



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 1994

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE GOVERNOR'S MEDIA SESSION

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THE FOLLOWING IS THE TRANSCRIPT OF THE MEDIA SESSION BY THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, AT THE KAI TAK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON HIS RETURN FROM LONDON THIS (SATURDAY) AFTERNOON:-

GOVERNOR: GOOD AFTERNOON. I'VE HAD AN INTERESTING VISIT TO LONDON, ONE OF THE VISITS THAT I HAVE MADE AND WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE REGULARLY. I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT TO BE ABLE FOUR OR FIVE TIMES A YEAR TO KEEP MINISTERS AND OFFICIALS AND OTHER COMMUNITY LEADERS IN TOUCH WITH DEVELOPMENTS HERE IN HONG KONG, BOTH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC, AND ONCE AGAIN, AS I SAID YESTERDAY IN MY PRESS CONFERENCE IN LONDON, I WAS ABLE TO DETECT VERY BROAD SUPPORT FOR THE APPROACH WHICH WE'VE BEEN TAKING IN HONG KONG AND A GREAT DEAL OF INTEREST IN OUR SUCCESSES. I SPOKE AT SOME LENGTH TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND, ON THIS OCCASION, ON THE TELEPHONE BECAUSE HE WAS IN HIS HUNTINGDON CONSTITUENCY AFTER RETURNING FROM BELFAST FOR THE EASTER RECESS. I SPOKE TO HIM MAINLY ABOUT THE SUCCESSFUL PASSAGE OF OUR BILL ON ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS EARLY IN THE YEAR AND OUR HOPE THAT WE'LL BE ABLE TO SEE EQUALLY SUCCESSFUL PASSAGE OF THE LAST BILL SO THAT WE CAN BED THOSE ARRANGEMENTS DOWN AND GET ON TO OTHER BUSINESS AND THAT IS THE OVERWHELMING DESIRE IN THE COMMUNITY.

I HAD A LUNCH WITH THE FOREIGN SECRETARY. I HAD A NUMBER OF MEETINGS WITH OTHER MINISTERS AND OFFICIALS, PARTICULARLY OF COURSE FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS AND I SAW OTHER COMMUNITY LEADERS AS WELL. I HAD AN INTERESTING MEETING WITH LADY THATCHER IN WHOM I'VE BEEN IN REGULAR CONTACT OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS, NOT LEAST BECAUSE SHE WAS ONE OF SIGNATORIES TO THE JOINT DECLARATION AND TAKES A CLOSE CONTINUING INTEREST IN THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JOINT DECLARATION HERE IN HONG KONG. AS I SAID, THERE WAS OBVIOUSLY CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN THE PROGRESS WE'VE MADE IN DEALING WITH OUR ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS. THERE WAS ALSO CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN THE ISSUE OF MFN. I TOLD MINISTERS AND OFFICIALS ABOUT OUR PLANS BOTH TO MAKE SPEECHES AND LOBBY ON MFN HERE AND IN WASHINGTON. I TOLD THEM ABOUT THE PLANNED VISIT BY THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO WASHINGTON AND THE UNITED STATES LATER THIS MONTH. I TOLD THEM THAT I'LL BE SPEAKING TO THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ON APRIL 22 MAINLY ABOUT MFN AND THEY ASSURED ME THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD BE LOBBYING JUST AS ENERGETICALLY AS WE ARE ON WHAT IS A VERY IMPORTANT SUBJECT FOR THE FUTURE ECONOMY AND WELL-BEING OF HONG KONG.

PLAINLY, WHILE I'VE BEEN IN LONDON, THE MAIN STORY OF INTEREST HERE IN HONG KONG HAS BEEN THE SENTENCE ON THE MING PAO JOURNALIST XI YANG. I TOTALLY ENDORSE EVERYTHING WHICH THE CHIEF SECRETARY SAID A DAY OR TWO AGO AND I KNOW THAT SHE WAS SPEAKING VERY MUCH ON BEHALF OF THE WHOLE COMMUNITY. I THINK THERE IS AN ALMOST UNPRECEDENTED LEVEL OF CONCERN RIGHT ACROSS THE COMMUNITY ON THIS CASE AND I THINK WE'VE ALL BEEN APPALLED BY WHAT HAS HAPPENED. I JUST WANT TO MAKE ONE, I HOPE, OBVIOUS POINT THAT WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TO DWELL ON AND IT IS NOT VERY HELPFUL TO GO INTO GREAT DETAIL ON IT.

