ORGANISED BY THE JUDICIARY, BEGAN WITH A CHURCH SERVICE AT THE CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL, CAINE ROAD, AT 3.30 PM.

THE CHIEF JUSTICE INSPECTED A GUARD OF HONOUR PROVIDED BY THE DRAGON COMPANY OF HONG KONG MILITARY SERVICE CORPS WITH MUSIC BY THE BAND OF THE BRIGADE OF GURKHAS AT THE EDINBURGH PLACE LATER IN THE AFTERNOON.

THE INSPECTION WAS FOLLOWED BY ADDRESSES IN THE CONCERT HALL OF CITY HALL. THE AUDIENCE COMPRISED JUDGES, MEMBERS OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION, HEADS OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND OTHER DIGNITARIES.

- - - - 0 - - - -

LEGAL SYSTEM SHOULD BE MORE RESPONSIBLE TO COMMUNITY NEEDS

\* \* \* \* \*

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, MR JEREMY MATHEWS, RAISED SOME THOUGHTS ON HOW LAWYERS COULD HELP TO MAKE HONG KONG'S LEGAL SYSTEM MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.

MR MATHEWS ASKED WHETHER THE LAW HAD ITSELF IN MANY RESPECTS TAKEN A PATH THAT LED IT AWAY FROM THE NEEDS AND THE SERVICE OF THE COMMUNITY AND BECAME AN END IN ITSELF TO LAWYERS - EITHER AS A GOOD COMFORTABLE BUSINESS TO BE IN OR A STIMULATING AND SATISFYING INTELLECTUAL HOBBY.

OPENING THE LEGAL YEAR TODAY (MONDAY), HE SAID:

"WE MUST ADDRESS IN A SERIOUS WAY ANY PERCEPTION THAT THE LAW IS SOMETHING ALIEN TO THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATION OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.

"IT IS INCUMBENT UPON US COLLECTIVELY AND INDIVIDUALLY TO EXERT ALL OUR EFFORTS TO MAKE THE LAW ACCESSIBLE TO THOSE WHOM WE SERVE - TO MAKE THE LAW 'USER FRIENDLY'."

MR MATHEWS SAID MUCH HAD ALREADY BEEN DONE IN THIS AREA. FOR EXAMPLE, THE LAW SOCIETY'S HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL "LAW WEEK" SERVED TO BRING THE LAW INTO THE COMMUNITY AND HEIGHTEN AWARENESS OF THE BENEFITS OF THE LAW TO THE SOCIETY.

THE BILINGUAL LAWS PROGRAMME WAS MAKING A SIGNIFICANT AND GROWING CONTRIBUTION TO THIS PROCESS.

BUT MUCH MORE NEEDED TO BE DONE, HE SAID.

MR MATHEWS SAID: "UNFORTUNATELY, I SEE A MAJOR OBSTACLE POSED BY THE VERY COST OF MAINTAINING THE LEGAL SYSTEM."

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE PROPER ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE WAS LABOUR INTENSIVE AND THAT THE LAW ULTIMATELY DEPENDED ON HUMAN BEINGS: JUDGES, LAWYERS, TEACHERS OF LAW, THOSE ENGAGED IN LEGAL RESEARCH AND A LARGE NUMBER OF OTHERS WHO HELPED TO SERVE THE LEGAL MACHINE.

THE TOTAL COST TO THE COMMUNITY IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER OF MAINTAINING THE LEGAL SYSTEM WAS ENORMOUS AND CONTINUED TO GROW.

"WE MUST BE AWARE AND BE EVER VIGILANT AGAINST A SITUATION DEVELOPING WHERE THE LAW AND LAWYERS SIMPLY PRICE THEMSELVES OUT OF THE REACH OF THE GROWING NUMBER OF OUR CITIZENS.

"WE MUST BEWARE LEST THE LAW BECOMES THE SERVANT OF ONLY THE VERY RICH - THE MILLIONAIRES OR THE BIG POWERFUL CORPORATIONS THAT CAN ENGAGE IN LONG AND EXPENSIVE LITIGATION, DRYING UP THE VALUABLE RESOURCES OF THE COURTS IN DISPUTES THAT ARE FREQUENTLY ABOUT ON WHICH SIDE OF A BALANCE SHEET A PARTICULAR FIGURE SHOULD APPEAR," HE SAID.

HE BELIEVED IT TO BE A MATTER OF SOME CONGRATULATION THAT THE AMOUNT OF MONEY MADE AVAILABLE BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR LEGAL AID HAD IN RECENT YEARS INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY.

BUT NO LEGAL AID SYSTEM COULD EVER PROVIDE A COMPLETE LEGAL COVER WITHOUT THE COST BEING PROHIBITIVE, HE SAID.

"THE TIME HAS COME," HE SAID, "I WOULD SUGGEST, FOR US TO GIVE ANXIOUS CONSIDERATION TO WAYS IN WHICH LEGAL SERVICES CAN BE PROVIDED TO THE COMMUNITY IN A SIMPLE, INEXPENSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE FORM."

MR MATHEWS SAID INFORMAL TRIBUNALS HAD A ROLE TO PLAY IN THIS RESPECT.

TRIBUNALS SUCH AS THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL AND THE SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL WERE NOT INTENDED TO FUNCTION LIKE NORMAL COURTS AND WERE INTENDED TO BE INFORMAL TRIBUNALS WHERE LAWYERS WERE NOT PERMITTED TO APPEAR, AND WHERE FINANCIAL DISPUTES COULD BE RESOLVED SWIFTLY AND INFORMALLY.

"PERHAPS THE TIME HAS COME FOR THESE TRIBUNALS TO BE LOOKED AT AGAIN, TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE INDEED COMMUNITY TRIBUNALS TO WHICH PEOPLE CAN TURN WITH THE READY ASSURANCE THAT THERE WILL BE QUICK AND INFORMAL DETERMINATION OF THEIR DISPUTES.

"WE SHOULD ALSO BE LOOKING AT OTHER WAYS IN WHICH CASES WHICH CURRENTLY MUST GO TO THE COURTS CAN BE DEALT WITH.

"WE SHOULD LOOK IMAGINATIVELY FOR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO THE QUESTIONS OF COST AND THE ANCILLARY PROBLEM OF DELAYS."

HE BELIEVED THAT THERE WAS A GOOD CASE FOR PROVIDING AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE COURTS IN RESOLVING A GREAT MANY OF THE ROUTINE CASES THAT CURRENTLY WENT TO THE COURTS AND WHICH HAD TO GO TO THE COURTS BECAUSE THERE WAS NO OTHER AVENUE FOR REDRESS.

HE BELIEVED THAT MEDIATION AND OTHER FORMS OF DISPUTE RESOLUTION COULD BE APPLIED TO MANY ORDINARY PROBLEMS OF THE CITIZENS AND THAT THESE FORMS OF DISPUTE RESOLUTION COULD BE SWIFT AND INEXPENSIVE.

"I SEE AS A SIDE BENEFIT TO THIS THE FREEING-UP OF THE COURTS, WHICH COULD DEVOTE THEIR RESOURCES TO THOSE MATTERS THAT MUST CONTINUE TO BE DEALT WITH BY THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM - FOR EXAMPLE THE HEARING OF CRIMINAL CASES, THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC LAW AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF JURISPRUDENCE IN SUCH AREAS AS THE BILL OF RIGHTS."

MR MATHEWS SAID THERE WERE ENCOURAGING SIGNS THAT AWARENESS OF ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF DISPUTE RESOLUTION IS GROWING IN HONG KONG.

ALL AIRPORT CORE PROJECT CONTRACTS, FOR EXAMPLE, CONTAINED A PROVISION FOR MANDATORY ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION WHICH, IT WAS HOPED, WOULD REDUCE THE LIKELIHOOD OF LONG-DRAWN-OUT COURT PROCEEDINGS IN RESPECT OF THESE CONTRACTS. SIMILAR PROVISIONS WERE NOW BEING ADOPTED IN OTHER GOVERNMENT CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS.

