



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 1993

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LIQUOR LICENSING PROCEDURES UNDER REVIEW

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BOTH THE URBAN SERVICES AND REGIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENTS ARE REVIEWING THEIR LIQUOR LICENSING PROCEDURES AND THE RELATED LEGISLATION TO SEE WHETHER THERE IS ROOM FOR STREAMLINING PROCEDURES, THE SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SZE, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"A SEPARATE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW IS ALSO BEING CONDUCTED ON THE RESTAURANT LICENSING SYSTEM," HE SAID IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MARTIN BARROW IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

TO HELP THE PUBLIC IN APPLYING FOR LICENCES, A BOOKLET ENTITLED "A GUIDE TO APPLICATION FOR GENERAL AND LIGHT REFRESHMENT RESTAURANT LICENCES" HAS BEEN PUBLISHED FOR DISTRIBUTION, AND SEMINARS ARE HELD TO EXPLAIN LICENSING PROCEDURES TO APPLICANTS.

MOREOVER, LICENSING CONFERENCES ARE HELD REGULARLY BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED TO RESOLVE DIFFICULT CASES, MR SZE SAID.

EXPLAINING THE PROCEDURES OF ISSUING A LIQUOR LICENCE, HE SAID THE MAIN AIMS OF THE LICENSING BOARDS UNDER THE URBAN AND REGIONAL COUNCILS WERE TO ENSURE THAT PREMISES SO LICENSED WERE SUITABLE TO RECEIVE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND WERE PROPERLY MANAGED AND CONTROLLED SO THAT THE PUBLIC INTEREST WAS PROTECTED.

ONE OF THE WAYS OF DOING THIS IS TO ENSURE THAT THE PREMISES HAVE ALSO BEEN ISSUED WITH A RESTAURANT LICENCE, HE SAID.

"AS RESTAURANT LICENSING TAKES FULL ACCOUNT OF THE STRUCTURAL, FIRE AND HEALTH SAFETY OF THE PREMISES, THE SUITABILITY OF THE PREMISES FOR A LIQUOR LICENCE IS, THUS ALSO ENSURED.

"THESE PROCEDURES, HOWEVER, TAKE TIME AND SOMETIMES CAUSE DELAYS, PARTICULARLY IN CASES WHERE APPLICANTS REPEATEDLY FAIL TO COMPLY WITH THE NECESSARY REQUIREMENTS FOR A RESTAURANT LICENCE," HE ADDED.

MR SZE SAID OTHER STEPS WERE ALSO TAKEN TO ENSURE THE PROPER MANAGEMENT OF THE PREMISES.

THESE INCLUDE REFERRING APPLICATIONS FOR NEW ISSUES OF LIQUOR LICENCES TO THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE AND THE RELEVANT DISTRICT OFFICERS FOR INVESTIGATION AND COMMENTS IN RESPECT OF THE SUITABILITY OF THE APPLICANT TO HOLD A LICENCE AND IN RESPECT OF PUBLIC OPINION ON THE APPLICATION RESPECTIVELY.

PUBLIC OPINION IS ALSO SOUGHT THROUGH ADVERTISEMENTS IN LOCAL NEWSPAPERS AND THROUGH NOTICES POSTED IN THE BUILDING WHERE THE PREMISES UNDER APPLICATION ARE LOCATED.

THE SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT GENERALLY IT TOOK ABOUT THREE MONTHS FROM THE RECEIPT OF AN APPLICATION TO THE ISSUE OF A LICENCE IF THE CASE WAS UNCONTESTED.

THE PROCESSING TIME MAY BE INCREASED BY TWO TO THREE MONTHS IN THE CASE OF A CONTESTED APPLICATION.

HOWEVER, LONGER DELAYS OCCUR IN CASES WHERE A LIQUOR LICENCE APPLICATION HAS BEEN APPROVED BUT CANNOT BE ISSUED PENDING A RESTAURANT LICENCE, MR SZE SAID.

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PROMOTION OF ANTI-SMOKING ACTIVITIES AMONG YOUTH

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EMPHASIS ON THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF SMOKING WILL BE PLACED ON MESSAGES TO YOUNG PEOPLE TO DISCOURAGE THEM FROM STARTING THE HABIT, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HOWARD YOUNG, MRS WONG SAID AN ANTI-SMOKING TEACHING KIT WOULD BE PRODUCED FOR DISTRIBUTION TO SCHOOLS AND A NUMBER OF YOUTH ACTIVITIES ARRANGED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

IN ADDITION, THE HONG KONG COUNCIL ON SMOKING AND HEALTH (COSH) HAS SENT LETTERS TO 500 SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND HAS ARRANGED TO GIVE TALKS TO 92 SCHOOLS, COVERING ABOUT 100,000 SECONDARY STUDENTS, THIS ACADEMIC YEAR.

IT AIMS TO COMPLETE VISITS TO ALL 500 SCHOOLS WITHIN THE NEXT 18 MONTHS.

TO STRENGTHEN EFFORTS IN EDUCATING THE PUBLIC, MRS WONG SAID COSH WOULD RECEIVE A SUBVENTION OF \$3.79 MILLION IN 1993/94, AN INCREASE OF NEARLY 35 PER CENT COMPARED WITH \$2.81 MILLION FOR 1992/93.

OF THIS SUM, \$1.6 MILLION WILL BE SPENT ON PUBLICITY AND PUBLIC EDUCATION, DOUBLE THE AMOUNT FOR 1992/93.

TURNING TO ENFORCEMENT AGAINST SMOKING IN DESIGNATED NON-SMOKING AREAS, MRS WONG SAID IT WAS PRIMARILY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MANagements OF THESE AREAS.

SHE SAID MANagements WERE EMPOWERED UNDER THE SMOKING (PUBLIC HEALTH) ORDINANCE TO REQUIRE SMOKERS IN A DESIGNATED NO-SMOKING AREA TO DESIST.

THEY MAY ALSO REQUIRE THE OFFENDER TO LEAVE OR CALL FOR POLICE HELP IN ENFORCEMENT.

MRS WONG SAID: "MANagements HAVE BEEN INFORMED INDIVIDUALLY, IN WRITING, OF THE ENFORCEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND OF THEIR POWERS UNDER THE ORDINANCE.

