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CULTURAL EXCHANGES STRENGTHEN LINKS WITH CANADA

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INCREASING BILATERAL EXCHANGES ON MANY FRONTS WILL FORM THE FOUNDATION FOR CONTINUED FRIENDSHIP AND CO-OPERATION BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CANADA, THE ACTING CHIEF SECRETARY, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, SAID IN MONTREAL ON SUNDAY.

SPEAKING AT A GALA DINNER CELEBRATING THE SUCCESS OF FESTIVAL HONG KONG '92 IN QUEBEC'S LARGEST CITY, MR WIGGHAM SAID HONG KONG WAS PROUD OF ITS CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH CANADA AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BUILD ON ITS HISTORIC LINKS.

"TO FURTHER CEMENT THE RELATIONSHIPS, WE HAVE RECENTLY EMBARKED ON A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT EXCHANGES," HE SAID.

OUTLINING THE EXCHANGES, HE SAID THE TWO GOVERNMENTS HAD SIGNED MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING ON CO-OPERATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND FILM PRODUCTION.

UNIVERSITIES IN BOTH PLACES HAVE SIGNED AGREEMENTS TO DEVELOP FURTHER EXCHANGES. A CIVIL SERVICE EXCHANGE SCHEME HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED.

LEGISLATORS FROM HONG KONG WERE RECENTLY ABLE TO MEET THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN OTTAWA FOR A USEFUL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, HE ADDED.

MR WIGGHAM BELIEVED THESE ACTIVITIES CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED THE FRUITFUL DEVELOPMENT OF THE RELATIONSHIP.

"I AM CONFIDENT THAT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CANADA WILL DEEPEN, AND OUR SIGNIFICANCE TO EACH OTHER WILL SIMILARLY INCREASE, AS IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS MAKE THE WORLD -- AND THE PACIFIC REGION IN PARTICULAR -- A SMALLER PLACE.

"THE OMENS ARE EXCELLENT FOR BOTH OF US IN THIS RELATIONSHIP, AND I KNOW YOU WILL FIND THAT OUR VALUE AS A BUSINESS AND CULTURAL PARTNER WILL GROW EVEN MORE AS WE MOVE INTO THE NEXT PHASE OF OUR DEVELOPMENT AS A SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION OF CHINA," HE SAID.

MR WIGGHAM WILL FLY TO OTTAWA ON MONDAY FOR A BUSY PROGRAMME, WHICH WILL INCLUDE CALLS ON CANADIAN OFFICIALS AND THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER.

HE WILL DELIVER A KEYNOTE SPEECH AT A BUSINESS LUNCHEON.

IN THE EVENING, HE WILL ENJOY A PERFORMANCE BY THE HONG KONG ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS.

ON TUESDAY, HE WILL FLY TO VANCOUVER FOR A SERIES OF EVENTS TO MARK THE CLOSE OF THE MONTH-LONG FESTIVAL.

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ORDERS, EMPLOYMENT AND PER CAPITA EARNINGS FIGURES FOR AUGUST

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THE VOLUME OF ORDERS-ON-HAND FOR THE 200 LARGEST MANUFACTURERS INCREASED BY 1% IN AUGUST OVER THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR, ACCORDING TO A MONTHLY SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

ORDERS POSITION IN THE FABRICATED METAL PRODUCTS AND THE ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS INDUSTRIES IMPROVED MODERATELY OVER A YEAR AGO.

ON THE OTHER HAND, ORDERS IN THE TEXTILES AND PLASTIC PRODUCTS INDUSTRIES DECLINED.

COMPARED WITH THE PRECEDING MONTH, ORDERS FOR THE MANUFACTURERS SURVEYED DECREASED BY 1%.

ORDERS IN THE PLASTIC PRODUCTS INDUSTRY DECREASED SIGNIFICANTLY. SLIGHT DECREASES WERE ALSO REPORTED IN THE TEXTILES AND FABRICATED METAL PRODUCTS INDUSTRIES.

MEANWHILE, THE WEARING APPAREL AND THE ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS INDUSTRIES SHOWED LITTLE CHANGE IN ORDERS.