HE SAID THE CONSUMER COUNCIL WAS ENCOURAGING ORGANISATIONS TO SET UP THEIR OWN SYSTEMS TO INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS AGAINST THEIR MEMBERS, AND MEDIATION WAS ONE OF THE APPROACHES RECOMMENDED BY THE COUNCIL.

THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HAD PROPOSED THAT LABOUR DISPUTES INVOLVING SMALL AMOUNTS BE SUBJECT TO ARBITRATION BY SENIOR LABOUR OFFICERS.

"I WELCOME THESE INITIATIVES TO PROVIDE QUICK AND INEXPENSIVE WAYS OF RESOLVING DISPUTES AND HOPE THEY WILL ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO DEVELOP SIMILAR IDEAS," MR MATHEWS SAID.

HE SAID IT WAS NOT ONLY IN THE AREA OF LITIGATION THAT THE LAW WAS IN DANGER OF PRICING ITSELF, IF NOT OUT OF EXISTENCE, THEN OUT OF THE REACH OF MANY OF THE COMMUNITY.

IN NON-CONTENTIOUS AREAS, HE BELIEVED THAT THERE WAS MUCH THAT COULD BE DONE TO REDUCE THE COST OF THE LAW.

FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID, THERE MIGHT BE A CASE FOR LOOKING AT THE COST OF BUYING AND SELLING A FLAT.

"IN HONG KONG THE FEES TO BE CHARGED ARE GEARED STRICTLY TO THE VALUE OF THE TRANSACTION, RATHER THAN TO THE VALUE OF THE SERVICES BEING PROVIDED BY THE LAWYER INVOLVED IN THE TRANSACTION.

"HAS THE TIME COME FOR US TO LOOK AGAIN AT THE WAY IN WHICH SUCH FEES ARE CALCULATED? IS THERE A CASE FOR CHARGING, AS OTHER PROFESSIONALS DO, FOR THE VALUE OF THE SERVICE?"

"THAT MAY, OF COURSE, MEAN THAT FOR SOME PARTICULAR TRANSACTIONS FEES WOULD RISE, BUT EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE HAS SHOWN THAT OVERALL FEES TEND TO DROP. IT ALSO INTRODUCES A HEALTHY DEGREE OF COMPETITION AND THAT SURELY CAN BE NO BAD THING."

HE SAID ANOTHER WAY IN WHICH THE COST OF THE LAW COULD BE REDUCED WOULD BE TO ELIMINATE THE COMMISSIONS THAT WERE IMPROPERLY PAID BY SOME LAWYERS TO TOUTS AND MIDDLEMEN WHO INTRODUCED WORK TO THEM.

"I KNOW THAT THE BAR ASSOCIATION AND LAW SOCIETY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THIS PROBLEM AND THAT STEPS ARE BEING TAKEN TO DEAL WITH COMMISSION-TAKING IN RELATION TO CRIMINAL MATTERS. I HOPE THAT THERE WILL SOON BE A DETERMINED EFFORT TO DEAL WITH COMMISSION-TAKING IN RESPECT OF CONVEYANCING."

MR MATHEWS SAID HE HAD THE THOUGHTS, NOT BECAUSE HE WISHED TO LAUNCH AN ATTACK UPON LAWYERS' RICE BOWLS.

"NONE OF THESE THOUGHTS, IF FOLLOWED THROUGH, WOULD RESULT IN LAWYERS BEING OUT OF WORK OR IMPECUNIOUS AND I AM, OF COURSE, ACUTELY CONSCIOUS OF, AND GLAD TO REAFFIRM PUBLICLY, THE VERY LARGE NUMBER OF SERVICES THAT ARE PROVIDED TO THE COMMUNITY BY LAWYERS IN HONG KONG AT NO COST AT ALL.

"HONG KONG LAWYERS HAVE A FINE RECORD OF PRO BONO WORK TO THE GREAT BENEFIT OF ALL IN HONG KONG AND LONG MAY THAT TRADITION CONTINUE.

"BUT I DO BELIEVE THAT WE MUST HARKEN TO THE WARNING BELLS AND NOT ALLOW OURSELVES AS A PROFESSION TO BECOME COMPLACENT ABOUT THE LEGAL SYSTEM OR TO ASSUME THAT HIGH LEGAL FEES WILL ALWAYS BE TOLERATED BY THE COMMUNITY.

"WE MUST REMEMBER AND REAFFIRM THE IDEALISM WHICH BROUGHT US INTO THE LAW IN THE FIRST PLACE - A WISH TO SERVE. WE MUST NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF THAT.

"WE MUST RE-EXAMINE THE STATE OF THE LEGAL SYSTEM AND ITS COST TO THE COMMUNITY AND ASK OURSELVES WHETHER THE SYSTEM IS RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY AND CAN BE REACHED AND USED BY ALL MEMBERS - RICH AND POOR ALIKE," HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

OMBUDSMAN'S ROLE TO BE STRENGTHENED

\* \* \* \* \*

THE ROLE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS (COMAC) IS TO BE STRENGTHENED UNDER A PACKAGE OF PROPOSALS ENDORSED BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL, THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (MONDAY).

THE PROPOSED CHANGES, WHICH AIM TO PROVIDE A MORE EFFECTIVE SAFEGUARD AGAINST GOVERNMENT MALADMINISTRATION, ARE:

- \* THE EXISTING SYSTEM FOR LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS TO REFER CASES TO THE COMAC SHOULD BE CHANGED TO ENABLE THE PUBLIC TO TAKE THEIR COMPLAINTS DIRECTLY TO THE COMMISSIONER;
- \* THE COMMISSIONER'S JURISDICTION SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO INCLUDE MAJOR STATUTORY BODIES ESTABLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT; AND

- \* THE COMMISSIONER SHOULD BE ABLE TO PUBLICISE INVESTIGATION REPORTS WITH THE NAMES OF THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN THE COMPLAINTS BEING ANONYMISED TO ENSURE PRIVACY.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THESE CHANGES, FIRST PROPOSED BY THE GOVERNOR IN HIS POLICY ADDRESS IN OCTOBER, WERE BASED ON A DETAILED REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE COMAC OFFICE IN THE LIGHT OF OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE.

"THE PROPOSED CHANGES REFLECT THE GENERAL PUBLIC OPINION AND ARE SUPPORTED BY THE COMMISSIONER, WHO HAS BEEN CONSULTED," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

UNDER THE PROPOSAL, THE PUBLIC WOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE THEIR COMPLAINTS TO THE COMMISSIONER WITHOUT THE NEED FOR REFERRAL BY A NON-OFFICIAL LEGCO MEMBER.

MEMBERS OF LEGCO, THE TWO MUNICIPAL COUNCILS AND DISTRICT BOARDS CAN STILL REFER CASES TO THE COMMISSIONER IN FUTURE, PROVIDED IT IS WITH THE CONSENT OF THE COMPLAINANT.

ON THE EXTENSION OF COMAC'S JURISDICTION TO MAJOR STATUTORY BODIES, THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT CHANGE WOULD UNDERLINE THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY OF STATUTORY BODIES.

"PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO THE HOUSING AUTHORITY, MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION, KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION, URBAN COUNCIL, REGIONAL COUNCIL, AND THE SECURITIES AND FUTURES COMMISSION.

"THESE STATUTORY BODIES PROVIDE AN IMPORTANT PUBLIC SERVICE AND HAVE CLOSE DEALINGS WITH THE PUBLIC. OTHER STATUTORY BODIES WILL BE BROUGHT UNDER THE COMMISSIONER'S JURISDICTION WHEN RESOURCES PERMIT," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

ON THE PROPOSAL TO ENABLE THE COMMISSIONER TO PUBLICISE HIS INVESTIGATION REPORTS, THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE CHANGE WOULD PROMOTE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE COMAC SYSTEM AND ENHANCE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN IT.