"FEEDBACK INDICATES THAT THE POWERS GIVEN TO MANagements ARE ADEQUATE FOR THE PURPOSE AND IT IS SELDOM NECESSARY TO RESORT TO POLICE INTERVENTION OR PROSECUTION."

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WAYS TO HELP STUDENTS SEVER TRIAD LINKS

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WITH EFFECT FROM APRIL 1 THIS YEAR, UNDER A SIX-MONTH TRIAL SCHEME, THE POLICE WILL MAKE WIDER USE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DISCRETION SCHEME IN CASE OF JUVENILES ARRESTED FOR MINOR TRIAD-RELATED OFFENCES, INCLUDING THAT OF BEING A MEMBER OF A TRIAD SOCIETY.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ERIC LI KA-CHEUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"IN APPROPRIATE CASES, YOUNG PERSONS BELOW 17 YEARS OF AGE WILL BE CAUTIONED AND HELPED TO TURN AWAY FROM CRIME RATHER THAN BEING PROSECUTED," MR ASPREY SAID.

WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE PARENTS, ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE CAN THEN BE PROVIDED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

"THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TRIAL SCHEME, AND THAT OF OTHER EXISTING MEASURES, WILL CONTINUE TO BE MONITORED TO ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE ASSISTANCE IS GIVEN TO STUDENTS WHO WISH TO GIVE UP THEIR TRIAD LINKS," MR ASPREY SAID.

HOWEVER, THE SECRETARY SAID THESE MEASURES DID NOT FALL PART OF A FORMAL TRIAD RENUNCIATION SCHEME, AND THERE WERE NO PLANS AT PRESENT TO REACTIVATE THE FORMER RENUNCIATION SCHEME.

"NO DOCUMENTARY PROOF OF TRIAD RENUNCIATION WILL THEREFORE BE PROVIDED," HE ADDED.

HE ALSO SAID STUDENTS WITH TRIAD LINKS COULD APPROACH SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS FOR COUNSELLING AND OTHER ASSISTANCE.

TO HELP THEM SEVER THEIR TRIAD LINKS, ARRANGEMENTS COULD BE MADE TO ENABLE THEM TO CHANGE SCHOOL.

IN MORE DIFFICULT CASES, THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, WITH THE CONSENT OF THE PARENTS, CAN APPLY TO THE JUVENILE COURT FOR A CARE AND PROTECTION ORDER TO PLACE THE STUDENTS UNDER STATUTORY SUPERVISION, HE ADDED.

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COMPASSIONATE HOUSING POLICY MODIFIED TO HELP DIVORCEES

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THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HAS RECENTLY REVIEWED THE COMPASSIONATE HOUSING POLICY AND APPROVED ITS MODIFICATION TO PROVIDE MORE HELP TO THOSE DIVORCEES IN GENUINE NEED.

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

/MR EASON

MR EASON SAID THESE CHANGES INCLUDED SETTING ASIDE AN ADJUSTABLE SUB-QUOTA WITHIN THE COMPASSIONATE REHOUSING QUOTA AND RAISING THE INCOME ELIGIBILITY LIMIT FROM THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE TO THE GENERAL WAITING LIST LEVEL.

OTHER CHANGES INCLUDED ALLOWING A DIVORCEE AND HIS OR HER CHILDREN TO BE ADDED TO THE TENANCY OF PARENTS ALREADY IN PUBLIC HOUSING; ACCEPTING RECOMMENDATIONS ON SUCH CASES BY APPROVED NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS; AND ENSURING THAT APPLICATIONS WERE PROCESSED WITHIN THREE MONTHS AS FAR AS PRACTICABLE, HE ADDED.

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MORE INFIRMARY BEDS IN THE PIPELINE

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THE NUMBER OF INFIRMARY BEDS IN HONG KONG AT THE END OF LAST YEAR STOOD AT 1,366, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, SAID.

AN ADDITIONAL 90 BEDS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE SHATIN INFIRMARY AND CONVALESCENT HOSPITAL UPON ITS FULL COMMISSIONING IN 1993/94, SHE ADDED.

MRS WONG SAID IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON FREDERICK FUNG KIN-KEE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT PLANS WERE IN HAND TO REDESIGNATE 500 GENERAL BEDS IN OTHER HOSPITALS AS INFIRMARY BEDS.

"FURTHERMORE, COMMUNITY GERIATRIC/INFIRMARY TEAMS WILL BE SET UP BY THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY IN COLLABORATION WITH SOCIAL WELFARE ORGANISATIONS TO IMPROVE INTERFACE WITH CARE AND ATTENTION HOMES," SHE SAID.

AS REGARDS THE DEMAND FOR INFIRMARY SERVICES, MRS WONG GAVE THE FOLLOWING STATISTICS:

- * 5,361 APPLICANTS WERE RECORDED BUT NOT MEDICALLY ASSESSED ON THE CENTRAL WAITING LIST AS AT MARCH 15, 1993;
- * ABOUT 3,600 RESIDENTS IN PRIVATE HOMES FOR THE AGED COULD BE CLASSIFIED AS IN NEED OF MEDICAL INFIRMARY SERVICES AS AT MARCH 1, 1993; AND
- * 752 ELDERLY PERSONS CURRENTLY STAYING IN RESIDENTIAL CARE INSTITUTIONS SUBVENTED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT WERE CLASSIFIED AS IN NEED OF MEDICAL INFIRMARY SERVICES AS AT MARCH 1, 1993.

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ENOUGH LAND IS SUPPLIED TO MEET DEMAND
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THE GOVERNMENT'S AIM IS TO SUPPLY ENOUGH LAND TO MEET DEMAND.

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

MR EASON NOTED THAT THE SALE OF RESIDENTIAL LAND OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS HAD AMOUNTED TO 40 HECTARES WHICH SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO PROVIDE 15,000 FLATS A YEAR.

TOGETHER WITH THE 20,000 NEW FLATS PRODUCED EACH YEAR BY REDEVELOPMENT, UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE TOTAL ESTIMATED REQUIREMENT OF 35,000 NEW FLATS EACH YEAR SHOULD BE MET.