THE VOLUME OF ORDERS-ON-HAND IS MEASURED IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF MONTHS AND REFERS TO ORDERS OUTSTANDING AS AT THE END OF THE REFERENCE MONTH.

ON EMPLOYMENT, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS ENGAGED BY THE 200 LARGEST MANUFACTURERS DECREASED BY 11% IN AUGUST 1992 WHEN COMPARED WITH THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR. THE DECLINE IN MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT REFLECTS THE CONTINUING RELOCATION OF PRODUCTION PROCESSES TO SOUTH CHINA.

COMPARED WITH THE PRECEDING MONTH, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS ENGAGED BY THE SURVEYED MANUFACTURERS DECREASED BY 2%.

PER CAPITA EARNINGS IN THE MANUFACTURING COMPANIES SURVEYED INCREASED BY 15% IN MONEY TERMS IN AUGUST 1992 OVER THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR.

COMPARED WITH THE PRECEDING MONTH, PER CAPITA EARNINGS INCREASED BY 1%.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS ENGAGED IN THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES SURVEYED DECREASED MODERATELY IN AUGUST 1992 WHEN COMPARED WITH THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR, BUT REMAINED STABLE WHEN COMPARED WITH THE PRECEDING MONTH.

PER CAPITA EARNINGS IN THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES SURVEYED INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY IN AUGUST 1992 OVER THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR, BUT DECREASED SLIGHTLY WHEN COMPARED WITH THE PRECEDING MONTH.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT FIGURES FOR THIS INDUSTRY COVERED COMPANY EMPLOYEES ONLY; SITE WORKERS EMPLOYED BY LABOUR-ONLY SUB-CONTRACTORS WERE NOT INCLUDED.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS ENGAGED IN THE SERVICE COMPANIES SURVEYED INCREASED SLIGHTLY IN AUGUST 1992 OVER THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR, BUT SHOWED LITTLE CHANGE OVER THE PRECEDING MONTH.

/PER CAPITA .....

PER CAPITA EARNINGS IN THE SERVICE COMPANIES SURVEYED INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY OVER THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR AND SLIGHTLY OVER THE PRECEDING MONTH.

THE SURVEY COVERED A PANEL OF THE 200 LARGEST MANUFACTURERS AND THE 50 LARGEST COMPANIES IN THE CONSTRUCTION AND SERVICE SECTORS, CHOSEN BY REFERENCE TO THEIR EMPLOYMENT SIZES IN SEPTEMBER 1986.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT POINTED OUT THAT AS THE SURVEY SAMPLE COVERED ONLY LARGE COMPANIES, THE SURVEY RESULTS MIGHT NOT BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GENERAL SITUATION OF THE MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND THE SERVICE SECTORS.

NEVERTHELESS, THE SURVEY RESULTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE A USEFUL INDICATION OF THE DIRECTION OF CHANGE FOR MAKING A QUICK ASSESSMENT OF SHORT-TERM DEVELOPMENTS IN THOSE SECTORS, HE SAID.

THE SURVEY REPORT FOR AUGUST IS NOW ON SALE AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS SALES CENTRE, GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, CONNAUGHT PLACE, CENTRAL, AND AT THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT PUBLICATIONS SALES COUNTER, 19TH FLOOR, WANCHAI TOWER I, 12 HARBOUR ROAD, WAN CHAI, AT $4.50 A COPY.

ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE SURVEY RESULTS MAY BE MADE OF THE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION STATISTICS SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ON TEL 805 6441.

THE PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN ORDERS-ON-HAND, EMPLOYMENT AND PER CAPITA EARNINGS ARE SHOWN IN THE FOLLOWING THREE TABLES:

TABLE 1 : ORDERS-ON-HAND IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

INDUSTRY	ORDERS-ON-HAND		
	AS AT THE END OF AUGUST 1992	CHANGE WHEN COMPARED WITH JULY 1992	AUG. 1991
	(MONTHS)	(%)	(%)
ALL MANUFACTURERS SURVEYED	4.40	-1	+1
WEARING APPAREL	4.77	*	*
TEXTILES	2.11	-3	-10
PLASTIC PRODUCTS	2.56	-16	-5
FABRICATED METAL PRODUCTS	4.52	-1	+8
ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS	5.66	*	+6
OTHERS	3.94	-1	-3

* CHANGES WITHIN +/- 0.5%

/TABLE 2 .....