THE COMAC OFFICE CAME INTO OPERATION IN MARCH 1989 AND CURRENTLY HAS AN ESTABLISHMENT OF 26 STAFF MEMBERS.

THE NUMBERS OF CASES IT RECEIVED IN THE PAST THREE YEARS WERE RESPECTIVELY 167, 197 AND 150.

THE SPOKESMAN ESTIMATED THAT THE PROPOSED CHANGES WOULD INCREASE THE CASELOAD OF THE COMAC OFFICE BY 50 PER CENT EACH YEAR. THE ADDITIONAL STAFF COST IS ESTIMATED TO BE ABOUT \$10.8 MILLION A YEAR.

AMENDMENTS TO THE COMAC ORDINANCE TO EFFECT THE CHANGES WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS AND, IF PASSED, WOULD BE PUT INTO EFFECT IN THE SECOND HALF OF THIS YEAR.

COMMITMENT TO BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES

\* \* \* \* \*

THE GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO FURTHER IMPROVING THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES, REDUCING ROAD HAZARDS AND INVESTING IN TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR MICHAEL LEUNG TODAY (MONDAY) IN A SESSION WITH THE MEDIA WHICH WAS ALSO ATTENDED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, MR RAFAEL HUI, AND THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS, MR K C YEUNG.

ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT, MR LEUNG SAID UNDER THEIR FIVE-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLANS, THE FRANCHISED BUS COMPANIES WILL INCREASE THEIR CARRYING CAPACITY BY 12 PER CENT BY 1997 WITH MORE EXPRESS ROUTES TO THE NEW TOWNS AND MORE AIR-CONDITIONED BUSES.

MR LEUNG SAID: "WE WILL ALSO KEEP IN VIEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTRODUCING MORE HEALTHY COMPETITION IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES FOLLOWING THE INTRODUCTION OF A SECOND FRANCHISED BUS OPERATOR ON HONG KONG ISLAND."

TO ENABLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS TO BE DIRECTLY ACCOUNTABLE TO THEIR CUSTOMERS, MR LEUNG SAID BOTH KOWLOON MOTOR BUS CO (KMB) AND CHINA MOTOR BUS CO (CMB) WILL SET UP THEIR PASSENGER LIAISON GROUPS THIS YEAR.

THIS FOLLOWED THE SUCCESS BY THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORP (MTRC) AND KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORP (KCRC) AND HONGKONG YAUMATEI FERRY IN ESTABLISHING THEIR OWN PASSENGER LIAISON GROUPS.

MR LEUNG NOTED THE SUCCESS IN KEEPING THE PEAK HOUR PASSENGER FLOW ALONG THE MTR NATHAN ROAD CORRIDOR BELOW THE ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF 75,000 LAST YEAR, BY INTRODUCING 13 NEW EXPRESS BUS ROUTES, MORE RESIDENTIAL COACH SERVICES AND NEW TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES.

AS A FURTHER MEASURE, MTRC WILL BE UPGRADING ITS SIGNALLING, VENTILATION AND POWER SUPPLY SYSTEM SO THAT AN ADDITIONAL SOUTH-BOUND TRAIN WILL BE OPERATED EACH HOUR DURING THE MORNING PEAK PERIOD LATER THIS YEAR, AND A FURTHER TRAIN NEXT YEAR.

OTHER NEW MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES INCLUDE A PLAN BY THE YAUMATEI FERRY TO COMMISSION TWO 300-SEAT FAST VESSELS IN AUGUST THIS YEAR ON THE TUEN MUN-CENTRAL ROUTE.

"IT IS ALSO OUR INTENTION TO START A NEW HOVER FERRY SERVICE BETWEEN TUEN MUN AND WAN CHAI AS SOON AS POSSIBLE," MR LEUNG SAID.

ON ROAD SAFETY, MR LEUNG SAID THE GOVERNMENT REMAINED COMMITTED TO FURTHER REDUCING SAFETY HAZARDS ON THE ROADS.

LEGISLATION WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS WEEK TO TACKLE THE OVERLOADING OF GOODS VEHICLES.

THERE ARE PLANS TO EXTEND THE WEARING OF SEAT BELTS TO REAR SEAT PASSENGERS IN NEW PRIVATE CARS BY NEXT YEAR AND TO REDUCE HAZARDS ON STEEP ROADS BY INSTALLING MORE CRASH BARRIERS, LAYING ANTI-SKID MATERIAL AND THROUGH TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES.

"WE ARE ALSO CONSIDERING MAKING MEDICAL CHECK-UP COMPULSORY FOR BUS DRIVERS."

WITH REGARD TO TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE, MR LEUNG SAID EXPENDITURE ON ROAD PROJECTS INCLUDING THOSE LINKING THE NEW AIRPORT WILL INCREASE SUBSTANTIALLY FROM \$1,556 MILLION IN 1991/92 TO \$3,790 MILLION IN 1992/93.

THE FIGURE WILL RISE FURTHER TO \$6,493 MILLION IN 1993/94.

"NEW TRANSPORT PROJECTS, SUCH AS THE WEST KOWLOON EXPRESSWAY AND ROUTE 3 (KWAI CHUNG - TSING YI SECTION) ARE NOT ONLY TO SERVE THE NEW AIRPORT. THEY WILL BENEFIT THE TERRITORY AS A WHOLE," HE SAID.

MR LEUNG ALSO PLEDGED TO MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM IN BUILDING MORE NEW ROADS AND IMPROVING EXISTING ONES TO MEET THE GROWING TRANSPORT NEEDS.

HE NOTED THAT MAJOR ROAD PROJECTS COMPLETED LAST YEAR INCLUDED THE RECONSTRUCTION OF KING'S ROAD, THE YUEN LONG WEST LINK TO TIN SHUI WAI AND THE FINAL SECTION OF THE NT CIRCULAR ROAD BETWEEN AU TAU AND FAN KAM ROAD WHICH WILL BE OPEN TO TRAFFIC ON SATURDAY (JANUARY 16).

PROJECTS DUE FOR COMPLETION THIS YEAR INCLUDE THE HILLSIDE ESCALATOR LINKING CENTRAL AND THE MID-LEVELS AND THE TUEN MUN-YUEN LONG EASTERN CORRIDOR.

PROJECTS DUE TO START THIS YEAR INCLUDE THE YAUMATEI SECTION OF THE WEST KOWLOON CORRIDOR AND THE SECOND TSING YI SOUTH BRIDGE.

FOR LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT, MR LEUNG SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD CARRIED OUT A NUMBER OF STRATEGIC STUDIES.

IN PARTICULAR, THE UPDATING OF THE SECOND COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORT STUDY (CTS-2) IS NEARING COMPLETION.

"THE UPDATE EXTENDS THE TRANSPORT PLANNING HORIZON UP TO 2011, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT, PORT, AIRPORT AND OTHER NEW LAND-USE DEVELOPMENTS," HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE AVERAGE TRAVELLING TIME HAD BEEN SHORTENED BY 10-15 PER CENT DURING 1986 TO 1991, DUE LARGELY TO A SUBSTANTIAL ROAD BUILDING PROGRAMME AND IMPROVEMENT IN THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM.

"THE IMPROVEMENT IS PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT WHEN ONE CONSIDERS THAT THERE HAS BEEN AN ANNUAL VEHICLE GROWTH OF 7.5 PER CENT IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS AND THAT PEOPLE IN HONG KONG ARE TRAVELLING MORE WITH AN AVERAGE OF ABOUT 10.3 MILLION TRIPS MADE A DAY IN 1992, REPRESENTING A 24 PER CENT RISE COMPARED TO 1981," MR LEUNG SAID.