"THE 70,000 FLATS WHICH WILL BE CONSTRUCTED OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS, TOGETHER WITH THE AMOUNT OF RESIDENTIAL LAND SOLD OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, SHOULD HELP SATISFY DEMAND AND BRING THE PRICE OF RESIDENTIAL FLATS CLOSER TO AFFORDABLE LEVELS, PROVIDED THERE ARE NO DISLOCATIONS OR DISTORTIONS IN THE MARKET," HE ADDED.

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WORKING GROUP ON ELECTRIC AND MAGNETIC FIELDS FORMED
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A WORKING GROUP ON ELECTRIC AND MAGNETIC FIELDS HAS BEEN FORMED TO ENSURE THAT THE GUIDELINES ON ELECTROMAGNETIC EXPOSURE ARE PROPERLY REVIEWED IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE WORKING GROUP COMPRISES REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO POWER COMPANIES, TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND RELEVANT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

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

MR EASON SAID A SET OF GUIDELINES FOR EXPOSURE HAD BEEN PROMULGATED BY THE INTERNATIONAL NON-IONISING RADIATION COMMITTEE OF THE INTERNATIONAL RADIATION PROTECTION ASSOCIATION IN COLLABORATION WITH THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION.

"THESE GUIDELINES, WHICH ARE STILL IN FORCE, HAVE BEEN ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT. THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT THE TWO POWER COMPANIES COMPLY FULLY WITH THESE GUIDELINES," HE SAID.

MR EASON SAID THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE THAT EXPOSURE TO ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELDS FROM POWER LINES AT STRENGTHS NORMALLY ENCOUNTERED IN THE ENVIRONMENT OR THE WORKPLACE IS ASSOCIATED WITH LONG-TERM HEALTH EFFECTS ON HUMAN BEINGS.

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EFFORTS MADE TO DEVELOP BIOTECHNOLOGY IN HK

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VARIOUS INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT MEASURES TO HELP THE DEVELOPMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY IN HONG KONG HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED, THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR T H CHAU, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THESE MEASURES INCLUDE:

- * A JOCKEY CLUB GRANT OF \$170 MILLION FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF BIOTECHNOLOGY. THIS PROVIDES A RANGE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FACILITIES FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY COMPANIES, PROMOTES TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND HELPS COMMERCIALISE THE RESULTS OF BIOTECHNOLOGY RESEARCH;
- * A JOCKEY CLUB GRANT OF \$130 MILLION TO SET UP THE BIOTECHNOLOGY RESEARCH INSTITUTE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. THIS IS TARGETING RESEARCH ON BIO-MEDICAL INSTRUMENTATION AND DIAGNOSTICS, DRUG DELIVERY AND DEVELOPMENT, AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING AND GENETIC ENGINEERING;
- * THE INSTITUTE OF MOLECULAR BIOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG FUNDED BY THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE (UPGC)
- * THE WASTE RECYCLING AND ENVIRONMENTAL BIOTECHNOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE AT THE HONG KONG BAPTIST COLLEGE FUNDED BY THE UPGC;
- * SIX OF THE UPGC-FUNDED INSTITUTIONS AT PRESENT PROVIDE BIOTECHNOLOGY-RELATED STUDY PROGRAMMES AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF STUDY;
- * IN 1992/93, THE FOLLOWING B.S.C. COURSES HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED;
 - (I) APPLIED BIOLOGY/APPLIED CHEMISTRY AT THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG,
 - (II) BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE AT THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC, AND
 - (III) BIOCHEMISTRY AT THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG; AND
- * IN 1993/94, A B.S.C. IN APPLIED BIOLOGY AND BIOTECHNOLOGY WILL BE INTRODUCED AT THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC.

IN ADDITION, THE RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL ALSO FUNDS RESEARCH PROJECTS ON BIOTECHNOLOGY. FOR EACH OF THE YEAR 1991/92 AND 1992/93, THERE WERE 12 SUCH FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS, INVOLVING ABOUT \$12 MILLION EACH YEAR.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON STEVEN POON, MR CHAU SAID THE INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (ITDC) HAD ESTABLISHED A BIOTECHNOLOGY SUB-COMMITTEE TO ADVISE GOVERNMENT ON MATTERS IN THIS FIELD.

IN ADDITION, THE BIOTECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY IS ABLE TO BENEFIT FROM THE INCREASED FUNDING FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT WORK THAT IS BEING MADE AVAILABLE, HE SAID.

THIS INCLUDES \$510 MILLION PROVIDED FOR THE PERIOD 1991/92 TO 1994/95 TO FUND RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AT INSTITUTIONS FUNDED BY THE UPGC; AND THE \$200 MILLION APPLIED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SCHEME ESTABLISHED BY INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT.

MR CHAU SAID DIFFICULTIES PERCEIVED BY LOCAL INDUSTRIALISTS TO THE INTRODUCTION AND EXPLOITATION OF BIOTECHNOLOGY IN HONG KONG INCLUDED HIGH START-UP COSTS, HIGH INVESTMENT RISKS AND INSUFFICIENT LOCAL SUPPLY OF SKILLED MANPOWER.

"THE BIOTECHNOLOGY SUB-COMMITTEE OF ITDC WILL CARRY OUT A SURVEY SOON TO ASSESS THE AVAILABILITY OF LOCAL EXPERTISE FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY RELATED INDUSTRIES," HE ADDED.

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OCCASIONAL CHILD CARE SCHEME SET TO EXPAND

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THE OCCASIONAL CHILD CARE SCHEME, WHICH WAS INTRODUCED ON A TRIAL BASIS BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT IN 1989, HAS SERVED ITS OBJECTIVE OF PROVIDING OCCASIONAL TEMPORARY CHILD CARE TO FAMILIES WHO MIGHT OTHERWISE LEAVE THEIR CHILDREN UNATTENDED AT HOME.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON TANG SIU-TONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, SAID PLANS WERE IN HAND TO EXPAND THE SCHEME AS A REGULAR COMPONENT OF ALL NEW CHILD CARE CENTRES, WITH SUBVENTION FROM THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, FROM 1993/94.