TABLE 2 : EMPLOYMENT

INDUSTRY/SERVICES	PERSONS ENGAGED AS AT THE END OF AUGUST 1992 — CHANGE WHEN COMPARED WITH JULY 92 (%)	AUG 91 (%)
ALL MANUFACTURERS SURVEYED	-2	-11
FOOD AND DRINKS	*	+1
WEARING APPAREL	-1	-15
TEXTILES	-4	-13
PLASTIC PRODUCTS	-8	-9
FABRICATED METAL PRODUCTS	*	-15
ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS	-2	-17
OTHERS	*	-1
CONSTRUCTION #	*	-6
SERVICES	*	+1
BANKS	*	-2
HOTELS	*	+1
PUBLIC UTILITIES	+1	+2
OTHERS	*	+3

* CHANGES WITHIN +/- 0.5%

PERSONS ENGAGED COVERED COMPANY EMPLOYEES ONLY; SITE WORKERS EMPLOYED BY LABOUR-ONLY SUB-CONTRACTORS WERE NOT INCLUDED.

/TABLE 3 .....

TABLE 3 : PER CAPITA EARNINGS

NOTE : BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE INCLUSION OF IRREGULAR PAYMENTS (E.G. BACKPAY OR SPECIAL BONUS), "PER CAPITA EARNINGS" FOR A GIVEN MONTH MAY BE SUBJECT TO RATHER VOLATILE FLUCTUATIONS FROM TIME TO TIME. THEREFORE, IT IS PARTICULARLY ADVISABLE, IN STUDYING PER CAPITA EARNINGS STATISTICS, NOT TO TAKE A GIVEN MONTH'S DATA IN ISOLATION, BUT TO MAKE REFERENCE TO DATA OVER A LONGER PERIOD.

INDUSTRY/SERVICES	PER CAPITA EARNINGS		
	AVERAGE AS IN AUGUST 92	CHANGE WHEN COMPARED WITH JULY 92	CHANGE WHEN COMPARED WITH AUG 91
	(HK$)	(%)	(%)
ALL MANUFACTURERS SURVEYED	7,934	+1	+15
FOOD AND DRINKS	8,212	+1	+8
WEARING APPAREL	5,902	+1	+9
TEXTILES	7,329	+6	+15
PLASTIC PRODUCTS	7,797	+3	+20
FABRICATED METAL PRODUCTS	7,877	+2	+16
ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS	8,279	*	+16
OTHERS	9,931	*	+16
CONSTRUCTION #	10,766	-3	+12
SERVICES	13,131	+3	+13
BANKS	11,533	*	+11
HOTELS	7,951	-11	+10
PUBLIC UTILITIES	12,959	-1	+14
OTHERS	15,861	+13	+14

* CHANGES WITHIN +/- 0.5%

PER CAPITA EARNINGS COVERED COMPANY EMPLOYEES ONLY; SITE WORKERS EMPLOYED BY LABOUR-ONLY SUB-CONTRACTORS WERE NOT INCLUDED.

NOTE TO TABLES 1 - 3 :

UNLIKE "ORDERS-ON-HAND" AND "PER CAPITA EARNINGS", WHICH ARE AVERAGE FIGURES AMONG THE COMPANIES SURVEYED, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS ENGAGED BY THE COMPANIES SURVEYED IS NOT MEANINGFUL INFORMATION ON ITS OWN (BECAUSE THIS IS A PANEL SURVEY) AND IS THEREFORE NOT SHOWN.

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SECRETARY FOR SECURITY INSPECTS BORDER AREA

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THE POLICE HAVE BEEN CARRYING OUT THEIR BORDER PATROL DUTIES EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY SINCE THEY TOOK OVER THE WORK FROM THE ARMY ABOUT SIX MONTHS AGO, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID.

HE MADE THE REMARK AFTER INSPECTING THE SECURITY FACILITIES AND ANTI-ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS IN THE BORDER AREA AND TIN SHUI WAI THIS MORNING.

THE VISIT WAS PART OF A REGULAR SERIES BY MR ASPREY TO THE DISCIPLINED SERVICES.