THE CTS-2 UPDATE RECOMMENDS THE CONSTRUCTION OF 12 MAJOR NEW ROADS OVER THE PERIOD 1998 TO 2011 AS FOLLOWS:

- \* ROUTE 3 (COUNTRY PARK SECTION) AND TING KAU BRIDGE,
- \* HUNG HOM BYPASS AND PRINCESS MARGARET ROAD LINK,
- \* ROUTE 16 LINKING SHA TIN WITH LAI CHI KOK,
- \* MA WAN - SHAM TSENG LINK,
- \* CENTRAL AND WANCHAI BYPASS,
- \* CENTRAL KOWLOON ROUTE,
- \* HUNG HOM - KAI TAK LINK,
- \* ADDITIONAL TAI PO - SHA TIN LINK,
- \* GREEN ISLAND LINK,
- \* ROUTE 3 (TSING YI - STONECUTTERS SECTION),
- \* ROUTE 7 FROM KENNEDY TOWN TO ABERDEEN AND
- \* A NEW NORTH-SOUTH ROAD IN THE NT.

MR LEUNG EMPHASISED THAT THE CTS-2 UPDATE WAS A STRATEGIC STUDY AND THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW INFRASTRUCTURE WOULD DEPEND ON THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.

MR LEUNG ALSO SAID THE STUDY ENVISAGED THAT GROWTH IN THE PRIVATE CAR FLEET WOULD BE LIMITED TO FIVE PER CENT PER ANNUM, COMPARED WITH THE PRESENT RATE OF 10 PER CENT PER ANNUM.

IF GROWTH CONTINUED AT PRESENT LEVELS, CONSIDERATION WOULD HAVE TO BE GIVEN TO FURTHER MEANS OF CONSTRAINING PRIVATE CAR GROWTH OR USAGE.

REFERRING TO ANOTHER STRATEGIC STUDY - THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STUDY, MR LEUNG SAID THE FINAL DRAFT REPORT SHOULD BE READY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT BY MARCH.

THE STUDY WILL PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RAIL SERVICES UP TO 2011, INCLUDING LINKS TO THE NORTHWEST NEW TERRITORIES.

- - - - 0 - - - -

#### APPOINTMENT OF TELECOMS CONSULTANT

\* \* \* \* \*

THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (MONDAY) THE APPOINTMENT OF MR ALEXANDER ARENA TO THE POST OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT TO THE GOVERNMENT, PENDING ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW OFFICE OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY (OFTA).

THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ANSON CHAN, SAID: "THE INTENTION IS TO APPOINT MR ARENA TO HEAD THE NEW OFTA WHEN IT IS ESTABLISHED, SUBJECT TO OBTAINING THE NECESSARY APPROVALS. WE HOPE THE NEW OFFICE WILL BE OPERATIONAL EARLY IN THE SECOND QUARTER."

MR ARENA IS CURRENTLY ONE OF THE THREE MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF AUSTEL, THE AUSTRALIAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY BODY.

/HE WAS .....

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 1993

- 12 -

HE WAS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AUSTEL AND HAS EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN DEALING WITH THE REGULATORY ISSUES WHICH ARISE DURING THE PROCESS OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS MARKET LIBERALISATION.

HE HAS PARTICULAR INTERESTS IN THE ECONOMIC, FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL ISSUES WHICH ARISE IN MULTI-CARRIER ENVIRONMENTS.

"EMBARKING AS WE ARE ON THE OPENING UP OF THE LOCAL FIXED TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK MARKET TO COMPETITION WE ARE VERY FORTUNATE TO HAVE OBTAINED THE SERVICES OF A REGULATOR OF MR ARENA'S HIGH STANDING AND TRACK RECORD.

"HIS APPOINTMENT UNDERSCORES OUR COMMITMENT TO THE SUCCESSFUL INTRODUCTION OF FIXED NETWORK COMPETITION," MRS CHAN SAID.

MR ARENA IS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN HONG KONG SHORTLY AFTER CHINESE NEW YEAR. INITIALLY, HE WILL BE WORKING IN ECONOMIC SERVICES BRANCH ADVISING MAINLY ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY.

MR ARENA IS 41 YEARS OLD, MARRIED WITH TWO CHILDREN. HE HAS A DEGREE IN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING (COMMUNICATIONS) AND HOLDS A MASTER'S DEGREE IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION.

HE HAS WORKED FOR THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SINCE 1970 AND WAS APPOINTED AS MEMBER OF AUSTEL IN 1989.

PRIOR TO THIS, HE CO-ORDINATED THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S EXERCISE TO REFORM STATE ENTERPRISES IN THE TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS SECTORS AND SERVED IN A NUMBER OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND AVIATION POLICY POSITIONS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

TAC BRIEFED ON UPDATED TRANSPORT STUDY

\* \* \* \* \*

THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) AT ITS MEETING TODAY (MONDAY) NOTED THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE DRAFT REPORT ON UPDATING THE SECOND COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORT STUDY (CTS-2).

TAC MEMBERS WERE ALSO INFORMED OF THE PROGRESS OF THE CURRENT PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE TAXI POLICY REVIEW.

AT THE MEETING, MEMBERS WERE BRIEFED ON THE CTS-2 UPDATE WHICH PROPOSED A CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOR THE PERIOD UP TO 2011, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE PORT, AIRPORT AND OTHER NEW LAND USE DEVELOPMENT.

THE DRAFT REPORT CONTAINED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW ROAD AND RAIL PROJECTS.

CTS-2 PRODUCED A TRANSPORT POLICY FOR HONG KONG UP TO THE YEAR 2001 UNDER THE SCENARIO THAT KAI TAK AIRPORT WOULD NOT BE REPLACED.

/THE UPDATING .....

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 1993

- 13 -

THE UPDATING BEGAN IN THE LIGHT OF THE PUBLICATION OF THE PORT AND AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY STUDY AND OTHER TRANSPORT PLANNING STUDIES WHICH PROVIDED TRAFFIC PROJECTIONS UP TO THE YEAR 2011.

AT THE MEETING, MEMBERS RESOLVED TO SET UP A WORKING GROUP TO EXAMINE THE REPORT IN DETAIL WHICH WILL HAVE WIDE POLICY IMPLICATIONS IN TRANSPORT PLANNING.

THE WORKING GROUP WILL BE CHAIRED BY THE TAC CHAIRMAN PROFESSOR C K LEUNG AND THE MEMBERS ARE MR NG SHUI-LAI, MR LEUNG KONG-YUI, MR CLEMENT TAO AND MR LAM HOI-HAM. THEY AIM TO REPORT BACK TO THE FULL COMMITTEE IN ABOUT TWO MONTHS.

ON THE PROGRESS OF THE TAXI POLICY REVIEW, MEMBERS WERE TOLD THAT UP TO DECEMBER 25 LAST YEAR, A TOTAL OF 43 WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS AND 201 TELEPHONE CALLS HAD BEEN RECEIVED SINCE THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISE BEGAN ON OCTOBER 30.

IN ADDITION, TAC MEMBERS HAD ATTENDED 17 MEETINGS, SEMINARS, RADIO INTERVIEWS AND TELEVISION PROGRAMMES INCLUDING NINE MEETINGS WITH THE DISTRICT BOARDS IN THE PROCESS OF CANVASSING PUBLIC OPINION.

TWELVE FURTHER MEETINGS HAVE BEEN SCHEDULED BEFORE THE CONSULTATION ENDS ON FEBRUARY 28 THIS YEAR.

A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE VIEWS RECEIVED IN THE CONSULTATION WILL BE AVAILABLE IN APRIL/MAY THIS YEAR.

- - - - 0 - - - -

GOVERNOR TO ADDRESS LEGCO MEMBERS

\*\*\*\*\*

THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, WILL ADDRESS MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AT A SITTING OF THE COUNCIL AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW (TUESDAY).

HE WILL ALSO INVITE AND ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS ON MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO OBSERVE THE PROCEEDING OF THE MEETING FROM THE PUBLIC GALLERY OF THE LEGCO CHAMBER.

THEY MAY RESERVE SEATS BY CALLING 869 9492.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/14 .....

DEVELOPMENT AND NATURE CONSERVATION CAN PROCEED IN TANDEM

\* \* \* \* \*

THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, DR LAWRENCE LEE, SAID WITH PROPER PLANNING AND CAREFUL EXECUTION, THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERRITORY'S PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND NATURE CONSERVATION CAN PROCEED IN TANDEM.