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OUR MAIN CONCERN HAS TO BE TO HELP MR XI YANG HIMSELF. OUR MAIN CONCERN HAS TO BE TO AVOID DOING OR SAYING ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT MAKE HIS VERY DIFFICULT POSITION EVEN MORE DIFFICULT AND THAT'S BEEN WHAT IS PRIMARILY MOTIVATED US FOR THE LAST SIX MONTHS OR SO. AGAIN, WITHOUT GOING INTO DETAIL, WE'VE KEPT IN TOUCH WITH HIS EMPLOYERS AND WE'VE HAD REGULAR CONTACTS WITH THE JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION BECAUSE WE HAVEN'T WANTED TO DO OR SAY THINGS WHICH WOULD PREJUDICE HIS POSITION IN ANY WAY AND I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT FOR US TO REMEMBER ALL THE TIME THAT WHILE THERE ARE HERE FOR MANY PEOPLE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES OF PRINCIPLE, THERE IS ALSO AN INDIVIDUAL FACING A VERY, VERY SEVERE PRISON SENTENCE WHICH ALL OF US MUST HOPE CAN BE APPEALED AND CAN BE DEALT WITH VERY LENIENTLY. SO, I HOPE WE CAN BEAR THAT IN MIND AND I REPEAT WHAT THE CHIEF SECRETARY HAS SAID AND WHICH I SAID AGAIN IN LONDON YESTERDAY, WE WANT TO HAVE MORE FACTS AND INFORMATION ABOUT THIS CASE, SOME ASPECTS OF WHICH REMAIN EXTREMELY MURKY. WE WANT TO KNOW IN THE INTERESTS OF YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES HERE IN HONG KONG WHAT EXACTLY THE RULES AND REGULATIONS ARE FOR COVERING PUBLIC AFFAIRS IN CHINA FOR HONG KONG JOURNALISTS. AND WE VERY MUCH HOPE THAT MR XI YANG'S FAMILY AND EMPLOYERS AND LEGAL ADVISERS WILL BE GIVEN EARLY ACCESS TO HIM SO AS TO DISCUSS AN APPEAL AND WE HOPE THAT APPEAL CAN BE HELD PROMPTLY AND CAN BE DEALT WITH LENIENTLY. I DO HOPE THAT SENIOR CHINESE OFFICIALS UNDERSTAND THE STRENGTH OF FEELING ON THIS ISSUE IN HONG KONG WHICH GOES, I REPEAT, RIGHT ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM AND I HOPE THEY UNDERSTAND WHY PEOPLE IN HONG KONG FEEL AS WE DO ON THIS CASE.

QUESTION: DID YOU DISCUSS THE ISSUE OF, I MEAN, THE NATIONALITY OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN YOUR MEETING WITH?

GOVERNOR: I DISCUSS THEM WITH OFFICIALS. I DIDN'T DISCUSS THEM ON THIS OCCASION WITH THE HOME SECRETARY.

QUESTION: WHAT IS THE STATE OF FEELING NOW INSIDE THE HOUSE AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ON THIS ISSUE?

GOVERNOR: I THINK THAT SOME OF THE ARGUMENTS WHICH I PUT HAVE BECOME FAMILIAR TO BRITISH OFFICIALS. BUT THERE IS STILL, AS I THINK YOU WOULD KNOW, BOTH AMONG POLITICIANS AND OFFICIALS SOME OF THE RESERVATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED IN THE PAST.

QUESTION: THE EMPLOYER OF MING PAO CALLING THAT THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANY FOREIGN INTERVENTION OR POLITICISING THE XI YANG CASE. IS THE GOVERNMENT AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE AND REACTIONS TO THAT WILL TRY TO HAMPER THE MING PAO'S DEALING OF THE XI YANG CASE?

GOVERNOR: NO. I THINK THAT WHAT I HAVE SAID VERY MUCH REFLECTS OUR CONCERN AND TO PROCEED IN A FIRM BUT MODERATE WAY.