"THE TERRAIN OF TIN SHUI WAI IS SUCH THAT IT PROVIDES LOTS OF HIDING PLACE FOR ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT (II) WORKERS, WHO CAN ALSO EASILY SPOT ANY APPROACHING POLICE," MR ASPREY SAID.

DESPITE THIS, THE POLICE MANAGED TO ARREST MORE THAN 1,200 II WORKERS IN TIN SHUI WAI OVER THE PAST FIVE MONTHS, HE NOTED.

HE ADDED THAT POLICE VIGILANCE AGAINST II WORKERS AT TIN SHUI WAI WOULD CONTINUE.

MR ASPREY ALSO WENT TO LAU FAU SHAN TO SEE HOW THE CONTROL MEASURES ON FISHERMEN FROM CHINA WERE WORKING.

UNDER THE CONTROL MEASURES, WHICH WERE IMPLEMENTED IN AUGUST THIS YEAR, UP TO 50 FISHING BOATS A DAY FROM CHINA ARE ALLOWED TO COME TO LAU FAU SHAN TO SELL THEIR FISHING PRODUCE.

THE NEW MEASURES ENABLE THE POLICE TO BETTER CONTROL THE ACTIVITIES OF THESE MAINLAND FISHERMEN WHILE THEY ARE IN LAU FAU SHAN.

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FURTHER CLARIFICATION ON RENT DECONTROL

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THE ONLY MATERIAL CHANGE TO PART II OF THE LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONSOLIDATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL IS THE PROPOSAL TO INCREASE THE CURRENT ANNUAL FIVE PERCENTAGE POINTS RISE IN MINIMUM RENT TO SEVEN-AND-A-HALF PERCENTAGE POINTS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF RATING AND VALUATION, MR BARRY WOODROFFE, THIS (MONDAY) MORNING WHEN HE MET A LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AD HOC GROUP TO ELABORATE ON THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE BILL.

HE POINTED OUT THAT 86 PER CENT OF FLATS CONTROLLED UNDER THE SECTION WERE BUILT BEFORE 1970.

MR WOODROFFE ASSURED THE MEMBERS THAT WHEN DETERMINING PREVAILING MARKET RENTS, THE AGE OF THE PROPERTY WOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT AND GENERALLY WOULD BE DERIVED FROM MARKET RENTS OF FLATS IN THE SAME BUILDING OR IN SIMILAR BUILDINGS NEARBY.

AND HE WAS OF THE OPINION THAT THE SLIGHTLY FASTER RATE OF INCREASE IN PART II RENTS WHICH WILL OCCUR IF THE BILL IS ENACTED WILL NOT AFFECT GENERAL MARKET RENTAL VALUES.

FURTHERMORE, TENANTS WILL RETAIN THEIR SECURITY OF TENURE ALTHOUGH THE RENTS WILL BE INCREASED TO THE LEVEL CURRENTLY BEING OBTAINED FOR OTHER SIMILAR FLATS ALREADY SUBJECT TO PART IV OF THE ORDINANCE.

TURNING TO A SURVEY RECENTLY CONDUCTED BY HIS DEPARTMENT, MR WOODROFFE REITERATED THAT IT WAS COMPREHENSIVE.

"QUESTIONAIRES WERE SENT OUT TO ALL PART II CASES AND 18,590 REPLIES WERE ANALYSED.

"A RANDOM SAMPLE TEST WAS ALSO CARRIED OUT ON NON-RESPONSE CASES WHICH REINFORCED OUR VIEWS THAT THE POLL WAS ROBUST AND RELIABLE," HE ADDED.

THE SURVEY, HE SAID, INDICATED THAT THE NUMBER OF PART II TENANCIES HAD DROPPED SINCE THE PREVIOUS FIGURES RELEASED IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR.

LATEST FIGURES SHOW THAT THERE ARE AT PRESENT ONLY 32,414 PART II FLATS WITH 48,500 HOUSEHOLDS ACCOMMODATING ABOUT 144,000 PEOPLE.

AND THE AVERAGE CONTROLLED RENTS FOR THESE PREMISES IS $3,344 AS AGAINST THE AVERAGE MARKET VALUE OF $5,330.

