



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL: 5-233191

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1986

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FS: GOVERNMENT WARMLY SUPPORTS MOTION

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THE GOVERNMENT WARMLY SUPPORTED THE HON LYDIA DUNN'S MOTION SEEKING FURTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

WINDING UP DEBATE ON THE MOTION, MR JACOBS EMPHASISED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD AT ALL TIMES BEEN FULLY AWARE OF THE DEEP AND GENUINE CONCERN EXPRESSED IN HONG KONG.

+IT HAS DONE EVERYTHING WITHIN ITS POWER TO CONVEY THIS CONCERN TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND, THROUGH IT, TO THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT. ONE RESULT HAS BEEN THE SIGNIFICANT ASSURANCES ON SAFETY GIVEN BY THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DELEGATION DURING THEIR RECENT VISIT,+ HE SAID.

+FURTHERMORE, CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO INVOLVING HONG KONG PEOPLE IN MONITORING THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE DAYA BAY STATION,+ HE ADDED.

MR JACOBS ALSO SAID HE INTENDED TO PRODUCE FOR ISSUE TO MEMBERS A PAPER WHICH WOULD PROVIDE, AS FAR AS THE GOVERNMENT WAS ABLE, THE INFORMATION SOUGHT IN THE MOTION.

MR JACOBS IN HIS SPEECH REFERRED TO THE COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE LAZARDS' REPORT COMMISSIONED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND EMPHASISED THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT RELEASE SUCH INFORMATION.

NOR WOULD IT BE APPROPRIATE TO PUBLISH THE REPORT WHICH, HE STRESSED, REPRESENTED ONLY PART OF THE STORY.

HE ADDED: +THE NEED FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL CONFIDENTIALITY IS, OF COURSE, SELF-EVIDENT.+

THIS RESPECT FOR CONFIDENTIALITY HAD ALLOWED INFORMATION (MUCH OF WHICH WAS NOT AVAILABLE TO SHAREHOLDERS) TO FLOW FREELY BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS CONCERNED, AND THIS FLOW OF INFORMATION HAD IN TURN, PERMITTED ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO BE DISCUSSED FRANKLY.

+THE GENERATION OF POWER REQUIRES MASSIVE INVESTMENT. INEVITABLY, MUCH OF THE CAPITAL IS PROVIDED BY FOREIGN INVESTORS. IF, IN THE FUTURE, COMPANIES OR OTHER INVESTORS WERE TO FEEL THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT BE RELIED UPON TO SAFEGUARD COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE INFORMATION, THEN THEY WOULD NOT PROVIDE THAT INFORMATION. AND THEY MIGHT ALSO HESITATE TO INVEST.

+TO ALLOW SUCH A SITUATION TO DEVELOP WOULD HAVE FAR REACHING AND ADVERSE CONSEQUENTIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR HONG KONG AS A WHOLE. WE CANNOT ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN.+

/RECALLING THE .....

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RECALLING THE BACKGROUND TO THE DAYA BAY ISSUE, MR JACOBS SAID THE ANNOUNCEMENT ON NOVEMBER 9, 1983, OF THE GOVERNMENT'S AGREEMENT TO HONG KONG'S PARTICIPATION IN THE PROJECT HAD ATTRACTED SOME 20 NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS AND HAD BEEN GENERALLY WELL RECEIVED.

+IT WAS DESCRIBED AS 'TIMELY AND WISE' BY SOME. OTHERS BELIEVED THE DECISION WOULD BOOST PUBLIC CONFIDENCE AND ENHANCE THE TERRITORY'S STABILITY AND PROSPERITY,+ HE SAID.

HE RECALLED THAT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING THE ANNOUNCEMENT HE HAD INDICATED THAT THE PROJECT OFFERED HONG KONG AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE ITS DESIRE TO CO-OPERATE FULLY WITH CHINA IN ITS FOUR MODERNISATIONS PROGRAMME AND THAT IT ALSO PROVIDED ANOTHER CLEAR INDICATION OF OUR FAITH IN THE FUTURE.

+OVERALL THE PROJECT WAS SEEN AS A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT WHICH AUGURED WELL FOR HONG KONG'S FUTURE.+

MR JACOBS SAID IT WAS ONLY AFTER THE ACCIDENT AT CHERNOBYL THAT THE SAFETY OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT BECAME A MATTER OF GREAT CONCERN TO THE HONG KONG PUBLIC GENERALLY.

WHAT CHERNOBYL DID WAS TO PUT INTO SHARP FOCUS INTERNATIONALLY AS NEVER BEFORE THE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS OF NUCLEAR ENERGY.

HONG KONG WAS NO EXCEPTION AND WITH A REVIVED AND INTENSIFIED PUBLIC DEBATE ON DAYA BAY, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES VISITED THE UNITED KINGDOM AND FRANCE FOR ON THE SPOT DISCUSSIONS IN THE WAKE OF THE DISASTER.

+ONE OUTCOME OF THAT VISIT WAS THAT THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE HARWELL STUDY ARE TO BE EXTENDED TO INCORPORATE ANY LESSONS LEARNT FROM CHERNOBYL WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO HONG KONG AND ITS CIRCUMSTANCES,+ MR JACOBS SAID, REFERRING TO THE STUDY BEING UNDERTAKEN FOR THE GOVERNMENT BY THE UNITED KINGDOM ATOMIC ENERGY AUTHORITY.

HE ADDED THAT AT THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA) MEETING ON SAFETY HELD LAST MONTH IN VIENNA, WHICH HONG KONG ATTENDED AS AN OBSERVER, TWO IMPORTANT CONVENTIONS ON EARLY NOTIFICATION AND ASSISTANCE IN THE EVENT OF A NUCLEAR ACCIDENT HAD BEEN ADOPTED.