THE EXPANSION PLAN FOR THE SCHEME BETWEEN 1993/94 AND 1996/97 IS AS FOLLOWS:

	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97
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NEW SUBVENTED UNITS	75	60	75	25
CUMULATIVE NUMBER OF UNITS	75	135	210	235

COMMENTING ON THE USE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE OCCASIONAL CHILD CARE SCHEME, MRS WONG SAID DURING THE 12-MONTH EVALUATION PERIOD FROM JULY 1991 TO JUNE 1992, THE CHILD CARE CENTRES PARTICIPATING IN THE SCHEME RECORDED A TOTAL ATTENDANCE OF 18,349, OR A MONTHLY AVERAGE ATTENDANCE OF 1,529.

IN THE THREE-MONTH PERIOD FROM NOVEMBER 1992 TO JANUARY 1993, THE MONTHLY AVERAGE ATTENDANCE WAS 2,057.

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"THE UTILISATION RATE OF THE SERVICE TENDED TO FLUCTUATE, RANGING FROM 37 PER CENT TO 76 PER CENT, WITH A PEAK IN THE SUMMER MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST," MRS WONG SAID.

AS REGARDS THE NUMBER OF CHILD CARE CENTRES IN YUEN LONG AND TUEN MUN WHICH PARTICIPATED IN THE SCHEME DURING THE EXPERIMENTAL PERIOD, MRS WONG SAID ONE CENTRE EACH IN THE TWO DISTRICTS TOOK PART IN THE FIRST PHASE OF THE SCHEME FROM NOVEMBER 1989 TO APRIL 1991.

THE FIGURE ROSE TO TWO CENTRES IN YUEN LONG AND FIVE IN TUEN MUN DURING THE SECOND PHASE FROM MAY 1991 TO OCTOBER 1992.

THREE CENTRES IN YUEN LONG AND SEVEN IN TUEN MUN ARE TAKING PART IN THE THIRD PHASE BETWEEN NOVEMBER 1992 AND OCTOBER 1993.

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BARRISTERS ON ROTATION TO DO PROSECUTIONS WORK FOR CROWN
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THE PROSECUTIONS DIVISION OF THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT KEPT A LIST OF BARRISTERS WHO HAD APPLIED TO DO PROSECUTIONS WORK FOR THE CROWN IN THE HIGH COURT AND WHO WERE CONSIDERED BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS TO HAVE THE NECESSARY ABILITY AND EXPERIENCE TO HANDLE CASES AT THAT LEVEL, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, SAID.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MRS ELSIE TU IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR MATHEWS SAID WHEN IT CAME TO BRIEFING OUT A PARTICULAR PROSECUTION, THE NORMAL PROCEDURE WAS TO CHOOSE A BARRISTER ON THE BRIEFING LIST ON THE BASIS OF ROTATION AND AVAILABILITY.

"OCCASIONALLY A BARRISTER WILL BE SELECTED BECAUSE OF HIS OR HER SPECIAL EXPERTISE IN A PARTICULAR AREA, FOR EXAMPLE, IN COMMERCIAL CRIME," HE SAID.

IN 1991 THE NUMBER OF HIGH COURT CASES BRIEFED OUT WAS 65 AND LAST YEAR THE NUMBER WAS 73.

OF THESE, 19 CASES IN 1991 AND 30 CASES LAST YEAR WERE ASSIGNED TO COUNSEL WHO WERE FORMERLY EMPLOYED BY THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT ON OVERSEAS TERMS.

THE NUMBERS OF CASES BRIEFED OUT TO EXPATRIATE COUNSEL NOT PREVIOUSLY EMPLOYED BY THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT WERE 38 IN 1991 AND 33 LAST YEAR.

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LINKED EXCHANGE RATE TO STAY

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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON HAMISH MACLEOD, REITERATED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING THAT THE MAINTENANCE OF THE LINKED EXCHANGE RATE SYSTEM WAS A FIRM GOVERNMENT POLICY.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON PHILIP WONG YU-HONG, MR MACLEOD SAID NO USEFUL PURPOSE COULD BE SERVED BY SPECULATING ON HYPOTHETICAL CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH SUCH A POLICY MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT BE CHANGED.

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ED TO ANNOUNCE PERFORMANCE PLEDGES LATER THIS YEAR

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THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IS EXPECTED TO ANNOUNCE DETAILS OF ITS PERFORMANCE PLEDGES BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, SAID.

"IT IS CURRENTLY EXAMINING ITS WORKING PROCEDURES WITH A VIEW TO DEVISING ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WILL ENABLE A FASTER TURNAROUND TIME FOR PROCESSING APPLICATIONS AND PROMPTER RESPONSES TO PUBLIC ENQUIRIES," MR CHAN SAID IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON VINCENT CHENG HOI-CHUEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

OTHER ISSUES BEING EXAMINED INCLUDE A REDUCTION IN PAPERWORK FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS AND A BETTER SERVICE ENVIRONMENT, HE ADDED.

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EFFORTS TO PROMOTE POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS DISABLED

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THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS TO ERADICATE PREJUDICE AGAINST PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IS THROUGH PUBLIC EDUCATION, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"ONLY THROUGH PUBLIC EDUCATION CAN WE BRING ABOUT A REAL CHANGE IN ATTITUDES," SHE STATED.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON SIMON IP SIK-ON, MRS WONG SAID THE ENACTMENT OF ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION SHOULD BE REGARDED AS A LAST RESORT AND SHOULD NOT BE ADOPTED UNLESS THERE WERE VALID AND COMPELLING REASONS.

"THEREFORE, WE REMAIN TO BE PERSUADED ON THE NEED FOR SUCH LEGISLATION," SHE SAID.

"PREJUDICE TENDS TO BE A CHILD OF IGNORANCE, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT IT CAN REALLY BE OVERCOME BY LEGISLATIVE MEANS ALONE."

SINCE THE 1970S, MRS WONG SAID, SUSTAINED EFFORT HAD BEEN PLACED IN PROMOTING POSITIVE COMMUNITY ATTITUDES AND GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT OF INTEGRATION.