AS FOR BED-SPACE TENANTS PROTECTED BY PART II, MR WOODROFFE SAID THEY NUMBERED ONLY 2,100 AND WERE PAYING AN AVERAGE RENT OF $279 AGAINST THE PREVAILING RENT OF $412.

THE NUMBER OF BEDROOMS/CUBICLES PROTECTED BY PART II IS ABOUT 10,000 FOR WHICH THE AVERAGE RENT WAS $874 ALTHOUGH THE PREVAILING RENT WAS $1,128.

AS FAR AS THESE TENANCIES ARE CONCERNED, MR WOODROFFE BELIEVED THAT THE INCREASES IN 1993 - $81 FOR BED SPACES AND $241 FOR BEDROOMS/ CUBICLES - WOULD HAVE LITTLE OR NO EFFECT ON THE TENANTS.

THIS IS BECAUSE THE RENT INCREASE WILL GENERALLY BE THE SAME EVEN IF THE BILL IS NOT PASSED, MR WOODROFFE POINTED OUT.

IN 1994, EVEN IF THE BILL IS ENACTED, THE INCREASE FOR BED SPACES WILL BE $118 INSTEAD OF $83 A MONTH OR JUST $35 EXTRA.

"THIS CONTRASTS WITH THE FINDINGS OF THE SURVEYS BY CONCERNED GROUPS WHICH INDICATED A FAR WIDER DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CURRENT CONTROLLED RENTS AND MARKET RENTS.

"ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT POINT ESTABLISHED IS THAT BED-SPACE TENANTS CURRENTLY PAY ON AVERAGE ONLY 7.3 PER CENT OF THEIR INCOME ON RENT WHICH MAY RISE TO ABOUT 9.4 PER CENT IN 1993.

/"THIS COMPARES .....

"THIS COMPARES TO RATIOS OF 21.3 PER CENT AND 30 PER CENT FOR 1993 IN THE INTEREST GROUP SURVEYS," MR WOODROFFE SAID.

MR WOODROFFE BELIEVED THAT THE MAIN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE FINDINGS OF HIS DEPARTMENT'S SURVEY AND THOSE CONDUCTED BY THE CONCERNED GROUPS MAY HAVE BEEN DUE TO CONFUSION AS TO WHETHER TENANCIES IN OLDER BUILDINGS WERE SUBJECT TO PART II CONTROL.

"EVEN IF A BUILDING IS OLD, A NEW LETTING ON OR AFTER JUNE 10, 1983 WOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO PART II.

"THIS CONFUSION MAY HAVE GIVEN AN INFLATED PICTURE OF THE NUMBER OF PART II TENANCIES IN SUBDIVIDED PREMISES.

"SECONDLY, THE AREAS SELECTED MAY HAVE TENDED TO BE UNREPRESENTATIVE OF THE OVERALL SITUATION AND AGAIN MAY HAVE GIVEN AN EXAGGERATED COUNT FOR THE NUMBER OF SUB-LETTINGS WHEN APPLYING THE FINDINGS TO THE OVERALL PICTURE," MR WOODROFFE EXPLAINED.

NONETHELESS, MR WOODROFFE ACCEPTED THAT THERE WOULD BE CERTAIN PERSONS WHO NEED ASSISTANCE.

"BUT THIS IS FOR GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE RATHER THAN LANDLORDS. IN FACT, PUBLIC ASSISTANCE OF $825 A MONTH FOR A SINGLE PERSON IS AVAILABLE TO THOSE IN NEED AS WELL AS A RENT ALLOWANCE OF UP TO $743 PER MONTH."

HE SAID THE GOVERNOR HAD PROPOSED THAT ALLOWANCES UNDER THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME BE REVISED UPWARDS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

ADDITIONALLY, THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WILL ALSO PLAY ITS ROLE.

FOR, ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE 2,500 RENTAL FLATS IT WILL BUILD EACH YEAR OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS FOR SINGLE PERSONS WILL GO TO THE PEOPLE DISPLACED BY ESTATE REDEVELOPMENT, ABOUT 500 TO 1,000 WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO TENANTS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR EACH YEAR.