AS TO THE DAYA BAY PLANT ITSELF, MR JACOBS SAID, +WE MUST NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT THIS IS A POWER STATION BEING BUILT IN CHINA.+

EVEN THOUGH THE HONG KONG DIMENSION HAD BEEN IMPORTANT AND HAD ALLOWED AN INPUT IN THE DELIBERATIONS CONCERNING THE POWER STATION, THE FACT THAT IT WAS A CHINESE PROJECT NECESSARILY LIMITED THE SCOPE AND SCALE OF HONG KONG'S INVOLVEMENT, HE SAID.

/+IT MUST .....

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+IT MUST ALSO BE REMEMBERED THAT THE CHINESE HAVE ON MANY OCCASIONS MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY INTENDED TO PROCEED WITH THE POWER STATION WITH OR WITHOUT HONG KONG'S PARTICIPATION.

+SURELY IT IS BETTER FOR HONG KONG TO PARTICIPATE THAN BE LEFT OUT WITH NO INFLUENCE WHATEVER OVER THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE STATION AND ITS SUBSEQUENT OPERATION.+

HE REMINDED MEMBERS THAT WITH TWO DIRECTORS ON THE BOARD OF THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONSTANTLY IN TOUCH WITH THE COMPANY AND HAD A CONTINUING INFLUENCE IN THE PROJECT.

MR JACOBS SAID THAT NO ISSUE, OTHER THAN THE AGREEMENT ON THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG, HAD BEEN DISCUSSED SO EXHAUSTIVELY IN PUBLIC.

IN ADDITION TO DEBATE, QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS IN THE COUNCIL, SENIOR GOVERNMENT AND COMPANY OFFICIALS HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN NUMEROUS PRESS CONFERENCES, AND BRIEFINGS FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS.

THE OMELCO PUBLIC UTILITIES PANEL HAD ALSO GONE TO GREAT LENGTHS TO KEEP THE MEDIA AND PUBLIC INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR OWN DISCUSSIONS WITH KEY OFFICIALS.

THE ISSUE HAD BEEN FREQUENTLY AIRED AT SEMINARS AND OTHER PUBLIC FORUMS, ALL OF WHICH HAD BEEN GIVEN SATURATION COVERAGE BY THE MEDIA.

MR JACOBS SAID THERE WAS A WIDE RANGE OF OPINION REGARDING THE MATTER. SOME WERE AGAINST ALL NUCLEAR POWER AND WOULD NOT BE CONVINCED BY ANY ARGUMENT TO THE CONTRARY.

HE URGED ALL CONCERNED TO LOOK AT THE ISSUES ON THEIR MERITS AND ACCEPT THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD DONE ALL IN ITS POWER TO ENSURE THAT THE PROJECT WAS AS SAFE AS IT COULD POSSIBLY BE MADE AND THAT HONG KONG'S PARTICIPATION WAS JUSTIFIED ON ECONOMIC GROUNDS.

+WE BELIEVE THAT THE ARRANGEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN CONCLUDED DO INDEED SUFFICIENTLY SAFEGUARD THE LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

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ACTION PLEDGED ON FACT-FINDING OBSERVATIONS  
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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, GAVE AN ASSURANCE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SEEK TO IMPLEMENT AS FAR AS WAS PRACTICABLE ALL OF THE SEVEN OBSERVATIONS DIRECTED TO IT BY THE COUNCIL'S FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS.

THE SEVEN OBSERVATIONS, ALL SAFETY RELATED, WERE AMONG 50 MADE IN THE REPORT COMPILED BY THE DELEGATIONS, MR JACOBS SAID WHEN WINDING UP DEBATE ON THE DAYA BAY MOTION MOVED BY THE HON LYDIA DUNN. +THE GOVERNMENT APPRECIATES THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE SEVEN OBSERVATIONS,+ HE NOTED.

THE GOVERNMENT AGREED WITH THE FIRST THREE OBSERVATIONS WHICH RELATED TO CONTINGENCY PLANNING, HE SAID.

ON THE FIRST OBSERVATION, WHICH WAS THAT A CONTINGENCY PLAN SHOULD BE DRAWN UP FOR THOSE AREAS WHICH LAY WITHIN 50 MILES OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT ACCEPTED THAT AS A MATTER OF PRUDENCE, A DETAILED CONTINGENCY PLAN SHOULD BE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH THE REMOTE POSSIBILITY OF AN ACCIDENT AT DAYA BAY.

+WITH THIS IN MIND, THE GOVERNMENT, IN MID-1985, ENGAGED THE UNITED KINGDOM ATOMIC ENERGY AUTHORITY AT HARWELL TO PROVIDE EXPERT ADVICE,+ HE SAID. HARWELL'S REPORT PROVIDING GUIDANCE FOR THE PREPARATION OF A DETAILED CONTINGENCY PLAN WAS EXPECTED BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.

+USING THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS REPORT, AND SUITABLY ADAPTING THE WELL FOUNDED PRINCIPLES ON WHICH EXISTING CONTINGENCY PLANS HAVE BEEN BASED, AN APPROPRIATE CONTINGENCY PLAN TO MEET HONG KONG'S CIRCUMSTANCES WILL BE PREPARED+, HE SAID.

ON THE SECOND OBSERVATION, WHICH PROPOSED THAT PROTECTIVE MEASURES SHOULD BE PLANNED AGAINST THE CONTAMINATION OF WATER AND FOOD SUPPLIES, MR JACOBS SAID THE GOVERNMENT ALREADY HAD CERTAIN CONTINGENCY PLANS TO DEAL WITH ANY DISRUPTION OF FOOD AND WATER SUPPLIES. THESE REQUIRED ADAPTATION IN RELATION TO THE DAYA BAY PROJECT.