QUESTION: MR PATTEN, LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL YESTERDAY REQUESTED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO TRY TO ARRANGE A MEETING BETWEEN DOUGLAS HURD AND THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR TO BRITAIN. DO YOU THINK THAT WILL HELP IN ANY WAY?

/GOVERNOR:

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GOVERNOR: I THINK THE FIRST THING THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL WOULD BE A RESPONSE TO THE INQUIRIES MADE BY THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN PEKING FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND DETAILS ABOUT MR XI YANG'S CASE. I THINK YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT THERE IS A SLIGHT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MR XI YANG AND OTHERS WHOSE CASES WE'VE TAKEN UP VIGOROUSLY IN THE PAST. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE PURSUE MR XI YANG'S CASE BECAUSE HE WAS A HONG KONG RESIDENT AND WORKING FOR A HONG KONG NEWSPAPER. BUT HE IS A CHINESE CITIZEN WHICH MEANS THAT THERE IS CERTAIN CONSTRAINT IN WHAT WE CAN DO IN INTERNATIONAL LAW, INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE WHICH WOULDN'T APPLY IF HE WAS A CITIZEN OF HONG KONG.

QUESTION: MR PATTEN, IN ORDER TO HELP MR XI YANG, WOULD IT BE BETTER IF YOU WOULD PUT THE XI YANG CASE ON THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDA? IF SO, WHAT SPECIFIC ACTION CAN THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT DO TO?

GOVERNOR: I THINK THE ACTIONS THAT I'VE SUGGESTED ARE THE RIGHT WAY TO PROCEED. BUT WE OBVIOUSLY WANT TO CONSIDER MATTERS WITH MR XI YANG'S EMPLOYER, WITH THE JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION AND WITH OTHERS FROM DAY TO DAY. BUT I DON'T WANT TO LEAP INTO THE ISSUE WITH BOTH FEET UNTIL WE'VE ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISHED OUR FIRST STAGE OBJECTIVE WHICH SHOULD BE, FIRST OF ALL, TO GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MR XI YANG'S CASE; SECONDLY, TO GET ACCESS TO MR XI YANG FOR HIS FAMILY AND EMPLOYERS AND LEGAL ADVISERS. I MEAN, THAT IS NOT A VERY SUBSTANTIAL REQUEST TO MAKE. IT SHOULDN'T BE DIFFICULT FOR THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES TO REACT VERY POSITIVELY TO IT AND I HOPE THEY WILL BECAUSE THEY MUST RECOGNISE THAT THERE IS A DEGREE OF CONCERN ABOUT THE XI YANG CASE HERE WHICH, I THINK, RAISES A LOT OF ANXIETIES, A LOT OF QUESTION MARKS, A LOT OF DOUBTS IN PEOPLE'S MINDS ABOUT THE FUTURE. IF EVER, ANYTHING CONFIRMS THE IMPORTANCE OF PEOPLE OF HONG KONG STANDING UP FOR THE JOINT DECLARATION, STANDING UP FOR OUR VALUES AND FREEDOMS, THEN THIS CASE IS IT AND I HOPE THERE AREN'T OTHERS LIKE IT. ONE MORE QUESTION.

QUESTION: MR PATTEN, AFTER YOUR VISIT TO LONDON, HOW WOULD YOU EVALUATE THE PRESENT SINO-BRITISH RELATIONSHIP AND ALSO ESPECIALLY ON THE HONG KONG CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS?