MR WOODROFFE AGAIN STRESSED THAT THE DELAY IN DEALING WITH THE BILL HAD UNFORTUNATELY RESULTED IN A NUMBER OF TENANTS RECEIVING LESS COMPENSATION THAN THEY WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE HAD IF LEGISLATION HAD BEEN ENACTED WITHIN THE ORIGINAL TIMETABLE.

"IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED THAT THE PROPOSALS FOR REVISED AND ENHANCED COMPENSATION UPON REDEVELOPMENT WILL APPLY TO BOTH PART II AND IV," HE SAID.

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FEE RISES FOR MARINE STORE AND MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS LICENCES

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LICENSEES OF MARINE STORES AND MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS HAVE TO PAY MORE FOR THEIR LICENCES WITH EFFECT FROM OCTOBER 16.

THE FEES FOR THE ISSUE AND RENEWAL OF A MARINE STORES DEALER LICENCE HAVE BEEN INCREASED FROM $825 TO $1,200 A YEAR AND THAT FOR A MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENT LICENCE FROM $3,320 TO $5,000.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THE FEES WERE SET TO RECOVER ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS AND TAKE ACCOUNT OF INCREASED COSTS SINCE THE FEES WERE LAST REVISED IN 1988.

THE MARINE STORES (AMENDMENT) REGULATION 1992 AND MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS (AMENDMENT) REGULATION 1992, WHICH SEEK TO INCREASE THE FEES FOR THESE LICENCES, WERE GAZETTED LAST FRIDAY.

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COMMUNICATION KEY TO HAPPY MARRIAGE

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MRS PATTEN SAID TODAY (MONDAY) THAT VOLUNTARY AGENCIES DID A VITAL JOB TO HELP PROVIDE THE CEMENT THAT WAS ESSENTIAL TO REBUILD MARRIAGES RUNNING INTO TROUBLE.

SPEAKING AT AN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MARRIAGE AND PERSONAL COUNSELLING SERVICE, SHE SAID THE CEMENT WAS COMMUNICATION.

"BY ENCOURAGING COUPLES TO COMMUNICATE - WITH YOU, WITH THEMSELVES, WITH EACH OTHER - YOU REALLY CAN AND DO HAVE A DECISIVE INFLUENCE ON THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES, AND TENS OF THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN.

"OFTEN IT INVOLVES HARD CHOICES; OFTEN IT MEANS GREATER SENSITIVITY AND UNDERSTANDING; OFTEN IT MEANS WORKING OUT COMPROMISES.

"YOU ARE THE CATALYST THAT PROMPTS THESE THINGS TO HAPPEN," SHE SAID.

NOTING THAT DIVORCE CASES IN HONG KONG WERE RISING BY ABOUT 500 EVERY YEAR, MRS PATTEN SAID THE FIRST TASK MUST BE ONE OF PREVENTION RATHER THAN CURE.

SHE SUGGESTED THE FOLLOWING THREE THINGS TO DO:

* EDUCATE YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A MARRIAGE;

* EXPLAIN THAT MARRIAGE IS ABOUT MORE THAN JUST SEXUAL AND ROMANTIC LOVE, BUT ABOUT A LIFETIME BUILT ON A SOLID FOUNDATION OF ENDURING PARTNERSHIP AND FRIENDSHIP; AND

* EXPLAIN THE DIFFICULTIES LIKELY TO EMERGE IN MARRIAGE, HOW TO AVOID THEM AND HOW TO RESOLVE THEM.

/EXPLAINING THAT .....

EXPLAINING THAT SHE HAD BOTH A PERSONAL AND A PROFESSIONAL INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT, MRS PATTEN SAID AS A FORMER BARRISTER IN BRITAIN SPECIALISING IN FAMILY LAW, SHE HAD SEEN FIRST-HAND A SORRY TALE OF MARRIAGES THAT WERE FALLING APART.

SHE ADDED THAT SHE HAD BEEN FORTUNATE TO BE VERY HAPPILY MARRIED FOR 21 YEARS DESPITE THE STRESSES AND STRAINS THAT POLITICAL LIFE INEVITABLY IMPOSED.

TURNING TO CASES WHERE MARRIAGES WENT WRONG, MRS PATTEN DID NOT CONSIDER THAT MAKING DIVORCE MORE DIFFICULT WAS OF ANY GREAT PRACTICAL BENEFIT WHEN IT CAME TO DETERMINING WHETHER COUPLES STAYED TOGETHER OR SPLIT APART.