HE ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO PUBLISH HARWELL'S REPORTS ON THESE SUBJECTS WHEN THEY WERE RECEIVED.

REFERRING TO THE THIRD OBSERVATION, WHICH WAS THAT A GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE SHOULD BE SET UP TO PREPARE CONTINGENCY PLANS, MR JACOBS SAID AN EXISTING INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP, SET UP TO CO-ORDINATE STRATEGY ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES ARISING FROM THE DAYA BAY PROJECT, WOULD ACCORDINGLY BE SPECIFICALLY TASKED TO CONSIDER THE PREPARATION OF DETAILED CONTINGENCY PLANS.

/HE SAID .....

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HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT FULLY SUPPORTED THE SUGGESTION THAT CLOSE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE AUTHORITIES ON EACH SIDE OF THE BORDER SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO ENSURE THAT CONTINGENCY PLAN WERE SUITABLY CO-ORDINATED.

ON THE FIFTH OBSERVATION, WHICH WAS THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD STRENGTHEN ITS PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAMME ON NUCLEAR ENERGY, MR JACOBS SAID A PROGRAMME OF PUBLIC EDUCATION ACTIVITIES WAS NOW UNDER PREPARATION.

A START TO ITS IMPLEMENTATION WOULD BE MADE IN THE NEAR FUTURE IN LIAISON WITH THE PROGRAMMES TO BE LAUNCHED BY THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY.

MEANWHILE, TWO TEACHING-LEARNING PACKAGE WOULD BE PRODUCED AND MADE AVAILABLE TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS FOR USE IN THE 1986-87 ACADEMIC YEAR. IN ADDITION, TWO EDUCATION TELEVISION PROGRAMMES WOULD BE PRODUCED AND MADE AVAILABLE TO SCHOOLS.

MR JACOBS SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD GIVE FURTHER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO SETTING UP AN INDEPENDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO ADVISE ON MATTERS RELATED TO NUCLEAR ENERGY, AS PROPOSED IN THE SIXTH OBSERVATION MADE BY THE FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS.

ON THE OBSERVATION THAT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT SHOULD SEEK MEMBERSHIP OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY, MR JACOBS POINTED OUT THAT AS IAEA STATUTE LIMITED MEMBERSHIP TO STATES, IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT HONG KONG WAS ELIGIBLE FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP.

NEVERTHELESS, BOTH THE UNITED KINGDOM AND CHINA WERE MEMBERS, AND +CLOSE CONTACTS WITH IAEA HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED THROUGH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.+

MR JACOBS NOTED THAT SOME COUNCILLORS HAD CONTINUED TO SUGGEST THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM THE PROJECT OR URGE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY TO WITHDRAW. HE STRESSED THAT ANY SUCH ACTION WOULD BE EXTREMELY DAMAGING TO THE CREDIBILITY NOT ONLY OF THE GOVERNMENT BUT PERHAPS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT TO THE CREDIBILITY OF HONG KONG ITSELF.

+I DO NOT FOR ONE MOMENT BELIEVE THAT THE MAJORITY OF OUR COMMUNITY WOULD WISH TO SEE HONG KONG'S INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION PLACED IN JEOPARDY BY SUCH A BREACH OF FAITH,+ HE SAID.

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ELECTRICITY COST A KEY FACTOR  
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THE GOVERNMENT'S OBJECTIVE THROUGHOUT ITS EVALUATION AND CONSIDERATION OF THE DAYA BAY PROJECT WAS THAT THE ELECTRICITY GENERATED BY THAT PLANT WOULD COST NO MORE THAN ELECTRICITY GENERATED IN HONG KONG BY CONVENTIONAL MEANS, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

WINDING UP DEBATE ON THE MOTION ON THE DAYA BAY ISSUE, MR JACOBS SAID IN THESE CONSIDERATIONS THE GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THE POTENTIAL COST AND FINANCING OF A NEW COAL-FIRED STATION IN HONG KONG.

IT ALSO CONSIDERED THAT THE SHARE OF THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY IN THE DAYA BAY PROJECT WOULD NOT CONSTITUTE PART OF THE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER GROUP OF COMPANIES' (CLP) NET FIXED ASSETS FOR THE PURPOSE OF CALCULATING PERMITTED RETURN UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE SCHEME OF CONTROL.

PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE CONSUMER, THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE GOVERNMENT WAS REQUIRED BOTH FOR ANY FINANCING PLANS THE COMPANY MIGHT WISH TO ADOPT IN RELATION TO ANY MAJOR ADDITIONS TO THE COMPANY'S SYSTEM AND THE TARIFFS THE COMPANY MIGHT CHARGE TO ITS CONSUMERS.

MR JACOBS ALSO EXPLAINED THE PROCEDURES ADOPTED FOR AGREEING THE LEVELS OF ELECTRICITY PRICES CHARGED BY CLP, AND POINTED OUT THAT IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE LEVELS OF PROJECTED TARIFFS A FINANCING REVIEW WAS CONDUCTED JOINTLY BY THE GOVERNMENT AND CLP.

+IN THE REVIEW, A FINANCING PLAN IS SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. THE REVIEW GIVES PROJECTIONS OF CLP'S COMMITMENTS OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD AND THE LEVEL OF TARIFF WHICH NEEDS TO BE CHARGED TO FUND THOSE COMMITMENTS,+ HE SAID.

MR JACOBS SAID HE WAS AWARE THAT COUNCILLORS WISHED TO KNOW HOW THE PURCHASE OF ELECTRICITY FROM THE DAYA BAY STATION WOULD BE DEALT WITH IN CALCULATING OR COMPUTING THE TARIFF CHARGED BY CLP. DETAILS WOULD BE GIVEN IN THE PAPER HE WOULD BE ISSUING.