IN VIEW OF RECENT OBJECTIONS TO CERTAIN REHABILITATION PROJECTS, THE GOVERNMENT WILL SHORTLY REVIEW ITS PUBLIC EDUCATION STRATEGY TOGETHER WITH THE HONG KONG COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE SO AS TO STRENGTHEN PUBLICITY ACTIVITIES IN 1993/94.

"THESE ACTIVITIES WILL AIM AT RESTATING OUR BASIC PRINCIPLE OF INTEGRATION AND REMOVING PREJUDICE AGAINST PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES SO THAT DISABILITY CAN BE TURNED TO ABILITY," MRS WONG SAID.

"FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE NEAR FUTURE A FUN DAY WILL BE HELD IN KOWLOON PARK TO KICK OFF THE SERIES OF PUBLIC EDUCATION ACTIVITIES IN THE PIPELINE."

ON THE QUESTION OF PLANNING OF REHABILITATION FACILITIES, MRS WONG SAID THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT HAD ALREADY INCLUDED A STATEMENT IN ITS INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR PROSPECTIVE TENANTS TO THE EFFECT THAT REHABILITATION FACILITIES MIGHT BE SET UP IN OR NEAR PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES.

DISCUSSIONS ARE ALSO UNDERWAY WITH THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF REQUIRING PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPERS TO INCLUDE A SIMILAR STATEMENT IN THEIR SALES BROCHURES.

TO HELP STUDENTS DEVELOP POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND ACCEPT THEM AS MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ENCOURAGES SCHOOLS TO ORGANISE VARIOUS EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

THESE ACTIVITIES INCLUDE THE "SISTER SCHOOL SCHEME" WHICH AIMS AT ESTABLISHING A LINK BETWEEN SPECIAL SCHOOL AND ORDINARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE PROMOTION OF CARE AND CONCERN FOR DISABLED AND DISADVANTAGED PERSONS THROUGH JOINT PARTICIPATION IN SPECIALLY ORGANISED ACTIVITIES.

GENERAL TOPICS ON DISABILITIES AND REHABILITATION SERVICES HAVE ALSO BEEN INCLUDED IN THE EXISTING PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CORE CURRICULA AND THE SENIOR SECONDARY AND SIXTH FORM OPTIONAL CURRICULA.

IN ADDITION, PAMPHLETS ON HELPING CHILDREN WITH HANDICAPS ARE DISTRIBUTED TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS, AND VIDEOS AND EDUCATION TELEVISION PROGRAMMES ON ACCEPTANCE OF DISABLED PERSONS ARE SHOWN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR TO STUDENTS.

"THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE IN ITS ENDEAVOUR TO CULTIVATE POSITIVE ATTITUDES IN STUDENTS IN THEIR FORMATIVE YEARS," MRS WONG SAID.

FACTUAL INFORMATION ON KINDERGARTENS
AVAILABLE TO ALL PARENTS

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BASIC FACTUAL INFORMATION ON A PARTICULAR KINDERGARTEN, INCLUDING THE NUMBER OF TRAINED TEACHERS EMPLOYED AND ENROLMENT OF PUPILS, THE KIND OF COURSES IT OFFERS AND THE NUMBER OF CLASSROOMS, IS AVAILABLE TO PARENTS FROM THE RELEVANT DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICERS.

THIS INFORMATION IS PROVIDED BY KINDERGARTEN OPERATORS WHEN REGISTERING THEIR KINDERGARTENS WITH THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND IS UPDATED FOLLOWING REGULAR INSPECTIONS BY EDUCATION OFFICERS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TIK CHI-YUEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HOWEVER, HE NOTED THAT REPORTS ON PERIODIC INSPECTIONS WHICH COVERED A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES WOULD NOT BE PUBLISHED AS THEY WERE COMPILED FOR DEPARTMENTAL USE.

IN REPLY TO ANOTHER QUESTION RAISED BY THE HON MRS PEGGY LAM, MR CHAN SAID ALL KINDERGARTENS, BEFORE REGISTERED WITH THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, MUST COMPLY WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS WITH REGARD TO THE SAFETY AND SANITARY CONDITIONS OF THE PREMISES AS WELL AS THE SUITABILITY OF TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS, COURSES AND FEE LEVELS.

"AFTER REGISTRATION, THEY ARE REGULARLY INSPECTED BY OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT TO ENSURE THAT ALL STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS CONTINUE TO BE MET, THAT THE SCHOOL IS BEING MANAGED SATISFACTORILY AND THAT EDUCATION IS BEING PROVIDED IN A PROPER MANNER," HE SAID.

"IN ADDITION, INSPECTORS ADVISE ON CURRICULUM APPROACHES AND TEACHING SKILLS WITH A VIEW TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION OFFERED."

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PUBLIC TO BE NOTIFIED OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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THE GOVERNMENT'S PRESENT THINKING IS THAT THE NEW PLANNING LEGISLATION SHOULD REQUIRE PROPERTY OWNERS WHO MAY BE AFFECTED AND THE PUBLIC TO BE NOTIFIED OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS BEFORE THEY ARE CONSIDERED BY THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD.

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

MR EASON SAID AT PRESENT A MASTER LAYOUT PLAN SUBMITTED UNDER THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE WAS PROCESSED AS OTHER PLANNING APPLICATIONS WERE.

"THE VIEWS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS ARE NORMALLY REFLECTED TO THE BOARD BY THE DISTRICT OFFICER WHO CAN ARRANGE SOUNDING OUT OR CONSULTATION, DEPENDING ON THE NATURE AND SCALE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT," HE SAID.

APPROVED MASTER LAYOUT PLANS WERE DEPOSITED IN THE LAND REGISTRY AND WERE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION, HE ADDED.

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SITE SEARCH FOR MID-STREAM OPERATIONS CONTINUES

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THE GOVERNMENT IS CONSTANTLY SEEKING SUITABLE NEW SITES, BOTH PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY, THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY TO SUPPORT MID-STREAM OPERATIONS.

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

MR EASON SAID MORE PERMANENT SITES SHOULD BE ALLOCATED IF POSSIBLE, BUT WATERFRONT SITES OF THE RIGHT KIND WERE NOT EASY TO FIND.