GOVERNOR: WE VERY MUCH HOPE, AS I'VE SAID BEFORE, THAT OUR FAILURE TO AGREE ON ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS HERE IN HONG KONG WON'T AFFECT THE WIDER INTERESTS OF HONG KONG AND WON'T BE ALLOWED TO AFFECT ISSUES CONCERNING HONG KONG'S LIVELIHOOD, HONG KONG'S WELL-BEING, HONG KONG'S FUTURE PROSPERITY AND STABILITY WHICH ARE, OF COURSE, INTIMATELY CONNECTED TO CHINA'S FUTURE PROSPERITY. WE ALSO HOPE THAT SINO - BRITISH RELATIONS WILL PROSPER IN THE FUTURE AS IT'S IN THE INTEREST OF BOTH COUNTRIES AND THEY DO. BUT THAT'S NOT OBVIOUSLY PRIMARY MY RESPONSIBILITY. BUT SO FAR AS HONG KONG IS CONCERNED, I REPEAT WHAT I'VE SAID MANY TIMES BEFORE, THAT WHILE WE WOULD HAVE VERY MUCH LIKED TO HAVE REACHED AN AGREEMENT, UNFORTUNATELY, WE WEREN'T ABLE TO DO SO. BUT WE SHOULD TRY TO COOPERATE AND AGREE ON ALL THE OTHER THINGS WHICH AFFECT HONG KONG'S FUTURE. I THINK THAT STEADILY OVER THE COMING MONTHS, YOU 'LL SEE THAT HAPPENING. I THINK THAT THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF SELF-CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG ABOUT OUR ABILITY TO COPE WITH OUR OWN AFFAIRS, TO MANAGE OUR AFFAIRS WITHOUT THREATENING ANYONE ELSE. I THINK THAT IS ONE OF THE BONUSES, PERHAPS, THE ARGUMENTS THAT WE'VE HAD IN THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS. BUT LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, THAT SELF-CONFIDENCE WOULD BE GREATLY STRENGTHENED, THAT SELF-CONFIDENCE WOULD BE EXPRESSED, I THINK, WITH MUCH MORE ENTHUSIASM IF PEOPLE IN HONG KONG COULD HAVE REASSURANCES ABOUT MATTERS LIKE THE XI YANG CASE. THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED.

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DEPUTY TO THE GOVERNOR PRAISES FAMINE CAMP PARTICIPANTS

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THE DEPUTY TO THE GOVERNOR, MRS ANSON CHAN, TODAY (SATURDAY) GAVE HER SUPPORT AND APPRECIATION TO THE 6,000 PARTICIPANTS OF THIS YEAR'S "30-HOUR FAMINE CAMP".

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE FAMINE CAMP ORGANISED BY THE WORLD VISION HONG KONG AT THE HONG KONG STADIUM, MRS CHAN DESCRIBED THE CAMP AS A VERY MEANINGFUL EVENT.

"IT REMINDS US THAT MANY PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD NEED OUR HELP IN ORDER TO HAVE A CHANCE IN LIFE," MRS CHAN SAID.

"HONG KONG PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN VERY GENEROUS AND ENTHUSIASTIC TOWARDS HELPING THE NEEDY. TODAY'S HIGH TURN OUT IS A VIDID DEMONSTRATION OF THIS," SHE ADDED.

MRS CHAN SAID THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS THIS YEAR DOUBLED THAT OF LAST YEAR.

"I GAVE MY FULL SUPPORT AND APPRECIATION TO ALL OF YOU AND WISH THE WORLD VISION HONG KONG EVERY SUCCESS IN ITS FUTURE ENDEAVOURS," SHE SAID.

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FIRST FAMILY ACTIVITY AND RESOURCE CENTRE OPENS

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THE FAMILY ACTIVITY AND RESOURCE CENTRE IN YAU MA TEI HENRY G LEONG COMMUNITY CENTRE, THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN HONG KONG, WAS OFFICIALLY OPENED TODAY (SATURDAY).

OFFICIATING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE CENTRE, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR IAN STRACHAN, SAID HONG KONG HAD MADE GREAT STRIDES BOTH SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY IN RECENT YEARS.

MR STRACHAN SAID THESE CHANGES, ARISING FROM THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY, SUCH AS DECREASING HOUSEHOLD SIZES, MORE WOMEN WORKING OUTSIDE THE HOME, WESTERN INFLUENCES, SOPHISTICATED LIFE STYLES, AGING POPULATION, HAD BROUGHT IMMENSE CHALLENGES TO THE FUNCTIONS OF FAMILIES TODAY.

"SOME FAMILIES ENCOUNTER STRESS AND ANXIETY ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR CHANGING ROLES.

"PREVENTION IS ALWAYS BETTER THAN CURE. A FAMILY ACTIVITY AND RESOURCE CENTRE IS A FACILITY SPECIALLY DESIGNED TO HELP FAMILIES DEVELOP AND BETTER ADJUST IN THE CHANGING WORLD," HE SAID.