+BRIEFLY, NUCLEAR POWER PURCHASED BY CLP WILL, FOR SCHEME OF CONTROL PURPOSES, BE TREATED LIKE ANY OTHER PURCHASE MADE BY CLP IN THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING ITS CONSUMERS WITH ELECTRICITY. THAT IS, IT WILL BE CONSIDERED IN EXACTLY THE SAME WAY AS THE PURCHASE OF COAL, OIL, OR INDEED ELECTRICITY PURCHASED FROM THE HONGKONG ELECTRIC COMPANY,+ HE SAID.

MR JACOBS POINTED OUT THAT THE NUCLEAR OPTION WAS CHOSEN FOLLOWING A COMPREHENSIVE JOINT FEASIBILITY STUDY UNDERTAKEN BY CLP AND THE GUANGDONG POWER CORPORATION.

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THE CONDITIONAL NATURE OF THE INITIAL ENDORSEMENT GIVEN BY THE GOVERNMENT WAS DELIBERATE. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PURCHASE OF ELECTRICITY FROM DAYA BAY HAD NOT, AT THAT STAGE, BEEN FINALISED. IN THE INTEREST OF CONSUMERS, THE GOVERNMENT CONVEYED TO CLP THE VIEW THAT FURTHER DISCUSSIONS SHOULD TAKE PLACE ON THE PROPOSED FISCAL AND COMMERCIAL TERMS.

AFTER A YEAR OF INTENSE NEGOTIATIONS, ADDITIONAL BENEFITS FOR CONSUMERS WERE SECURED. THESE INCLUDED: CONCESSIONARY TAX RATES FOR THE PROJECT; THE INTRODUCTION OF A FLEXIBILITY PROVISION CONCERNING THE PURCHASE OF ELECTRICITY SHOULD DEMAND BE LESS THAN THAT FORECAST; AND, FOR THE LARGER PART OF THE ELECTRICITY TO BE BOUGHT, CEILING ON THE PRICE THAT WOULD BE PAID DURING THE FIRST SIX YEARS.

MR JACOBS SAID THAT AS TO THE IMPACT OF DAYA BAY ON THE TARIFF, AFTER BOTH GENERATING UNITS WERE COMMISSIONED, NUCLEAR ELECTRICITY PURCHASED IN THE MID 1990'S WOULD BE APPROXIMATELY 25 PER CENT OF CLP'S TOTAL ELECTRICITY REQUIREMENT.

THE PERCENTAGE SHARE OF NUCLEAR ELECTRICITY IN THE SYSTEM WOULD GRADUALLY DECLINE AS THE TOTAL CLP SALES CONTINUED TO GROW AFTER THE MID 1990'S.

DURING THE FIRST SIX YEARS OF OPERATION, THE MAJOR PART OF ELECTRICITY PURCHASED WOULD BE SUBJECT TO A PRICE CEILING SO THAT IT COST NO MORE THAN ELECTRICITY GENERATED BY A COAL-FIRED STATION IN HONG KONG.

HONG KONG CONSUMERS WOULD NOT BE REQUIRED TO BEAR THE RISK OF PAYING MORE FOR THIS PORTION OF THE NUCLEAR ELECTRICITY PURCHASE IF IT TURNED OUT TO BE MORE EXPENSIVE DURING THE INITIAL YEARS OF OPERATION.

+THE REMAINING PORTION OF THE NUCLEAR ELECTRICITY NOT SUBJECT TO THE PRICE CEILING WILL AMOUNT TO APPROXIMATELY 10 PER CENT OF CLP'S TOTAL ANNUAL ELECTRICITY REQUIREMENT AND WILL NOT CAUSE ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT TO THE OVERALL TARIFF,+ HE SAID.

IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT OF THE NUCLEAR ELECTRICITY PRICE BEING, SAY, 25 PER CENT HIGHER THAN THAT PRESENTLY ENVISAGED, THE IMPACT ON THE CLP TARIFF WILL BE LESS THAN 2 PER CENT.+

AFTER THE FIRST SIX YEARS OF OPERATION THE PERCENTAGE SHARE OF NUCLEAR ELECTRICITY USED IN THE SYSTEM WOULD GRADUALLY REDUCE AS CONSUMER DEMAND INCREASED. ACCORDINGLY, THE IMPACT OF ITS PRICE ON THE CLP CONSUMER TARIFF WOULD ALSO GRADUALLY REDUCE.

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DUTY TO HAVE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION HAVE A DUTY TO SEE THAT THE QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG ABOUT THE DAYA BAY PROJECT ARE ANSWERED.

THIS WAS STATED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY SENIOR MEMBER, THE HON LYDIA DUNN, WHEN MOVING A MOTION IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CALLING FOR FURTHER DETAILS ON THE PROJECT.

THE MOTION READ:

+THAT THIS COUNCIL REQUESTS THE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE DETAILS OF THE ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING SAFETY AND TARIFF FOR THE PURCHASE OF ELECTRICITY FROM THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT TOGETHER WITH SUCH DOCUMENTS AS DO NOT BREACH COMMERCIAL CONFIDENTIALITY AND TO EXPLAIN WHETHER OR NOT SUCH ARRANGEMENTS WILL SUFFICIENTLY SAFEGUARD THE LONG TERM INTERESTS OF THE HONG KONG PEOPLE.+

MISS DUNN NOTED THAT WITH THE SIGNING OF BINDING CONTRACTS LAST MONTH THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES HAD ASSUMED A HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SAFETY OF THE PLANT AND FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL THOSE IN ITS VICINITY.

THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG MUST NOW COME TO TERMS WITH THE FACT THAT IN SIX YEARS' TIME THERE WILL PROBABLY BE A MODERN NUCLEAR PLANT OPERATING SOME 50 KILOMETRES FROM THIS CROWDED CITY, SHE SAID.