"ONE SUCH SITE OF 7.8 HECTARES HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED OFF SOUTHWESTERN STONECUTTERS ISLAND, WHICH WILL REQUIRE RECLAMATION AND SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TOWARDS THE END OF 1995," HE SAID.

"BUT TEMPORARY SITES WILL BE NEEDED TO MEET IMMEDIATE PRESSURES AND THE TUEN MUN SITE, WITH ITS GOOD MARINE ACCESS, IS POTENTIALLY ONE OF THESE. WHILE IT IS BY NO MEANS IDEAL, GIVEN THE SHORTAGE, IT IS SUITABLE," HE SAID.

MR EASON SAID PRESENT INDICATIONS WERE THAT USE OF THE TUEN MUN SITE WAS UNLIKELY TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON ROAD CONDITIONS IN AND AROUND TUEN MUN FOR TWO REASONS.

"FIRST, THE SITE HAS A MARINE FRONTAGE OF ONLY 100 METRES OR SO AND A BACK-UP AREA OF 6.93 HECTARES, SO THE AMOUNT OF CARGO HANDLED IS UNLIKELY TO EXCEED ABOUT 400 TEUS PER DAY.

"SECOND, IT MAY WELL BE THAT MOST OF THE CONTAINERS WILL BE SHIPPED SOUTH FROM TUEN MUN RATHER THAN TRANSPORTED ALONG THE TUEN MUN HIGHWAY."

HOWEVER, MR EASON SAID THE TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL WOULD BE ASCERTAINED BY ASKING PARTIES WHO MIGHT TENDER FOR THE SITE TO SUBMIT EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST TO THE GOVERNMENT DETAILING THEIR PROPOSED METHODS OF OPERATION, INCLUDING MODES OF TRANSPORT, PRIOR TO TENDERS BEING CALLED.

"THEY WILL ALSO BE ASKED TO ASSESS THE TRAFFIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS OF THEIR OPERATION. THE GOVERNMENT WILL NEED TO BE SATISFIED THAT THE TRAFFIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTABLE," HE ADDED.

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BILL TO REGULATE FRINGE FOREIGN EXCHANGE FIRMS

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THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR MONETARY AFFAIRS, MR TAM WING-PONG, SAID THE GOVERNMENT HOPED TO BE ABLE TO INTRODUCE THE BILL ON THE REGULATION OF FRINGE FOREIGN EXCHANGE COMPANIES INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BEFORE THE SUMMER RECESS.

UNDER THE CURRENT PROPOSALS, ALL LEVERAGED FOREIGN EXCHANGE OPERATORS, OTHER THAN CERTAIN EXEMPTED BODIES, SUCH AS AUTHORISED INSTITUTIONS AND AUTHORISED INSURERS, ARE REQUIRED TO BE REGISTERED AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO REGULATION, HE SAID.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON JAMES TO KUN-SUN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR TAM SAID: "THE PROPOSED REGULATORY SYSTEM WILL COVER ALL LEVERAGED FOREIGN EXCHANGE TRANSACTIONS CONDUCTED IN HONG KONG, IRRESPECTIVE OF THE LOCATION OF THE INVESTOR."

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WAY-FORWARD STUDY UNDERWAY OF CONTAINERISED CARGO OPERATION

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THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT IS CARRYING OUT AN IN-HOUSE STUDY, BASED ON DIFFERENT THROUGHPUT SCENARIOS, ON THE WAY FORWARD TO CATER FOR THE NEED OF CONTAINERISED CARGO OPERATIONS.

THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY SHOULD BE AVAILABLE BY OCTOBER THIS YEAR.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ANSON CHAN, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN THE WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HUANG CHEN-YA, MRS CHAN SAID AS THIS SECTOR WAS MAKING A SIGNIFICANT AND GROWING CONTRIBUTION TO THE OVERALL ECONOMY, THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED THAT THERE SHOULD BE A MORE SYSTEMATIC APPROACH OF LAND PROVISION UNDER LONGER TENURE FOR CONTAINERISED CARGO OPERATIONS.

THE LATEST DATA SUGGESTS THAT MID-STREAM CARGO WILL SEE AN OVERALL GROWTH OF SOME 12 PER CENT OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

MID-STREAM CARGO HAS TWO SEPARATE COMPONENTS, NAMELY CONTAINERISED AND NON-CONTAINERISED CARGO.

AT PRESENT, NON-CONTAINERISED CARGO ACCOUNTS FOR ABOUT HALF OF MID-STREAM THROUGHPUT.

"THIS CARGO IS LARGELY HANDLED ACROSS PUBLIC CARGO WORKING AREAS FOR WHICH THERE IS GENERALLY ADEQUATE PROVISION. WE ANTICIPATE IT TO GROW BY ONE PER CENT WITHIN THE SAME PERIOD," MRS CHAN SAID.

ON THE OTHER HAND, CONTAINERISED CARGO HAD SEEN AN EXTREMELY VOLATILE GROWTH PATTERN OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS, RANGING FROM A LOW OF 10 PER CENT TO A HIGH OF 60 PER CENT.

"WE FORECAST GROWTH IN THE RANGE OF 13-16 PER CENT PER ANNUM FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS," MRS CHAN SAID.

AT PRESENT, THE CARGO IS BY AND LARGE HANDLED BY FACILITIES LOCATED ON LAND HELD UNDER SHORT-TERM TENANCIES. THERE IS INSUFFICIENT BACKUP LAND WITH WATERFRONT FOR SUCH OPERATIONS, SHE ADDED.

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AGE NOT KEY FACTOR OF APPOINTMENTS: SHA
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ALL THE 14 NON-OFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION ON YOUTH, INCLUDING THE CHAIRMAN, ARE OVER THE AGE OF 25; BUT HALF OF THEM ARE UNDER 40, INCLUDING TWO MEMBERS WHO ARE YOUNGER THAN 30.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SUEN, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LAU CHIN SHEK IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

DESPITE THIS, MOST MEMBERS WORK CLOSELY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE OR YOUTH WORKERS IN THEIR OWN CAREER OR THROUGH THEIR VOLUNTARY WORK, MR SUEN SAID.