SPEAKING AT THE ANNUAL MEET-THE-MEDIA SESSION AT THE TAI MO SHAN COUNTRY PARK VISITOR CENTRE THIS (MONDAY) AFTERNOON, DR LEE SAID HIS DEPARTMENT, WHILE ON ONE HAND PROMOTED THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, ON THE OTHER TOOK CARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE NAME AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DID NOT FULLY REFLECT THE DEPARTMENT'S MAIN AREAS OF WORK, AS IT HAD DEPLOYED MORE THAN 50 PER CENT OF ITS RESOURCES ON NATURE CONSERVATION AND COUNTRY PARKS-RELATED WORK.

THE DEPARTMENT WAS ALSO THE ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY OF SOME 20 PIECES OF LEGISLATION, RANGING FROM THE PROMOTION OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF COUNTRY PARKS, PROTECTION OF ENDANGERED SPECIES AND WILD ANIMALS TO THE SAFE USE AND TRADING OF PESTICIDES AS WELL AS CONCERN OVER ANIMAL WELFARE.

ON NATURE CONSERVATION, DR LEE SAID THROUGH THE MANAGEMENT OF 21 COUNTRY PARKS AND 14 SPECIAL AREAS, THE DEPARTMENT HAD ALL ALONG BEEN TAKING ACTIVE STEPS TO CONSERVE THE TERRITORY'S FLORA, FAUNA AND NATURAL HABITATS.

"IT HAS ALSO MANAGED TO REHABILITATE A NUMBER OF DEGRADED ECOSYSTEMS IN COUNTRY PARKS AND TO PROMOTE THE RECOVERY OF THREATENED SPECIES.

"DURING THE YEAR, THE WILD ANIMALS PROTECTION ORDINANCE HAS BEEN AMENDED TO EXTEND PROTECTION TO COVER THE RARE LOCAL WILD ANIMAL SPECIES OF ROMER'S TREE FROG, HONG KONG CASCADE FROG, WATER MONITOR AND ALL MONGOOSE.

"A BILL HAS ALSO BEEN INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO AMEND THE FORESTS AND COUNTRYSIDE ORDINANCE FOR GREATER PROTECTION OF FORESTS AND PLANTS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE," HE SAID.

ON THE EDUCATION SIDE, THE DEPARTMENT HAD SET UP 10 TREE WALKS IN COUNTRY PARKS THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY IN ADDITION TO ITS MANY PUBLICITY AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES ORGANISED TO ENHANCE THE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION.

TO FURTHER ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES OF NATURE CONSERVATION, THE AFD IS ACTIVELY CONSIDERING EXTENDING SOME COUNTRY PARKS, DEVELOPING MARINE PARKS AND A MARINE RESERVE AS WELL AS EXTENDING THE RESTRICTED AREA AT INNER DEEP BAY, HE SAID.

AREAS BEING CONSIDERED FOR INCORPORATION INTO COUNTRY PARKS INCLUDED THE WAN TSAI PENINSULA NEAR HOI HA WAN IN SAI KUNG AND TAI TONG WEST.

DETAILS OF THE PROPOSALS WILL BE CIRCULATED TO RELEVANT DEPARTMENTS AND THE COUNTRY PARKS BOARD FOR CONSIDERATION, HE ADDED.

THE PUBLIC WILL ALSO BE CONSULTED IN DUE COURSE.

"SUBJECT TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL'S APPROVAL, NEW LEGISLATION WILL BE INTRODUCED TO SET UP A MARINE PARKS AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE FOR THE DESIGNATION, MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF MARINE PARKS AND MARINE RESERVES, AND TO MAKE REGULATIONS FOR THE CONTROL OF ACTIVITIES IN THESE AREAS."

DR LEE POINTED OUT THAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS ALSO INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF OFF-SITE ECOLOGICAL MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE NEW AIRPORT AT CHEK LAP KOK AND OTHER AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME PROJECTS LAST YEAR.

APART FROM A CURRENT ECOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE CONSERVATION OF THE ROMER'S TREE FROG, THREE OTHER STUDIES FOR THE ENHANCED PROTECTION OF MANGROVE HABITATS, SEAGRASS COMMUNITIES AND FRESHWATER WETLAND HABITATS ARE ALSO BEING PURSUED, HE SAID.

TURNING TO FISHERIES, DR LEE SAID THE DEPARTMENT, WHILE RECOGNISING THE NECESSITY OF MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TERRITORY, WORKED VERY HARD TO SAFEGUARD THE INTERESTS OF THE FISHING COMMUNITY WHOSE LIVELIHOOD WAS AFFECTED BY THE UNPRECEDENTED LARGE-SCALE DREDGING AND DUMPING ACTIVITIES AT THE FORESHORE AND SEABED.

"TO THIS END, A FISHERMEN LIAISON GROUP MEETING, AIMED TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE FISHING COMMUNITY, HAD BEEN SET UP AND CHAIRED BY THE DEPARTMENT." HE SAID.

TO MITIGATE AGAINST THE ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT, HE SAID THE DEPARTMENT HAD INTENSIFIED ITS EFFORTS IN PURSUING THE DEPLOYMENT OF AN ARTIFICIAL REEF WITH A VIEW TO ENHANCING FISH RESOURCES AND CONSERVING MARINE LIFE.

A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE PROJECT, TO BE CONDUCTED IN CAPE D'AGUILAR, WAS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY MID-1996.

ON THE AGRICULTURAL FRONT, DR LEE SAID WHILE THE DEPARTMENT CONTINUED TO DEVELOP THE PRODUCTION OF LOCAL FRESH FOOD, IT HAD ALSO BEEN ACTIVE IN EXPLORING AND PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTALLY ACCEPTABLE FARMING TECHNIQUES LAST YEAR.

APART FROM THE CONTINUED EXPLORATION OF SUITABLE EXOTIC VARIETIES OF HIGH-VALUE VEGETABLES, DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCTION SYSTEMS, INCLUDING SOILLESS CULTURE OR HYDROPONICS, ARE BEING DEVELOPED AND INTRODUCED TO GROWERS, HE SAID.

OTHER ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY MEASURES PURSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT LAST YEAR INCLUDED THE PROMOTION OF THE EFFLUENT-FREE "PIG-ON-LITTER" RAISING METHOD, CONTROLS OVER THE USE OF PESTICIDES AND THE FURTHER EXPANSION OF THE AGRICULTURAL LAND REHABILITATION SCHEME.

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 1993

- 16 -

SMALL INCREASE IN NUMBER OF COURT INSOLVENCIES

\* \* \* \* \*

THE OFFICIAL RECEIVER, MR ROBIN HEARDER, SAID TODAY (MONDAY) THAT 1992 SHOWED ONLY A SMALL INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF NEW INSOLVENCIES REACHING THE COURTS.

THERE WERE 342 NEW COMPULSORY COMPANY LIQUIDATIONS AND 295 NEW PERSONAL BANKRUPTCIES COMPARED WITH CORRESPONDING FIGURES OF 346 AND 283 IN 1991, AN INCREASE OF 1.27%.

HOWEVER, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF NEW CASES AT 637 WAS ONLY 91% OF THE HIGHEST EVER TOTAL FIGURE OF 699 CASES WHICH WAS RECORDED IN 1985.

THE BUSINESSES MAINLY AFFECTED BY COMPULSORY COMPANY LIQUIDATIONS AND BANKRUPTCIES INCLUDED GARMENT AND KNITTING MANUFACTURING, RESTAURANTS AND CANTEENS, IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS, AND COMPANY DIRECTORS GIVING PERSONAL GUARANTEES.

PETITIONS WERE FILED BY THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AID (41%), TRADE CREDITORS (46%), BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (12%) AND OTHERS (1%).