SHE SAID HOWEVER, THERE WAS A CASE FOR PROVIDING TWO THINGS:

* A 'COOLING OFF' PERIOD TO ENABLE COUPLES TO AGREE ON WHAT HAPPENS TO THEIR CHILDREN BEFORE A DIVORCE IS FINALISED; AND

* MEDIATION SERVICES TO ENABLE COUPLES TO COME TO AGREEMENTS WITHOUT THE DISASTROUS, DESTRUCTIVE EXPERIENCE OF A COURT CASE.

SHE SAID AS A FAMILY LAWYER, SHE ALWAYS CONSIDERED IT HER FIRST DUTY TO TRY AND GET THE PARTIES TO SETTLE IN THE INTERESTS OF THE CHILDREN.

DESCRIBING THAT DIVORCE WAS NEVER AN EASY OPTION, SHE SAID: "DIVORCE BRINGS FINANCIAL AND EMOTIONAL TURMOIL IN ITS WAKE; HOUSING PROBLEMS; INSECURITY FOR THE CHILDREN AND LONELINESS FOR THE SINGLE PARENT."

"HOW MUCH BETTER, THEN, TO TRY AND KEEP THE MARRIAGE TOGETHER THAN TO ALLOW ANY OF THIS TO HAPPEN," SHE SAID.

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CIVIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE TO PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

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THE COMMITTEE ON THE PROMOTION OF CIVIC EDUCATION (CPCE) WILL TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

THIS IS ON TOP OF ITS PRESENT WORK FOCUS ON PROMOTING THE RULE OF LAW, CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE, DR DANIEL TSE, SAID AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY (MONDAY).

TEACHERS, JOURNALISTS AND FRONT-LINE WORKERS WILL BE CALLED IN TO HELP.

THE COMMITTEE, DR TSE SAID, IS TO PLAY THE ROLE OF A FACILITATOR IN SPREADING THE MESSAGES AND GUIDELINES TO TEACHERS, NEWS REPORTERS AND FRONT-LINE COMMUNITY WORKERS. THEY WILL IN TURN HELP SPREAD THE MESSAGE WIDELY ACROSS ALL SECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY.

/DR TSE .....

DR TSE SAID THE RULE OF LAW WAS THE BEDROCK OF HONG KONG'S WAY OF LIFE, GUARANTEEING FAIR AND EQUITABLE TREATMENT FOR EVERYONE.

TO PUT THESE SAFEGUARDS IN PLACE, THE GOVERNMENT HAD PROMULGATED THE BILL OF RIGHTS IN JUNE 1991, HE SAID.

IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE THE BILL COULD HAVE ON THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG, DR TSE POINTED OUT THAT THE CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR DAVID FORD, HAD STATED IN THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL LAST YEAR THAT IT WAS PARAMOUNT TO PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN ORDER TO HAVE A SOLID BASE FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION.

TURNING TO TWO RECENT SURVEYS RELATING TO CIVIC MATTERS, DR TSE SAID THE FINDINGS INDICATED THAT THE PUBLIC, IN PARTICULAR THE YOUTH, GENERALLY DID NOT KNOW MUCH ABOUT LAWS THAT MAY AFFECT THEM.

TO COUNTER THIS, THE COMMITTEE HAS DESIGNED SETS OF PROGRAMMES FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE.

THESE INCLUDE A HUMAN RIGHTS TEACHING KIT FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS AND SOCIAL WORKERS; A SEMINAR ON COURT REPORTING FOR JOURNALISTS THIS SATURDAY (OCTOBER 24); WEEKLY NEWSPAPER COLUMNS ON THE CONCEPTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW, AND A TERRITORY-WIDE CIVIC EDUCATION DAY IN SHA TIN ON NOVEMBER 29.

ANOTHER SPEAKER, CONVENOR OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE, MR WILLIAM TSUI, BRIEFED THE MEDIA ON HIS SUB-COMMITTEE'S ROLE, OBJECTIVES AND FUTURE PLANS. THE SUB-COMMITTEE WAS SET UP IN MAY.