THOUGH HONG KONG HAD BEEN ASSURED THAT THE PLANT WOULD BE BUILT AND OPERATED TO THE HIGHEST INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS, THE FEARS AND ANXIETIES OF HONG KONG PEOPLE PERSISTED.

+LET US BE CLEAR ABOUT ONE THING - THEIR FEARS AND ANXIETIES ARE GENUINE,+ MISS DUNN SAID.

+ORDINARY MEN AND WOMEN KNOW NOTHING OF NUCLEAR PHYSICS. BUT THEY DO KNOW ABOUT LIFE AND ABOUT HEALTH, FOR THEMSELVES, FOR THEIR CHILDREN AND FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN. AND THEY WILL NOT SEE THEM THREATENED,+ SHE SAID.

+THEIR CONCERNS ARE THE CONCERNS OF THIS COUNCIL.+

MISS DUNN SAID THE MOTION WAS PART OF THE EFFORT LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS WERE MAKING TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION, AND SHE URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT THE MOTION WHICH HAD THE UNANIMOUS SUPPORT OF ALL HER COLLEAGUES.

FIRST, SHE SAID, WE MUST BRING HOME TO THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES AND THE JOINT VENTURE COMPANY THAT WORRIES ABOUT THE SAFETY OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT WILL ONLY BE MET IF THEY DEMONSTRATE THAT ALL THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE CHERNOBYL ACCIDENT ARE INCORPORATED IN THE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY OF THE PLANT, AND THAT THERE ARE WAYS OF VERIFYING THAT THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF MANAGEMENT, SUPERVISION AND TRAINING OF PERSONNEL ARE IN FORCE DURING THE OPERATIONAL LIFE OF THE PLANT.

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SECOND, WE MUST BE TOLD WHAT PLANS THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IS DRAWING UP TO COPE WITH THE CONTINGENCY OF AN ACCIDENT AT DAYA BAY, HOWEVER UNLIKELY THE CHANCE OF IT HAPPENING.

THIRD, WE MUST LET THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG KNOW HOW THEY STAND TO BENEFIT FROM A SUPPLY OF ELECTRICITY FROM A NUCLEAR PLANT IN CHINA.

+LET THEM SEE AND UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY STAND TO GAIN FROM DAYA BAY AND HOW THE COMMUNITY WOULD MANAGE WITHOUT IT,+ MISS DUNN URGED.

MISS DUNN SAID THE CONFIDENCE OF THE ORDINARY MAN WILL NOT BE WON OR LOST ON THE OUTCOME OF TODAY'S DEBATE.

+HIS JUDGEMENT WILL BE RESERVED. HE WILL CONTINUE TO ASSESS BUT I HAVE FAITH IN THE GOOD SENSE OF PEOPLE IN HONG KONG TO REACH THEIR OWN CONCLUSIONS IF THEY ARE GIVEN THE FACTS,+ SHE SAID. +THIS COUNCIL MUST HELP THEM TO OBTAIN THAT MATERIAL FROM ALL THE PARTIES INVOLVED.+

MISS DUNN SAID LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS ALSO SOUGHT ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS. SOME MEMBERS HAD ALREADY OFFERED ANSWERS, AND NOT SURPRISINGLY HAD NOT ALWAYS AGREED.

+OUR DIFFERENCES OF VIEW ARE ALSO GENUINE AND HONESTLY HELD,+ SHE SAID. +ALL OF US WANT NOTHING MORE THAN THE BEST FOR THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.+

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HKNIC SHOULD KEEP GOVERNMENT INFORMED

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THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY (HKNIC) SHOULD BE ASKED TO KEEP THE GOVERNMENT FULLY INFORMED AT ALL TIMES ON THE OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT.

THIS WAS SUGGESTED BY THE HON S.L. CHEN WHEN SPEAKING ON THE MOTION ON THE DAYA BAY ISSUE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR CHEN SAID HE WAS GLAD TO NOTE FROM THE REPORTS OF THE FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS THAT HIS CONCERN ON THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE PLANT FROM THE SAFETY POINT OF VIEW, AS EXPRESSED DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE IN JULY, HAD BEEN FULLY AND ADEQUATELY DEALT WITH.

/+IN THE .....

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+IN THE LIGHT OF THE VERY POSITIVE RESPONSE OF THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES WHEN THEY DISCUSSED THE FINDINGS WITH OUR FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS, I FEEL CONFIDENT THAT THEY ARE MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO ENSURE THAT THE CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT WOULD BE CARRIED OUT TO THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE SAFETY STANDARDS,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEN SAID HE WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED TO NOTE THAT THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES WERE VERY RECEPTIVE TO THE PROPOSAL THAT AN INDEPENDENT ADVISORY BODY WITH HONG KONG PARTICIPATION BE ESTABLISHED.

HE SAID SUCH A BODY, IF SET UP PROPERLY, WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO THE SAFE OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PLANT, AND IT WOULD ALSO ENHANCE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG.

MR CHEN SAID HE WELCOMED THE LONG-TERM PARTICIPATION OF HKNIC IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT. THIS WOULD PROVIDE SOME ASSURANCE TO HONG KONG PEOPLE THAT THE PLANT WOULD BE OPERATED AND MAINTAINED WITH THE HIGHEST STANDARD OF SAFETY IN MIND ALL THE TIME.

+SINCE HKNIC IS THE ONLY ORGANISATION IN HONG KONG WHO WOULD HAVE COMPLETE ACCESS TO DETAILS OF THE DAY-TO-DAY MANAGEMENT OF THE PLANT, I SUGGEST THAT THEY SHOULD BE ASKED FORMALLY AS AN OBJECT ON THEIR PART, TO KEEP THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT FULLY INFORMED AT ALL TIMES OF THE SAFE OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PLANT, AND TO PROVIDE THE PUBLIC OF HONG KONG, A PERMANENT DEMAND OF ACCESS FOR INFORMATION,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEN SAID IT WAS FALLACIOUS TO QUESTION THE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF THE PROJECT.