OTHER THAN BANK OF CREDIT AND COMMERCE HONG KONG LIMITED AND BCCI FINANCE INTERNATIONAL LIMITED IN WHICH SPECIAL MANAGERS WERE APPOINTED WITH THE OFFICIAL RECEIVER AS LIQUIDATOR, MORE COMPLICATED OR SIGNIFICANT INSOLVENCIES DURING THE YEAR WERE HW SECURITIES COMPANY LIMITED, UNITEX LIMITED, W L SHIPPING COMPANY LIMITED GROUP, YUN JIP AUTO SERVICE LIMITED, BIRDCAGE WALK LIMITED, OCEAN STORY LIMITED, HING FUNG TEXTILES LIMITED, NG YAT CHI AND CHEN TAI HWA.

FIFTY-FIVE SUMMONSES WERE ISSUED AGAINST DIRECTORS OF COMPULSORILY WOUND-UP COMPANIES FOR FAILURE TO SUBMIT STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS TO THE OFFICIAL RECEIVER, OF WHOM 45 WERE CONVICTED AND THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF FINES IMPOSED BY THE COURT WAS \$298,390.

TOTAL DIVIDENDS DECLARED BY THE OFFICIAL RECEIVER LAST YEAR AMOUNTED TO \$221.36 MILLION IN 207 INSOLVENCIES, AS AGAINST \$91.7 MILLION IN 242 INSOLVENCIES IN 1991, AN INCREASE OF 141%.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVE INSOLVENCY CASES BEING HANDLED BY THE OFFICIAL RECEIVER'S OFFICE AT THE END OF THE YEAR WAS 1,903, REPRESENTING 1,145 COMPULSORY COMPANY LIQUIDATIONS AND 758 PERSONAL BANKRUPTCIES, AS AGAINST A TOTAL OF 1,793 AT THE END OF 1991.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/17 .....

HK - LEADING FUND MANAGEMENT CENTRE IN SE ASIA

\* \* \* \* \*

HONG KONG HAS ADOPTED A FLEXIBLE APPROACH TO MARKET REGULATION FOR THE INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT INDUSTRY, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, MR HAMISH MACLEOD, SAID TODAY (MONDAY).

"THIS FLEXIBLE REGULATORY APPROACH, COMBINED WITH OUR EXCELLENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS AS WELL AS OUR GEOGRAPHIC POSITION AMONG THE EMERGING MARKETS OF THIS REGION, HAS MADE US THE LEADING FUND MANAGEMENT CENTRE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA," HE SAID.

MR MACLEOD WAS SPEAKING AT A CEREMONY TO PRESENT THE FUND MANAGER OF THE YEAR AWARDS ORGANISED BY THE SUNDAY MORNING POST.

CITING AN EXAMPLE OF THE FLEXIBLE APPROACH, MR MACLEOD NOTED THAT THE SECURITIES AND FUTURES COMMISSION HAD AGREED TO STREAMLINE APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND ALLOW WARRANT FUNDS, LEVERAGE FUNDS, AND FUNDS INVESTING IN FUTURES AND OPTIONS TO BE MARKETED TO THE PUBLIC IN HONG KONG.

HE ADDED: "WHILE THE PROVISION OF AN EFFECTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE INDUSTRY IS OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE, THE QUALITY OF THE PLAYERS INVOLVED IS EQUALLY SIGNIFICANT."

THE INTRODUCTION OF THIS FUND MANAGER AWARD WAS A USEFUL STEP FORWARD IN ENCOURAGING MARKET PARTICIPANTS, AND INFORMING THE PUBLIC ABOUT THIS IMPORTANT SECTOR, HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

GOVT OFFICIALS VISIT BROADCASTING AUTHORITIES IN CHINA

\* \* \* \* \*

A GOVERNMENT DELEGATION LED BY THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MRS RACHEL CARTLAND, VISITED THE RADIO AND TELEVISION BUREAU OF GUANGDONG PROVINCE AND RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS IN GUANGZHOU AND SHENZHEN OVER TWO DAYS LAST WEEK.

THE DELEGATION COMPRISED THE PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR PETER HARRISON; ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF BROADCASTING, MISS MARIA WAN, AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR WILLIAM KWAN.

ON RETURN TO HONG KONG, MRS CARTLAND SAID HER DELEGATION HAD BEEN WARMLY RECEIVED IN CHINA AND THERE HAD BEEN A MOST USEFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS.

"WHILST CLEARLY THERE ARE DIFFERENCES, NEVERTHELESS WE WERE STRUCK BY THE MANY SIMILARITIES IN OUR APPROACH TO BROADCASTING," MRS CARTLAND SAID.

SHE SAID: "WHILE RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG AND HONG KONG'S COMMERCIAL BROADCASTERS HAVE ALREADY DEVELOPED VERY GOOD RELATIONS WITH BROADCASTING ORGANISATIONS ACROSS THE BORDER, THIS WAS THE FIRST EXCHANGE AT POLICY-MAKING LEVEL."

"THERE IS NOW A BASIS FOR INCREASED CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE MAINLAND AND HONG KONG IN THE BROADCASTING FIELD: IN PARTICULAR, REFLECTING THE CLOSE ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL TIES BETWEEN SOUTH CHINA AND HONG KONG.

"EACH SIDE NOW HAS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW THE OTHER'S BROADCASTING SYSTEMS OPERATE AND ARE REGULATED. THE CHINESE WERE PARTICULARLY KEEN TO KNOW MORE ABOUT NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN BROADCASTING IN HONG KONG.

"WE HAD A GOOD EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND WE SHALL CERTAINLY BUILD ON THIS FOUNDATION TO ESTABLISH BETTER CO-OPERATION WITH CHINA IN THE BROADCASTING FIELD."

- - - - 0 - - - -

MEXICO STOPS ANTI-DUMPING INVESTIGATION ON  
COTTON WOVEN FABRICS

\* \* \* \* \*

THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO TERMINATE ITS ANTI-DUMPING INVESTIGATION ON IMPORTS OF COTTON WOVEN FABRICS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF DENIM, FROM HONG KONG, ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, SOUTH KOREA, THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, TAIWAN AND PAKISTAN.

A COMMERCIAL INFORMATION CIRCULAR PUBLISHED BY THE TRADE DEPARTMENT SAID THE MEXICAN MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (MCID) FOUND THAT THERE WERE INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO ESTABLISH THE EXISTENCE OF DUMPING.

THE COMPLAINT AGAINST DUMPING WAS LODGED BY THE NATIONAL TEXTILE INDUSTRY CHAMBER OF MEXICO AND INVESTIGATION BY THE MCID WAS INITIATED LAST JUNE.

SINCE THEN, THE TRADE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN WORKING CLOSELY WITH HONG KONG COMPANIES ENGAGED IN EXPORTING THE PRODUCTS IN QUESTION TO MEXICO TO PROVIDE PROCEDURAL ADVICE.

ACCORDING TO TRADE STATISTICS, DOMESTIC EXPORTS AND RE-EXPORTS OF WOVEN FABRICS OF COTTON TO MEXICO, EXCLUDING DENIM, AMOUNTED TO HK\$17.1 MILLION AND HK\$36.2 MILLION RESPECTIVELY IN 1991.

- - - - 0 - - - -

SHENZHEN DELEGATION VISITS MARINE DEPARTMENT

\* \* \* \* \*

THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE, MR TONY MILLER, TODAY (MONDAY) MET A SEVEN-MEMBER DELEGATION OF THE HARBOUR SUPERINTENDENCY BUREAU IN SHENZHEN WHO ARE NOW ON A FAMILIARISATION VISIT IN HONG KONG.

THE DELEGATES HOPED TO ACHIEVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE OPERATION OF THE HONG KONG PORT AND THE FUTURE PLANS OF THE PORT'S DEVELOPMENT THROUGH A VISIT TO THE MARINE DEPARTMENT.

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 1993

- 19 -

LED BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, SHENZHEN HARBOUR ADMINISTRATION BUREAU, MR ZHANG WEI-ZHONG, THE GROUP WAS RECEIVED BY MR MILLER AND SENIOR OFFICIALS AT THE DEPARTMENT'S HEADQUARTERS IN CENTRAL THIS AFTERNOON.