MR STRACHAN POINTED OUT THAT OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE WERE TO PROMOTE HARMONIOUS FAMILY RELATIONSHIP, TO EARLY IDENTIFY AND RESOLVE PROBLEMS AND TO ASSIST INDIVIDUALS TO ACHIEVE A MORE SATISFYING ROLE IN THE FAMILY.

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"WITH A PLEASANT ENVIRONMENT, THESE CENTRES PROVIDE A DROP-IN FOCAL POINT OF INTEREST AND CONTACT FOR FAMILIES IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

"I AM SURE, FAMILY MEMBERS WILL FIND IT EASY TO SHARE THEIR FEELINGS, TROUBLES AND EXPECTATIONS AMONG THEMSELVES, WITH THE HELP OF SOCIAL WORKERS," HE ADDED.

NOTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS DETERMINED TO DEVELOP NEW COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR THE FAMILY, MR STRACHAN CONCLUDED THAT BY JOINING HANDS WITH NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS, THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AIMED AT PROVIDING ABOUT TWO SUCH CENTRES IN EACH DISTRICT.

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LUCKY CAR REGISTRATION MARKS SALE BY AUCTION

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ONE HUNDRED CAR REGISTRATION MARKS WERE PUT UP FOR AUCTION THIS SATURDAY FOR A TOTAL OF \$2,314,000 WHICH WILL GO TO THE GOVERNMENT LOTTERIES FUND FOR CHARITY PURPOSES AFTER DEDUCTION OF EXPENSES INCURRED IN THE CONDUCT THEREOF.

THE AUCTION, HELD AT THE RECITAL HALL OF THE CITY HALL, SAW THE REGISTRATION MARK *BC88 FETCH THE HIGHEST PRICE OF \$330,000.

ANOTHER REGISTRATION MARK *AL888 WAS SOLD AT THE SECOND HIGHEST PRICE OF \$220,000 WHILE THE LOWEST PRICE WAS \$1,000 EACH FOR FT1229, FT1029, FT245, FT7693, BE5713, FT7118, FU157, FU1013, FT2108, CH874.

FOLLOWING ARE THE RESULTS OF TODAY'S MORNING SESSION AUCTION:

	\$		\$		\$		\$
FT819	4,000	FT1289	4,000	AW365	6,000	FT6333	20,000
FS301	5,000	FU3228	19,000	FT1219	3,000	FT3988	8,000
*FE400	10,000	*FX3	185,000	*DL5	110,000	*BC88	330,000
FT1229	1,000	FT189	23,000	FT2228	24,000	FT113	21,000
AS1992	8,000	CG3688	14,000	FS9369	3,000	EL339	33,000
FT3680	4,000	FT325	6,000	CH874	1,000	FT1029	1,000
AL2848	21,000	FT718	6,000	FT1668	25,000	AA5525	17,000
*AS7	205,000	*FW900	20,000	*DK26	30,000	*AC696	W/C
FT612	3,000	FT3168	4,000	FT881	13,000	FT245	1,000
FT6381	2,000	FT2313	6,000	FT522	4,000	FT317	3,000
CG815	4,000	FT3889	12,000	*BH4444	12,000	FT3278	6,000
BU8968	5,000	FT9116	3,000	BN327	6,000	*ET2277	16,000
FT7693	1,000	BE5713	1,000				

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FOLLOWING ARE THE RESULTS OF TODAY'S AFTERNOON SESSION AUCTION:

	\$		\$		\$		\$
FT1128	14,000	AW366	30,000	AL1218	18,000	FU9219	4,000
FU932	6,000	FU203	16,000	FU2608	5,000	FU712	5,000
*FX323	W/C	*FW111	40,000	*DK19	80,000	*AL888	220,000
FU629	6,000	CZ609	15,000	FU104	W/C	FU850	10,000
AA6768	15,000	FU2118	6,000	AT1972	8,000	CM8023	4,000
FU318	28,000	FT882	14,000	FU157	1,000	FU751	3,000
FT7118	1,000	FU1812	6,000	AW6318	14,000	BZ2805	8,000
*DL9	120,000	*1268	140,000	*AJ7000	44,000	*FU67	20,000
FU980	10,000	FU710	6,000	FT627	4,000	FU516	4,000
FT2108	1,000	FC308	18,000	FU6080	8,000	AS9192	19,000
FU1013	1,000	FU407	5,000	*FW5678	22,000	FU9266	2,000
AN874	8,000	FU1960	8,000	CC2608	6,000	*FX1001	12,000
FU583	8,000	FT5224	W/C				