THEY ARE ALSO KEPT ABREAST OF THE NEEDS OF YOUTH, HE ADDED.

THE COMMISSION MAINTAINS CLOSE AND REGULAR CONTACTS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE FROM A WIDE CROSS-SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY BY ORGANISING AND PARTICIPATING IN FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND SEMINARS ON YOUTH MATTERS AND CO-OPTING YOUNG PEOPLE INTO ITS WORKING GROUPS, MR SUEN EXPLAINED.

"COMPREHENSIVE STUDIES AND RESEARCHES ON THE ATTITUDES AND EXPECTATIONS OF YOUTH FROM DIFFERENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND ARE REGULARLY CONDUCTED BY THE COMMISSION.

"THE COMMISSION IS THEREFORE WELL PLACED TO REFLECT FULLY THE INTERESTS AND ASPIRATIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE," HE SAID.

AS TO APPOINTMENTS TO GOVERNMENT ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES, MR SUEN SAID AGE WAS BUT ONE OF THE FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION.

"FOR THE COMMISSION ON YOUTH, THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO ENSURE THAT ITS MEMBERSHIP WILL ADEQUATELY CATER FOR THE INTEREST OF YOUTH," HE SAID.

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POSITION ON TALKS REAFFIRMED

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) SAID THAT TALKS ON THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS IN HONG KONG SHOULD TAKE PLACE ON THE SAME BASIS AS FOR THE LAST DECADE.

"THAT IS THE POSITION OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND REMAINS THE POSITION OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT," HE SAID.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER VISITING THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "WE REMAIN IN THE POSITION THAT WE'RE HAPPY TO TALK AT ANY TIME.

"WE'RE PREPARED TO TALK ON THE BASIS ADVOCATED BY THE CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER, MR QIAN QICHEN, ON THE BASIS OF THE JOINT DECLARATION, WHICH WE ARE DETERMINED TO UPHOLD; ON THE BASIS OF CONVERGENCE WITH THE BASIC LAW AND ON THE BASIS OF THE RELEVANT UNDERSTANDINGS AND AGREEMENTS MADE BETWEEN BRITAIN AND CHINA."

"ANYONE WHO WANTS TO COME TO THE TABLE, WE WILL BE DELIGHTED TO SIT DOWN WITH THEM AND TALK."

WHEN ASKED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF HE COMPROMISED AND WENT AHEAD WITH TALKS WITH HONG KONG PEOPLE NOT ON THE SAME BASIS, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "IF WE HAD ACCEPTED THAT, A TOTALLY NEW PROPOSAL FROM CHINA, NOT SOMETHING THAT'S BEEN DONE FOR THE LAST TEN YEARS, THE COMMUNITY WOULD HAVE BEEN OUTRAGED BY IT. I THINK THAT WE WOULD HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF RELEGATING HONG KONG, HONG KONG GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG SECOND CLASS STATUS."

"I DON'T THINK ANYBODY IN THE COMMUNITY SHOULD THINK THAT TALKS ARE ON THEIR OWN AN ANSWER, BECAUSE IF THERE WERE TO BE TALKS, THEY WOULD HAVE TO DEAL WITH A LOT OF VERY DIFFICULT PROBLEMS, VERY DIFFICULT ISSUES," HE ADDED.

"IF THERE AREN'T TO BE TALKS AT THE MOMENT, THOUGH I'M SURE THERE WILL BE TALKS ONE DAY, IF THERE AREN'T TO BE TALKS FOR THE MOMENT, THEN WE'LL HAVE TO GET ON WITH THE BUSINESS OF DEALING WITH THESE MATTERS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

"I'M SURE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WILL DEAL WITH THEM IN A VERY RESPONSIBLE WAY AND WE CAN'T, AS EVERYONE KNOWS, DELAY INDEFINITELY."

WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE TIMING OF INTRODUCTION OF THE BILL INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR PATTEN SAID THAT THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HAD TO DECIDE WHETHER TO INTRODUCE THE BILL INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL JUST BEFORE THE EASTER RECESS OR JUST AFTER THE EASTER RECESS PROVIDED THAT THERE WERE NOT OTHER DEVELOPMENTS WHICH HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

"I DON'T WANT TO START TALKING IN TERMS OF DEADLINE IN THE CALENDAR BECAUSE I THINK THAT ALWAYS CREATES FRICTIONS WHICH I DON'T WANT TO SEE," HE SAID.

"BUT, THE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING THE BILL INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SO THAT LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS HAVE A PROPER OPPORTUNITY OF DEALING WITH IT IS, I THINK, CLEAR TO EVERYONE."

NEW COINS AVAILABLE
FOR MODIFICATION OF VENDING MACHINES

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HONG KONG'S NEWLY DESIGNED COINS COMING OUT LATER THIS YEAR AND OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO CONCERNED PARTIES FOR TESTING TO FACILITATE MODIFICATIONS OF THEIR VENDING MACHINES.

THE \$5 AND \$2 COINS FEATURING THE BAUHINIA FLOWER WERE PUT INTO CIRCULATION ON JANUARY 1 THIS YEAR.

THE NEWLY DESIGNED \$1, 50-CENT AND 20-CENT COINS WILL BE ISSUED LATER THIS YEAR, AND THE NEW \$10 AND 10-CENT COINS IN 1994 OR 1995.

"THE SIZE, WEIGHT AND SHAPE OF THE NEW COINS REMAIN THE SAME AS THE EXISTING ONES. THEY ONLY DIFFER IN METAL COMPOSITION TO FACILITATE WITHDRAWAL BY MACHINE," A SPOKESMAN FOR THE OFFICE OF THE EXCHANGE FUND SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"SMALL QUANTITIES OF THE \$10, \$1, 50-CENT, 20-CENT AND 10-CENT COINS HAVE BEEN MINTED AND DELIVERED TO HONG KONG.

"ARRANGEMENTS ARE BEING MADE TO RELEASE THESE COINS TO VARIOUS TRANSPORT OPERATORS AND OTHER CONCERNED PARTIES FOR TESTING AND MODIFICATION OF THEIR COIN-OPERATED VENDING MACHINES," HE SAID.