+I BELIEVE THERE ARE ADEQUATE PROVISIONS IN THE OFF-TAKE AGREEMENT TO GUARANTEE THAT ELECTRICITY CHARGES TO HONG KONG CONSUMERS SHOULD BE NO HIGHER THAN THE TARIFF CHARGED BY THE HONG KONG UTILITY COMPANIES FOR COAL-GENERATED ELECTRICITY FOR THE FIRST SIX YEARS AFTER THE PLANT COMES INTO COMMERCIAL OPERATION,+ HE SAID.

+THIS IS A COMMITMENT FOR 13 YEARS FROM NOW, WHICH IN MY OPINION IS LONG ENOUGH AS LIKELY TO BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE ESPECIALLY IF THE PREDICTED COST RELATIVITY BETWEEN NUCLEAR FUEL AND FOSSIL FUEL WERE TO BE WIDELY OFF THE MARK DURING THE YEARS TO COME,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEN ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE BULK OF THE CAPITAL ASSETS OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT WOULD BE OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE SCHEME OF CONTROL.

HE SAID THIS WOULD MEAN THAT HONG KONG WOULD IN EFFECT HAVE THE BENEFIT OF THE SERVICE OF A 1260 MW ENERGY SOURCE (THAT IS 70 PER CENT OF 1800 MW) WITHOUT HAVING TO RAISE THE CAPITAL TO FINANCE ITS CONSTRUCTION.

/+ON THE .....

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+ON THE OTHER HAND, IF A COAL-FIRED POWER STATION OF EQUIVALENT CAPACITY WERE TO BE BUILT IN HONG KONG TO REPLACE THE DAYA BAY PLANT, ITS ENTIRE CAPITAL ASSET WILL HAVE TO BE BROUGHT INTO THE SCHEME OF CONTROL AND BE FULLY REFLECTED IN FUTURE ELECTRICITY TARIFF STRUCTURE,+ HE SAID.

+MOREOVER, HONG KONG WOULD HAVE TO RAISE THE NECESSARY INITIAL CAPITAL TO FINANCE THE PROJECT,+ HE ADDED.

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#### CALL FOR INDEPENDENT COMMISSION

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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER SETTING UP AN INDEPENDENT COMMISSION DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE TO THE GOVERNOR TO ENSURE THAT THE DAYA BAY ISSUE RECEIVES THE CONTINUOUS AND SPECIALISED ATTENTION IT DESERVES, THE HON PETER C. WONG SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING ON THE DAYA BAY MOTION IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR WONG SAID SUCH A MOVE MIGHT HELP ALLAY PUBLIC FEARS AND PREVENT ANY FURTHER EROSION OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT MUST ENSURE THAT A CONTINGENCY PLAN AND AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT OF A NUCLEAR ACCIDENT ARE WORKED OUT WELL BEFORE THE PLANT STARTS UP. IN IT WAS IN THIS RESPECT THAT HE THOUGHT AN INDEPENDENT COMMISSION WOULD BE USEFUL.

MR WONG SAID COUNCIL MEMBERS WERE SEEKING OTHER INFORMATION, IN ADDITION TO SAFETY DETAILS TO ASSIST THEM, AND THE PUBLIC, IN ASSESSING WHETHER THE DECISIONS TAKEN TO BUY ELECTRICITY FROM DAYA BAY WERE PRUDENT AND WHETHER CONSUMERS WOULD ACTUALLY BENEFIT FROM LOWER TARIFFS.

+THE INFORMATION SOUGHT DOES NOT, HOWEVER, INFRINGE ON THE RIGHT TO COMMERCIAL CONFIDENTIALITY,+ HE SAID.

+THIS IS IMPORTANT AS HONG KONG IS AN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTRE AND INTERNATIONAL COMMERCIAL CODES OF CONDUCT MUST BE RESPECTED.+

NOTING THAT THE COUNCIL DELEGATION THAT WENT TO PEKING HAD BEEN ABLE TO ELICIT CERTAIN IMPORTANT ASSURANCES FROM THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES, MR WONG SAID: +NO EFFORTS SHOULD BE SPARED TO SEE THAT THESE ASSURANCES ARE IMPLEMENTED, THE SOONER THE BETTER.+

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CALL TO CLARIFY HKNIC'S RELATIONSHIP WITH CONTROL SCHEME  
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THE GOVERNMENT WAS CALLED UPON TO CLARIFY THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY (HKNIC) WITH THE SCHEME OF CONTROL BECAUSE THE COMPANY WAS A WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF THE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY (CLP).

SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI SAID THE SCHEME OF CONTROL LEGALLY GOVERNED CLP'S FINANCIAL AFFAIRS AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES OR ASSOCIATE COMPANIES SO FAR AS THEY RELATED TO ELECTRICITY-RELATED ACTIVITIES.

DR HO EXPLAINED THAT THE SCHEME PROVIDED FOR A PERMITTED RETURN TO THE CLP WHICH WAS REASONABLE IN RELATION TO THE RISKS INVOLVED AND THE CAPITAL INVESTED.

THEREFORE, HE SAID, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CLARIFY WHICH PARTS OF THE DAYA BAY POWER PLANT CONSTRUCTION, EQUIPMENT AND THE TRANSMISSION CABLE NETWORK WERE CONSIDERED LEGITIMATE INVESTMENT BY CLP AND HKNIC.