THERE WERE NO BIDDER FOR *AC696, *FX323, FU104, FT5224, FU104, FT5224 WILL BE ASSIGNED TO THE ORIGINAL APPLICANTS.

* SPECIAL VEHICLE REGISTRATION MARK (NOT TRANSFERABLE)
W/C: WITHDRAWN

SUCCESSFUL BIDDERS MUST PAY BY CHEQUE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE BIDDING.

A TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN REMINDED BIDDERS THAT THE CAR REGISTRATION MARK WOULD BE ASSIGNED ONLY TO A VEHICLE REGISTERED IN THE NAME OF THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF THE AUCTION.

THE CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION MUST BE PRODUCED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE AUCTION IF THE VEHICLE REGISTRATION MARK IS TO BE REGISTERED UNDER THE NAME OF BODY CORPORATE.

PROCEEDS OF THE AUCTION, AFTER DEDUCTION OF EXPENSES INCURRED IN THE CONDUCT THEREOF, WILL AS USUAL GO TO THE GOVERNMENT LOTTERIES FUND.

THE COMING AUCTIONS WILL BE THE 220TH AND 221ST ORGANISED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SINCE MAY 1973.

TODAY'S SALE, THE 220TH AND 221ST ORGANISED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SINCE MAY 1973, BROUGHT THE AMOUNT REALISED SO FAR TO \$308,646,905.

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HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	<u>\$ MILLION</u>	<u>TIME (HOURS)</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE CHANGE (\$ MILLION)</u>
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	3,987	0930	-1,000
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,887	1000	-1,000
CHANGE ATTRIBUTABLE TO :		1100	-1,000
MONEY MARKET ACTIVITY	-1,000	1200	
LAF TODAY	-1,100	1500	
		1600	
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER		TWI 125.6 *-0.1*	9.4.94

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GOOD PROGRESS MADE IN PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR THE DISABLED

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A LOT OF WORK HAS BEEN PUT IN BY THE GOVERNMENT, THE TRANSPORT OPERATORS AND THE DISABLED GROUPS IN THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT TO ENHANCE THE ABILITY OF DISABLED PERSONS TO MOVE AROUND AT WILL, AND CONSIDERABLE ACHIEVEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE, THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, MR RAFAEL HUI, SAID TODAY (SUNDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE RI-ICTA REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON ACCESS AND TRANSPORT HELD AT THE HONG KONG CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE, MR HUI SAID THE GOVERNOR HELD A SUMMIT MEETING IN DECEMBER 1992 WITH DISABLED GROUPS AND TRANSPORT OPERATORS TO ENHANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF DISABLED PERSONS, AND TO IMPROVE TRANSPORT FACILITIES FOR THEM.

IN EARLY 1993, THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SET UP A WORKING GROUP TO CO-ORDINATE IMPROVEMENTS ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES FOR DISABLED PERSONS. AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSIONS AND A NUMBER OF ACCESS TRIALS FOR DISABLED PERSONS ON VARIOUS MODES OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT, IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMMES HAVE BEEN DRAWN UP BY EACH OF THE MAJOR TRANSPORT OPERATORS FOR IMPLEMENTATION.

MR HUI SAID THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION HAS AGREED TO CATER FOR THE NEEDS OF THE DISABLED IN THE DESIGN OF THE NEW AIRPORT RAILWAY, AS WELL AS TO INTRODUCE FACILITIES FOR DISABLED PERSONS ON ITS EXISTING SYSTEM AS FAR AS PRACTICABLE.

EVEN THOUGH BOTH THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY AND THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT ARE ALREADY RELATIVELY ACCESSIBLE TO DISABLED PERSONS, THE KCRC HAS CONTINUED TO TAKE NEW INITIATIVES TO MAKE ITS SERVICES MORE USER-FRIENDLY TO DISABLED PERSONS.