THEY WILL ALSO BE BRIEFED ON A WIDE SPECTRUM OF TOPICS. THE BRIEFING WILL LAST TWO DAYS.

THE TOPICS INCLUDED THE DIFFERENT STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HONG KONG PORT, PORT OPERATIONS, SHIP INSPECTIONS AND PROCEDURES, THE FORMULATION OF PORT DEVELOPMENT POLICIES, THE PROCEDURES OF SETTING UP FAIRWAY, ANCHORAGE, FIRE-FIGHTING AT SEA, SEARCH AND RESCUE, AND THE PROTECTION OF MARINE ENVIRONMENT.

THE PARTY WILL ALSO BE BRIEFED ON THE GOVERNMENT'S INVOLVEMENT IN SHIPPING AGENCIES, SHIPPERS AND PILOTAGE, THE ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP OF THE MARINE DEPARTMENT, AND THE PORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD WITH REGARD TO THEIR OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

BOTH PARTIES EXCHANGED VIEWS AND SHARED THEIR EXPERIENCE OF MARINE MATTERS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

LAN KWAI FONG INQUIRY

OUTLINE OF WORK DONE ON MONDAY  
(JANUARY 11) UP TO 4.30 PM

\* \* \* \* \*

1. REVIEWING FURTHER STATEMENTS.
2. INTERVIEWING WITNESSES.
3. STUDYING COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES FROM THE HOSPITALS.
4. ARRANGING FOR WITNESSES AND REPRESENTATIONS IN "OPEN" SESSION TOMORROW AND WEDNESDAY (COURT NO. 10, SIXTH FLOOR, SUPREME COURT, 38 QUEENSWAY, HONG KONG).
5. VISIT TO LAN KWAI FONG TO OBSERVE THE SAME AFTER DARK.

- - - - -

NOTE:

OVER THE WEEKEND, THE PRINCIPAL WORK CONSISTED OF ANALYSING MATERIAL GATHERED SO FAR.

- - - - 0 - - - -

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 1993

- 20 -

LEGCO MEETS ON WEDNESDAY

\* \* \* \* \*

LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR, DR THE HON PHILIP WONG, WILL MOVE A MOTION ON WEDNESDAY (JANUARY 13) AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING NOT TO INTRODUCE THE GOVERNOR'S POLITICAL PROPOSALS.

THE MOTION READS: "THAT THIS COUNCIL URGES THE GOVERNMENT NOT TO INTRODUCE THE CONSTITUTIONAL PACKAGE AS OUTLINED IN THE GOVERNOR'S POLICY ADDRESS MADE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON 7 OCTOBER 1992."

MEMBERS WILL ALSO ASK A TOTAL 20 QUESTIONS AND CONSIDER 14 BILLS AT THE MEETING.

OF THE 12 BILLS, TWO WILL BE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS. DEBATES ON THEM WILL BE ADJOURNED.

THEY ARE ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) (NO. 4) BILL 1992 AND TELEVISION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993.

DEBATES ON THE OTHER BILLS WILL BE RESUMED. THEY ARE DUE TO GO THROUGH THE COMMITTEE STAGE AND BE GIVEN A THIRD READING.

THEY ARE DISTRICT COURT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992, SUPREME COURT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992, PENSIONS MODIFICATION BILL 1992, PENSIONS ORDINANCE AND REGULATIONS (MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENT) BILL 1992, MERCHANT SHIPPING (SAFETY) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992, HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992, THEFT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992, REGISTRAR GENERAL (ESTABLISHMENT) (TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS AND REPEAL) BILL, TRUSTEE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 AND COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992.

IN ADDITION, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WILL MOVE FOUR MOTIONS UNDER THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ORDINANCE.

THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY WILL MOVE A MOTION UNDER DRUG TRAFFICKING (RECOVERY OF PROCEEDS) ORDINANCE.

THE HON ELSIE TU WILL RAISE AN ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE AVAILABILITY OF RENTAL PUBLIC HOUSING.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO OBSERVE THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING FROM THE PUBLIC GALLERIES OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER. THEY MAY RESERVE SEATS BY CALLING 869 9492.

- - - - 0 - - - -

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 1993

- 21 -

POST OFFICE INTRODUCES NEW LETTER SCALES

\* \* \* \* \*

A NEW TYPE OF ELECTRONIC LETTER SCALE HAS BEEN INTRODUCED TODAY (MONDAY) FOR USE INITIALLY AT 15 BUSIEST POST OFFICES INCLUDING THE GENERAL POST OFFICE AND TSIM SHA TSUI POST OFFICE.

EXPLAINING DETAILS OF THE MACHINE, THE ACTING POSTMASTER GENERAL, MRS DORIS HO, SAID THE NEW ELECTRONIC SCALE CAN AUTOMATICALLY CALCULATE THE POSTAGE REQUIRED FOR POSTING A MAIL ITEM TO A PARTICULAR COUNTRY.

CUSTOMERS WILL BE ABLE TO SEE THE POSTAGE REQUIRED THROUGH A REMOTE LIGHT EMITTING DIODE DISPLAY PANEL INSTALLED AT THE COUNTER TOP, SHE SAID.

"THESE NEW SCALES WILL HELP TO REDUCE THE TRANSACTION TIME, ENSURE THE COLLECTION OF THE CORRECT POSTAGE AND IMPROVE THE OVERALL EFFICIENCY OF THE POST OFFICE COUNTER SERVICE.

"THE PLAN IS TO PROVIDE ALL POST OFFICES WITH THESE NEW SCALES WITHIN THE NEXT FEW YEARS," SHE SAID.

THE NEW ELECTRONIC SCALE IS ONE OF SEVERAL AUTOMATION PROJECTS THAT THE POST OFFICE HAS PLANNED TO INTRODUCE IN ORDER TO ENHANCE SERVICES TO ITS CUSTOMERS AND TO IMPROVE OVERALL EFFICIENCY.

OTHER PROJECTS INCLUDE SELF SERVICE AUTO-MAILING EQUIPMENT AND A COMPUTERISED SPEEDPOST ACCEPTANCE SYSTEM.

- - - - 0 - - - -

45 NEW BUILDING PLANS APPROVED IN OCTOBER

\* \* \* \* \*

THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE OF THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT APPROVED 45 NEW BUILDING PLANS IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR.

OF THESE, 21 WERE FOR HONG KONG, 12 FOR KOWLOON AND 12 FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THE APPROVED PLANS INCLUDED 22 FOR APARTMENT, APARTMENT/COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS, 10 FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS AND ONE FOR FACTORY AND INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES.

DURING THE MONTH, THE OFFICE GAVE CONSENT FOR WORK TO START ON 41 PROJECTS, INVOLVING 128,112 SQUARE METRES OF USABLE DOMESTIC FLOOR AREA AND 63,619 SQUARE METRES OF USABLE NON-DOMESTIC FLOOR AREA.

THE TOTAL DECLARED COST OF NEW BUILDINGS COMPLETED DURING THE MONTH WAS ABOUT \$3,283 MILLION.

USABLE FLOOR AREAS FOR DOMESTIC AND NON-DOMESTIC USES WERE ABOUT 173,768 SQUARE METRES AND ABOUT 151,394 SQUARE METRES RESPECTIVELY.

/IN OCTOBER .....

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 1993

- 22 -

IN OCTOBER, THE OFFICE ISSUED 39 OCCUPATION PERMITS, 15 FOR HONG KONG ISLAND, 10 FOR KOWLOON AND 14 FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES.

IN ADDITION, 24 DEMOLITION CONSENTS AFFECTING 47 BUILDING WERE ISSUED.

THE OFFICE'S CONTROL AND ENFORCEMENT DIVISION RECEIVED 627 COMPLAINTS ON ILLEGAL BUILDING WORKS, CARRIED OUT 1,746 INSPECTIONS AND ISSUED 273 REMOVAL ORDERS.