IN ADDITION, THE METHOD AND BASIS OF CALCULATING THE TARIFFS OF THE NUCLEAR ELECTRICITY CHARGED TO LOCAL CONSUMERS BY THE CLP AFTER THE COMMISSIONING OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT SHOULD ALSO BE CLARIFIED.

DR HO ALSO ASKED THE GOVERNMENT WHETHER IT WOULD IN THE 1988 REVIEW NEGOTIATE WITH THE CLP TO SET UP AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF TARIFFS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE INTERESTS OF BOTH THE INVESTORS AND THE CONSUMERS.

THE RESULTS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE MADE PUBLIC, HE SAID.

DR HO POINTED OUT THAT THE STEADY GROWTH OF HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIES AND ECONOMY AND ITS LIFESTYLES WERE TO A SIGNIFICANT EXTENT DEPENDENT ON AN ADEQUATE, CONTINUOUS SUPPLY OF ELECTRICITY.

IF THERE WERE NO DAYA BAY POWER PLANT, HONG KONG WOULD HAVE TO BUILD IN ITS OWN TERRITORY AN ADDITIONAL POWER STATION IN THE LATTER HALF OF 1980'S TO MEET ANTICIPATED DEMAND IN 1993, HE SAID.

HOWEVER, TO FIND A SITE FOR THE NEW POWER STATION - WITH ITS NECESSITY FOR DEEP WATER ACCESS AND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS - WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT, HE NOTED, ADDING THAT THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONSTRUCTION COSTS WOULD BE EXTREMELY HIGH.

+OUR CONCERN ABOUT ELECTRICITY SUPPLY SHOULD THEREFORE NOT BE ON ITS PRICE ALONE, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY ON ITS AVAILABILITY IN SUFFICIENT AMOUNT AND IN AN UNINTERRUPTED MANNER,+ HE ADDED.

/DR HO .....

DR HO SAID THE GENERAL PUBLIC HAD BEEN DESPERATE IN THE SEARCH OF KNOWLEDGE AND ASSURANCES ABOUT NUCLEAR ENERGY IN ORDER TO ALLAY THEIR FEAR. HOWEVER, SUCH INFORMATION WAS RELEASED BY THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES IN A PIECEMEAL AND HAPHAZARD MANNER AND THE PUBLIC WERE UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND THE ISSUE IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE.

HE SAID THE HKNIC OWED THE CONSUMING PUBLIC A DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THE NUCLEAR POWER PROJECT AT DAYA BAY AND A COMPREHENSIVE STATEMENT OF THE ASSURANCES MADE BY THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY ABOUT SAFETY FEATURES IN THE DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT OF THE POWER PLANT.

IT WAS ALSO ENCUMBENT UPON THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE AVAILABLE COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION AND RELEVANT DOCUMENTS ABOUT THE PROJECT, ITS PART IN THE COMMERCIAL VENTURE AND ITS ASSESSMENT OF THE LONG-TERM INTERESTS FOR THE LOCAL PEOPLE, HE SAID.

+ONLY THROUGH A LENGTHY PROCESS OF EDUCATION AND INTENSIVE INVOLVEMENT OF THE PUBLIC WILL THE FEAR IN THE PEOPLE BE GRADUALLY REPLACED BY A SENSE OF TRUST IN AND SUBSEQUENTLY ACCEPTANCE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY,+ HE ADDED.

ON THE RELEASE OF DOCUMENTS BY THE GOVERNMENT, DR HO SAID THAT THE ECONOMY OF HONG KONG WAS BUILT ON A FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM AND WAS SPURRED BY INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT, BOTH FROM LOCAL AND OVERSEAS SOURCES.

CONFIDENCE AND THE PROFIT INCENTIVE IN THE BUSINESS SECTOR MUST BE FOSTERED, HE SAID.

+THEREFORE, GOVERNMENT POLICY AND PRACTICES SHOULD UPHOLD THE SPIRIT OF FREE TRADE AND OBSERVE COMMERCIAL CONFIDENTIALITY,+ HE NOTED.

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OPEN ATTITUDE ON DAYA BAY URGED  
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AN OPEN ATTITUDE SHOULD BE ADOPTED BY ALL PARTIES CONCERNED SO THAT ANY CITIZEN OF HONG KONG WHO WISHES TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE SAFETY ASPECTS OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO, THE HON ALLEN LEE SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING ON THE DAYA BAY MOTION, MR LEE POINTED OUT THAT THE ISSUE WOULD BE WITH US FOR THE LIFE SPAN OF THE PLANT.

+IF ANYTHING HAS COME OUT OF THIS WHOLE EXERCISE, I BELIEVE THAT IT HAS CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF THE CHINESE, FRENCH, BRITISH AND HONG KONG GOVERNMENTS ALONG WITH THE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY LIMITED,+ HE SAID.

/MR LEE .....

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MR LEE SAID HE WAS VERY IMPRESSED WITH THE OPEN AND ACCOMMODATING ATTITUDE OF THE POWER COMPANIES AND GOVERNMENTS VISITED BY THE DELEGATIONS IN SUPPLYING INFORMATION TO THOSE WHO WISHED TO UNDERSTAND THE SAFETY ASPECTS OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS.

HE THEREFORE CALLED FOR AN OPEN ATTITUDE FROM ALL PARTIES CONCERNED WITH THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT.

MR LEE REFUTED NEWSPAPER COMMENTS AND EDITORIALS ACCUSING HIM OF SUPPORTING THE DAYA BAY PROJECT BECAUSE OF THE VAST ECONOMIC BENEFITS HIS COMPANIES DERIVED FROM DOING BUSINESS WITH CHINA.

+I WOULD LIKE TO PUT IT ON RECORD THAT OVER 95 PER CENT OF MY COMPANIES' BUSINESS IS AMERICAN MARKET ORIENTED AND THAT THIS TREND IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY TO CHANGE,+ HE STATED.