HE SAID: "THE SUB-COMMITTEE, BESIDES CARRYING OUT ITS OWN FUNCTIONS, WILL SUPPORT AND CO-ORDINATE ANY ACTIVITIES THAT ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST COMMUNITY GROUPS TO ORGANISE HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAMMES."

THE CPCE HAS SOLICITED SUPPORT FROM THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB IN PUTTING UP MORE FUNDS FOR THE CIVIC EDUCATION COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION SCHEME.

MOREOVER, AT DISTRICT LEVELS, THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WILL OFFER HELP TO THE 19 DISTRICT CIVIC EDUCATION BODIES TO HOLD ACTIVITIES THAT PUBLICISE HUMAN RIGHTS, HE ADDED.

WITH A VIEW TO SHARING EXPERIENCES AND IMPROVING COMMUNICATION AMONG THE DISTRICT BODIES AND OTHER INTERESTED GROUPS, HIS WORKING GROUP INTENDS TO INVITE RELEVANT ORGANISATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN TWO SPECIAL HUMAN RIGHTS SEMINARS EARLY NEXT YEAR.

IN THE LONG RUN, THE SUB-COMMITTEE HOPES TO DISCUSS AND STUDY CERTAIN HUMAN RIGHTS TOPICS, THE OUTCOME OF WHICH WILL BE COMPILED FOR REFERENCES FOR THE CPCE AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, HE SAID.

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CORRECTIONAL SERVICES DELEGATION VISITS GUANGDONG

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A CORRECTIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT DELEGATION TODAY (MONDAY) LEFT HONG KONG FOR A SIX-DAY VISIT TO GUANGDONG.

THE EIGHT-MEMBER WORKING-LEVEL DELEGATION WAS LED BY SENIOR SUPERINTENDENT YU KAM-FAI.

THEY WILL MEET OFFICIALS OF THE GUANGDONG PROVINCIAL JUSTICE AUTHORITY AND THE PROVINCIAL REFORMATORY SERVICES BUREAU.

THEY WOULD ALSO VISIT A REFORMATORY FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS, A PRISON, A POLICE SUBSTATION AND A COURT TO SEE THE LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

THE DELEGATION WILL RETURN TO HONG KONG ON SATURDAY.

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FRESH WATER CUTS IN YAU MA TEI AND KWUN TONG

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FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO SOME PREMISES IN YAU MA TEI AND KWUN TONG WILL GO OFF FROM 11 PM ON WEDNESDAY (OCTOBER 21) TO 6 AM THE FOLLOWING DAY TO FACILITATE WASTE DETECTION WORK ON WATER MAINS.

THE SUSPENSION WILL AFFECT ALL PREMISES BOUNDED BY KANSU STREET, CANTON ROAD, SAIGON STREET, FERRY STREET, MAN CHEONG STREET AND MAN WUI STREET IN YAU MA TEI.

ALL RESIDENTS IN SHUN LEE ESTATE, SHUN CHI COURT AND SHUN LEE ESTATE TEMPORARY HOUSING AREA IN KWUN TONG WILL ALSO BE AFFECTED BY THE FRESH WATER CUT.

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WATER STORAGE FIGURE

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STORAGE IN HONG KONG'S RESERVOIRS AT 9 AM TODAY (MONDAY) STOOD AT 82.3 PER CENT OF CAPACITY OR 482.069 MILLION CUBIC METRES.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR THE RESERVOIRS CONTAINED 278.707 MILLION CUBIC METRES OF WATER, REPRESENTING 47.6 PER CENT OF CAPACITY.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS
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	$ MILLION
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,395
REVERASL OF LAF	+105
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	1,500
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	+300
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,800

LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER TWI 110.8 *+0.1* 19.10.92

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS		HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS				
TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.78 PCT	13 MONTHS	2311	6.25	102.87	3.55
1 MONTH	2.82 PCT	16 MONTHS	2402	5.50	102.35	3.70
3 MONTHS	2.85 PCT	19 MONTHS	2405	5.502	102.39	3.96
6 MONTHS	2.95 PCT	22 MONTHS	2408	4.375	100.45	4.16
12 MONTHS	3.46 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 8,018 MN

CLOSED 19 OCTOBER 1992

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