"IT IS HOPED THAT THIS ARRANGEMENT WILL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT LEAD TIME TO MODIFY VENDING MACHINES PRIOR TO THE COINS BEING PUT INTO CIRCULATION," HE ADDED.

ANY SUPPLIER OR OPERATOR OF VENDING MACHINES WHO WISHES TO OBTAIN THESE COINS FOR TESTING AND MODIFYING THEIR MACHINES CAN APPLY TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXCHANGE FUND, 24TH FLOOR, ADMIRALTY CENTRE, TOWER 2, 18 HARCOURT ROAD, HONG KONG.

THE COINS WILL BE RELEASED ON LOAN FOR A PERIOD OF ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGAINST A DEPOSIT WHICH WILL BE REFUNDED WHEN THE COINS ARE RETURNED.

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GOVERNOR VISITS SAI KUNG

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, VISITED SAI KUNG DISTRICT TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR PATTEN FIRST TOURED THE SEAFOOD MARKET IN SAI KUNG TOWN, WHICH IS RENOWNED FOR ITS GOURMET SEAFOOD CUISINES AMONG LOCAL AS WELL AS OVERSEAS VISITORS.

AT PRESENT THERE ARE ABOUT 30 RESTAURANTS IN THE AREA, WITH A DAILY FRESH SUPPLY OF SEAFOOD FROM THE 16 STALLS ALONG THE WATERFRONT.

/THE GOVERNOR

THE GOVERNOR THEN VISITED KING LAM CATHOLIC KINDERGARTEN IN KING LAM ESTATE, TSEUNG KWAN O, WHERE HE WAS GIVEN A WARM WELCOME BY SOME 180 PUPILS. HE WAS PRESENTED WITH A KNITTED SOUVENIR HAND-MADE BY THE CHILDREN.

AFTERWARDS, THE GOVERNOR WENT WALKABOUT IN THE ESTATE. HE WAS ATTRACTED BY A WELL-DESIGNED LANDSCAPE GARDEN WHICH FEATURES A WATERFALL, A POND, PAVILIONS, BRIDGES, AND ROCK AND STONE CARVINGS IMPORTED FROM CHINA.

BEFORE CONCLUDING HIS VISIT, MR PATTEN MET DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS AND DISTRICT PERSONALITIES AT A RECEPTION.

THE GOVERNOR WAS ACCOMPANIED ON HIS TOUR BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR ALBERT LAM; SAI KUNG DISTRICT OFFICER, MR PARRISH NG, AND SAI KUNG DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMAN, MR WILLIAM WAN HON-CHEUNG.

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MARCH SURVEY OF EMPLOYMENT, VACANCIES AND PAYROLL STARTS
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THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT HAS STARTED THE MARCH SURVEY OF EMPLOYMENT, VACANCIES AND PAYROLL IN THE MAJOR SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY IN RESPECT OF THE FIRST QUARTER OF THIS YEAR.

THE SURVEY IS CONDUCTED QUARTERLY AND THE RESULTS ARE USEFUL IN PROVIDING SHORT-TERM ECONOMIC INDICATORS AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE LABOUR MARKET.

THIS ROUND OF THE SURVEY COVERS ABOUT 40,000 ESTABLISHMENTS WHICH ARE DRAWN FROM VARIOUS SECTORS INCLUDING THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR (MINING AND QUARRYING; MANUFACTURING; ELECTRICITY AND GAS), THE DISTRIBUTIVE TRADES SECTOR (WHOLESALE, RETAIL AND IMPORT/EXPORT TRADES, RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS) AND THE SERVICE SECTOR (TRANSPORT, STORAGE AND COMMUNICATION; FINANCING, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES; COMMUNITY, SOCIAL AND PERSONAL SERVICES).

INFORMATION ON NUMBER OF PERSONS ENGAGED AND EXISTING VACANCIES ON MARCH 31 WILL BE SOUGHT FROM EACH SELECTED ESTABLISHMENT.

A RANDOM SUB-SAMPLE OF ABOUT 10,000 ESTABLISHMENTS IS SELECTED FROM THE MAIN SAMPLE TO COLLECT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON PAYROLL IN EACH OF THE THREE MONTHS DURING THE REFERENCE PERIOD OF JANUARY-MARCH 1993.

QUESTIONNAIRES ARE BEING MAILED TO THE SAMPLED ESTABLISHMENTS. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS ORDER 1982, ESTABLISHMENTS RECEIVING QUESTIONNAIRES ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE AND RETURN THEM TO THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT WITHIN THE SPECIFIED PERIOD.

SHOULD RESPONDENTS FIND DIFFICULTIES IN COMPLETING THE FORMS, THEY ARE WELCOME TO CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT FOR HELP ON TEL 582 5076.

AS FOR THOSE ESTABLISHMENTS NEWLY INCLUDED IN THE REGISTER OF ESTABLISHMENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT DURING JANUARY-MARCH 1993, THEY WILL ALSO BE ENUMERATED TO MAKE THE SURVEY RESULTS COMPLETE.

OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT, EACH BEARING A GOVERNMENT IDENTITY CARD, WILL CALL ON THESE ESTABLISHMENTS TO SOLICIT INFORMATION ON NATURE OF BUSINESS, TYPE OF OWNERSHIP, DATE ON WHICH BUSINESS STARTED, NUMBER OF PERSONS ENGAGED AND EXISTING VACANCIES.

IN CASE OF ANY ENQUIRIES REGARDING THESE FIELD VISITS, PLEASE CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT ON TEL 582 4782.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS
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	\$ MILLION -----
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,855
REVERSAL OF LAF	+295
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	2,150
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-325
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,825
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	TWI 113.6 *+0.1* 24.3.93

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS		HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS				
TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.58 PCT	14 MONTHS	2405	5.50	102.34	3.44
1 MONTH	2.71 PCT	17 MONTHS	2408	5.50	101.21	3.51
3 MONTHS	2.83 PCT	20 MONTHS	2411	4.375	101.57	3.66
6 MONTHS	3.05 PCT	23 MONTHS	2502	4.625	101.62	3.89
12 MONTHS	3.36 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 8,475MN

CLOSED 24 MARCH 1993

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