"GENERALLY SPEAKING, THE DISABLED GROUPS ARE HAPPY WITH THE PROGRESS MADE BY THE TRANSPORT OPERATORS AND THEIR PLANS FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS, ALTHOUGH THEY FEEL THAT THERE IS ROOM FOR MORE POSITIVE ACTION ON THE PART OF THE BUS OPERATORS, ESPECIALLY IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF WHEELCHAIR USERS," MR HUI SAID.

"BECAUSE OF THE HEAVY TRAFFIC ON HONG KONG'S ROADS, THE CROWDED CONDITIONS ON ITS BUSES, THE HIGH FREQUENCY AND NUMBER OF SERVICES AND THE GENERALLY LIMITED SPACING AT BUS STOPS, THERE ARE REAL OBSTACLES FOR BUS OPERATORS TO DRASTICALLY AND QUICKLY CHANGE THEIR VEHICLES TO FULLY ACCOMMODATE THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF ALL TYPES OF DISABLED PERSONS.

"NEVERTHELESS, THE BUS OPERATORS HAVE AGREED TO INCORPORATE IN THEIR NEW BUS FLEET THE SPECIAL FACILITIES FOR DISABLED PERSONS RECOMMENDED BY THE DISABLED PERSONS TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN THE UK," HE ADDED.

STARTING APRIL 1993, DISABLED DRIVERS HAVE BEEN EXEMPTED FROM PAYMENT OF GOVERNMENT TUNNEL TOLLS. THIS IS ADDITIONAL TO CONCESSIONS SUCH AS EXEMPTION FROM FIRST REGISTRATION TAX, VEHICLE AND DRIVING LICENCE FEES, DUTY ON FUEL AND CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL PASSAGE TAX.

IN LATE 1993, A SCHEME WAS INTRODUCED UNDER WHICH TAXI DRIVERS ARE ALLOWED TO PICK UP OR SET DOWN DISABLED PASSENGERS IN RESTRICTED ZONES WITH THE PRODUCTION OF A CERTIFICATE ISSUED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT BY THE DISABLED PASSENGER.

ALSO IN LATE 1993, THE WORKING GROUP PUBLISHED A BOOKLET CALLED "A GUIDE TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES IN HONG KONG FOR DISABLED PERSONS" SETTING OUT IN A CLEAR AND CONCISE WAY THE TRANSPORT FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO DISABLED PERSONS.

EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RAHABUS SERVICE WILL ALSO BE PUT IN PLACE NEXT YEAR.

MR HUI SAID IN ACHIEVING THE RESULTS ATTAINED, BOTH THE DISABLED GROUPS AND THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS HAD ADOPTED A POSITIVE AND PRAGMATIC APPROACH IN IMPLEMENTING PRACTICABLE IMPROVEMENTS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, GIVEN THE MANY CONSTRAINTS THAT WERE ALMOST UNIQUE TO THE TRANSPORT SCENE IN HONG KONG.

"THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE FULL SUPPORT TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE ACCESS OF OUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM TO THE DISABLED PERSONS. THROUGH THE CONCERTED EFFORTS OF THE GOVERNMENT, THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS AND THE DISABLED COMMUNITY, I AM CONFIDENT THAT OUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM WILL CONTINUE TO BE MORE AND MORE USER-FRIENDLY AND ACCESSIBLE TO DISABLED TRAVELLERS," HE SAID.

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61 NEW BUILDING PLANS APPROVED

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THE BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT APPROVED 61 NEW BUILDING PLANS IN JANUARY THIS YEAR.

OF THESE, 20 ARE FOR HONG KONG ISLAND, NINE FOR KOWLOON AND 32 FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THE APPROVED PLANS INCLUDE 18 FOR APARTMENT AND APARTMENT/COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS, 13 FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS AND 11 FOR FACTORY AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS.

DURING THAT MONTH, CONSENT WAS GIVEN FOR WORK TO START ON 40 BUILDING PROJECTS, WHICH INVOLVE 88,718 SQUARE METRES OF USABLE DOMESTIC FLOOR AREA AND 96,543 SQUARE METRES OF USABLE NON-DOMESTIC FLOOR AREA. THE DECLARED COST OF NEW BUILDINGS COMPLETED TOTALLED ABOUT \$2,411 MILLION.