THE DANGEROUS BUILDING SECTION INSPECTED 700 BUILDINGS AND OBTAINED TWO EMERGENCY CLOSURE ORDERS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

RATES FOR FIRST QUARTER DUE THIS MONTH

\* \* \* \* \*

THE TREASURY REMINDS RATEPAYERS THAT RATES FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF THIS YEAR ARE DUE ON JANUARY 30.

PAYMENT MAY BE MADE BY POST ADDRESSED TO THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING SERVICES, PO BOX 8000, GPO, HONG KONG OR IN PERSON AT ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OFFICES:

- \* THE TREASURY HEADQUARTERS COLLECTION AND PAYMENT OFFICE, IMMIGRATION TOWER, FIRST FLOOR, 7 GLOUCESTER ROAD, WAN CHAI, HONG KONG;
- \* THE CENTRAL SUB-TREASURY, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES (WEST WING), 11 ICE HOUSE STREET, HONG KONG;
- \* THE NORTH POINT SUB-TREASURY, MAX SHARE CENTRE, FIRST FLOOR, 373 KING'S ROAD, HONG KONG (OPEN FROM JANUARY 18);
- \* THE SAI WAN HO SUB-TREASURY, EASTERN LAW COURTS BUILDING, GROUND FLOOR, 29 TAI ON STREET, SAI WAN HO, HONG KONG;
- \* THE YAU MA TEI SUB-TREASURY, KOWLOON GOVERNMENT OFFICES, FOURTH FLOOR, 405 NATHAN ROAD, KOWLOON;
- \* THE KOWLOON CITY SUB-TREASURY, MAN SANG COMMERCIAL BUILDING, FIRST FLOOR, 348-352 PRINCE EDWARD ROAD, KOWLOON; AND
- \* THE DISTRICT OFFICES AT SAI KUNG, SHA TIN, TAI PO, NORTH, YUEN LONG, TUEN MUN, TSUEN WAN OR KWAI TSING.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE TREASURY SAID RATES DEMAND NOTES FOR THE FIRST QUARTER HAD BEEN ISSUED.

RATEPAYERS WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED THE NOTES SHOULD BRING ALONG THOSE FOR ANY PREVIOUS QUARTER TO ANY OF THE TREASURY COLLECTION OFFICES AND DUPLICATE DEMAND NOTES WILL BE ISSUED TO THEM, HE SAID.

/IF THE .....

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 1993

- 23 -

IF THE RATEPAYERS CANNOT PRODUCE RATES DEMAND NOTES FOR ANY PREVIOUS QUARTER, THEY SHOULD INQUIRE AT THE TREASURY RATES SECTION, IMMIGRATION TOWER, 30TH FLOOR, 7 GLOUCESTER ROAD, HONG KONG.

NON-RECEIPT OF THE DEMAND NOTES DOES NOT ALTER THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE RATES MUST BE PAID BY NOON ON JANUARY 30.

UNLESS SO PAID, RATEPAYERS MAY BE SUBJECT TO A SURCHARGE OF 5 PER CENT UNDER THE RATING ORDINANCE, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

A FURTHER SURCHARGE OF 10 PER CENT MAY BE ADDED TO ACCOUNTS (INCLUDING THE NORMAL 5 PER CENT SURCHARGE) WHICH REMAIN UNPAID SIX MONTHS AFTER THE DUE DATE, HE ADDED.

RATEPAYERS WHO HAVE SUBMITTED A VALID DIRECT DEBIT AUTHORISATION SHOULD NOTE THAT PAYMENT SHOULD STILL BE MADE BY POST OR IN PERSON UNLESS THE WORDING "PAYMENT TO BE MADE BY AUTOPAY" IS SHOWN IN THE DEMAND NOTE.

IN THIS CASE THEIR PAYMENT OF RATES WILL BE MADE BY DIRECT DEBIT TO THEIR BANK ACCOUNTS ON JANUARY 30. RATEPAYERS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THEIR BANK ACCOUNTS CONTAIN THE NECESSARY FUNDS ON THAT DATE.

RATES ARE PAYABLE ON VACANT PROPERTIES BUT ARE REFUNDABLE UNDER THE CONDITIONS SPECIFIED IN SECTION 30 OF THE ORDINANCE.

UNDER SECTIONS 30(1A) AND (2A), HOWEVER, NO REFUNDS WILL BE MADE IN THE CASE OF A VACANT TENEMENT LAST USED OR INTENDED TO BE USED WHOLLY OR PRIMARILY FOR DOMESTIC PURPOSES OR FOR THE PARKING OF VEHICLES (UNLESS VACANT BY REASON OF AN ORDER OF THE GOVERNMENT).

TO SAVE QUEUING TIME, THE SPOKESMAN URGED RATEPAYERS TO PAY BY CHEQUE OR MONEY ORDER SENT BY POST OR BY EARLY PERSONAL ATTENDANCE AT A COLLECTION OFFICE.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THE MOST CONVENIENT PAYMENT METHOD WAS AUTOPAY UNDER WHICH RATEPAYERS' BANK ACCOUNTS WOULD BE DEBITED ON RATES DUE DATES.

APPLICATION FORMS FOR AUTOPAY ARE OBTAINABLE FROM TREASURY COLLECTION OFFICES, DISTRICT OFFICES AND ALL MAJOR BANKS IN HONG KONG OR BY TELEPHONING 829 5019.

- - - - 0 - - - -

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 1993

- 24 -

MORE WOULD VOTE IN ELECTIONS

\* \* \* \*

WITH POLITICAL AWARENESS HEIGHTENED IN THE COMMUNITY, MORE PEOPLE WOULD VOTE IF ELECTIONS WERE TO BE HELD NOW, WAN CHAI DISTRICT OFFICER, MR PETER MANN, SAID TODAY (MONDAY).

SPEAKING AT A ROTARY LUNCHEON, HE DESCRIBED THE DISTRICT OFFICE AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE AND ALSO THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

"WE WANT TO INVOLVE BOTH RESIDENTS AND COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS IN DISTRICT AFFAIRS," HE SAID.

AS AN EXAMPLE, MR MANN SAID HIS OFFICE HAD ORGANISED NUMEROUS COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS THE RECENT WAN CHAI FESTIVAL, AND HELPED TO CO-ORDINATE THE WORK OF OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN THE DISTRICT.

ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT, HE SAID ABOUT 600 TREES HAD BEEN PLANTED OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS UNDER THE DISTRICT BOARD'S "GREEN WAN CHAI" CAMPAIGN.

FURTHERMORE, HE SAID HE HAD ENCOURAGED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WAN CHAI TENANTS ASSOCIATION TO HELP PROMOTE DISTRICT AFFAIRS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

WATER STORAGE FIGURE

\* \* \* \*

STORAGE IN HONG KONG'S RESERVOIRS AT 9 AM TODAY (MONDAY) STOOD AT 53.6 PER CENT OF CAPACITY OR 314.413 MILLION CUBIC METRES.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR THE RESERVOIRS CONTAINED 177.881 MILLION CUBIC METRES OF WATER, REPRESENTING 30.4 PER CENT OF CAPACITY.

- - - - 0 - - - -

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 1993

- 25 -

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND  
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS  
\* \* \* \* \*

	\$ MILLION -----
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,500
REVERSAL OF LAF	NIL
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	1,500
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-150
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,350
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	TWI 114.6 *-0.1* 11.1.93

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS

TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	3.06 PCT	13 MONTHS	2402	5.50	100.95	4.65
1 MONTH	3.45 PCT	16 MONTHS	2405	5.50	100.83	4.91
3 MONTHS	3.78 PCT	19 MONTHS	2408	4.375	98.87	5.18
6 MONTHS	4.02 PCT	22 MONTHS	2411	4.625	98.83	5.37
12 MONTHS	4.60 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 11,451MN

CLOSED 11 JANUARY 1993

- - - - 0 - - - -