OF THE BUILDINGS CERTIFIED FOR OCCUPATION IN THAT MONTH, USABLE FLOOR AREAS FOR DOMESTIC AND NON-DOMESTIC USE ARE 186,284 SQUARE METRES AND 109,463 SQUARE METRES RESPECTIVELY.

IN JANUARY, THE DEPARTMENT ISSUED 41 OCCUPATION PERMITS - 14 FOR HONG KONG ISLAND, NINE FOR KOWLOON AND 18 FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES.

IN ADDITION, 28 DEMOLITION CONSENTS INVOLVING 61 BUILDINGS WERE ISSUED.

THE BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT'S CONTROL AND ENFORCEMENT DIVISION RECEIVED 482 COMPLAINTS OF UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS, CARRIED OUT 1,707 INSPECTIONS AND ISSUED 527 REMOVAL ORDERS ON THE UNAUTHORISED WORKS.

THE DEPARTMENT'S DANGEROUS BUILDINGS SECTION ALSO INSPECTED 1,210 BUILDINGS AND OBTAINED THREE EMERGENCY CLOSURE ORDERS FROM THE COURT.

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PUBLIC URGED TO PLANT TREES

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THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, DR LAWRENCE LEE, TODAY (SUNDAY) URGED MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO TAKE PART IN THIS YEAR'S COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING SCHEME NOW IN FULL SWING.

HE MADE THE APPEAL AT THE OPENING OF THE CONSERVANCY ASSOCIATION'S "GREENING OF HONG KONG 94" AT PAK TAM AU IN THE SAI KUNG COUNTRY PARK.

THE ACTIVITY IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING SCHEME ORGANISED BY THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT.

DR LEE POINTED OUT THAT TREE PLANTING COULD GIVE LOCAL RESIDENTS VALUABLE EXPERIENCE IN LIFE AND ENHANCE THEIR AWARENESS OF NATURE.

"TREES ARE HONG KONG'S PRECIOUS NATURAL RESOURCES. THEY PROVIDE FRESH AIR, BEAUTIFY OUR ENVIRONMENT, PREVENT SOIL EROSION AND OFFER NATURAL HABITATS TO THE MANY WILD LIFE SPECIES.

"BUT REGRETTABLY, MANY OF OUR TREES ARE DESTROYED IN COUNTRYSIDE FIRES EACH YEAR," HE SAID.

AS COUNTRYSIDE FIRES WERE MOSTLY CAUSED BY CARELESSNESS, THEY COULD BE PREVENTED IF LOCAL RESIDENTS HAD BEEN MADE MORE AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF TREES AND HAD HELPED PROTECT THEM, HE SAID.

DR LEE SAID MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC COULD HELP IN THIS MEANINGFUL CAUSE BY PLANTING TREES AT FOUR COUNTRY PARKS ON SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS UNTIL THE END OF THIS MONTH.

THE FOUR PLANTING SITES ARE AT TAI MO SHAN, LAU SHUI HEUNG IN PAT SIN LENG, QUARRY BAY AND NAM SHAN ON LANTAU.

AS FOR INTERESTED SCHOOLS AND ORGANISATIONS, THEY ARE WELCOME TO CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT'S CONSERVATION EDUCATION UNIT ON TEL 733 2121 FOR SEPARATE ARRANGEMENTS.

A TOTAL OF 16,500 TREES HAVE BEEN PLANTED BY MORE THAN 13,000 PARTICIPANTS SINCE THIS YEAR'S SCHEME WAS LAUNCHED ON MARCH 5.

DR LEE THANKED THE CONSERVANCY ASSOCIATION FOR PROMOTING NATURE CONSERVATION IN HONG KONG.

FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR, THE ASSOCIATION HAS MOBILISED ITS MEMBERS TO TAKE PART IN THE SCHEME.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE CEREMONY WERE LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR MR PETER WONG AND CONSERVANCY ASSOCIATION'S CHAIRMAN, MR FUNG SHIU-WING.

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