HE ADDED THAT HIS BUSINESS ASSOCIATION WITH CHINA WAS A 10 PER CENT INVESTMENT IN A PROJECT WHICH BROUGHT TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER FROM THE UNITED STATES TO CHINA AND A TURN-KEY OPERATION OF PRINTED CIRCUIT BOARDS.

MR LEE EXPLAINED THAT THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD BELIEVED THEY SHOULD DO WHAT THEY COULD TO ASSIST CHINA IN SUCCESSFULLY OBTAINING TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER FOR THEIR MODERNISATION PROGRAMME.

HE POINTED OUT THAT HONG KONG'S FUTURE STABILITY WAS ALSO DEPENDENT ON THE SUCCESS OF CHINA'S MODERNISATION PROGRAMME AND SAID HE FELT CHINA SHOULD BE ASSISTED IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMMES.

REFERRING TO THE DELEGATION'S VISIT TO PEKING, MR LEE SAID IT HAD BEEN SCORNE AS A PUBLIC RELATIONS EXERCISE FOR THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES BUT FELT SUCH ACCUSATIONS WERE MISLEADING.

+I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO PUT IT ON RECORD THAT IT WAS NEVER A FUN TASK VISITING PEKING DISCUSSING OUR OBSERVATIONS WITH THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES AND PERSUADING THEM TO SEE OUR POINTS OF VIEWS,+ HE SAID.

+I AM SURE ALL THE MEMBERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THESE DISCUSSIONS WOULD AGREE WITH ME THAT ALTHOUGH THE DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD IN A CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE, IT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN REGARDED AS A SHEER PUBLIC RELATIONS EXERCISE,+ HE ADDED.

MR LEE ALSO PAID TRIBUTE TO THE STAFF WHO WORKED HARD BEHIND THE SCENES WITH THE DELEGATIONS TO MAKE THEIR TRIPS SO FRUITFUL.

HE SAID HE BELIEVED THAT IN THE LIMITED TIME THE COUNCIL HAD AND IN VIEW OF THE DEEP AND GENUINE CONCERN OF THE HONG KONG PEOPLE, THEY HAD SERVED HONG KONG TO THE BEST OF THEIR ABILITIES.

+MY CONSCIENCE IS CLEAR ON THE HANDLING OF THE DAYA BAY ISSUE,+ HE SAID.

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MAKE AVAILABLE ALL RELEVANT INFORMATION  
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ALL RELEVANT INFORMATION CONCERNING THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT SHOULD BE PROVIDED AS FULLY AS CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT TO ALLAY PUBLIC ANXIETY, THE HON WONG PO-YAN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

FOCUSSING HIS SPEECH ON THE ECONOMIC ASPECT OF THE DAYA BAY ISSUE, MR WONG URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO URGE THE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY TO MAKE AVAILABLE RELEVANT INFORMATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND IT SHOULD ALSO BE AS DETAILED AS POSSIBLE.

+AS THE DAYA BAY PLANT IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN PRODUCTION IN 1992 AND THE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY WILL STILL BE SUBJECT TO THE CONTROL SCHEME UNTIL 1994, DETAILS OF THE COSTS WHICH BEAR RELATION TO THE TARIFF SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO GOVERNMENT SCRUTINY,+ HE SAID.

MR WONG SAID HE WAS CERTAIN THAT THE PLANT COULD BE BUILT WITHIN BUDGET BECAUSE OF LOWER CONSTRUCTION COSTS.

+IN CONSIDERATION OF THE FACT THAT THE LABOUR COST IN CHINA WILL BE CONSIDERABLY LOWER THAN THAT IN OTHER COUNTRIES, THE DAYA BAY PROJECT WILL HAVE A MEANINGFUL ADVANTAGE OVER THE PLANTS IN OTHER COUNTRIES IN TERMS OF COSTS,+ HE SAID.

IT WOULD ALSO BE IN A BETTER POSITION THAN THE OTHERS IN TERMS OF RUNNING COST, MR WONG SAID.

+THEREFORE, WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE PRICE OF ELECTRICITY FROM DAYA BAY WILL BE CHEAPER NOT ONLY FOR THE FIRST SIX YEARS BUT FOR MANY YEARS THEREAFTER,+ HE SAID.

+ANOTHER FAVOURABLE CONDITION IN RESPECT OF ITS RUNNING COST IS THAT CHINA HAS HER OWN URANIUM DEPOSIT AND THE FACILITIES TO PROCESS THE MINERAL UP TO THE CONCENTRATION APPLICABLE FOR USE AS NUCLEAR FUEL FOR THE DAYA BAY PLANT.+

HE ADDED THAT THE DISPOSAL OF NUCLEAR WASTE WAS MUCH EASIER AND LESS COSTLY IN CHINA COMPARED WITH THE RATHER COMPLICATED AND POLITICAL SITUATION THAT APPLIED IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

MR WONG DISMISSED AS +UNFAIR+ CRITICISM OF COUNCILLORS OVER THE DAYA BAY ISSUE.

THE COUNCILLORS INCLUDED MANY KNOWLEDGEABLE PEOPLE WITH SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND WHO HAD A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF NUCLEAR POWER GENERATION IN GENERAL AND OF THE DAYA BAY PROJECT IN PARTICULAR, HE SAID.

+MEMBERS EXPRESS THEIR INDIVIDUAL VIEWPOINTS ON THIS SUBJECT IN GOOD FAITH AND SO IT IS NOT FAIR TO SUGGEST THAT THEY WERE SUBJECT TO PRESSURE FROM CHINA,+ HE ADDED.

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RIGHT TO KNOW ABOUT TARIFF ARRANGEMENTS  
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THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG ARE VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE TARIFF ARRANGEMENTS OF CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY (CLP) FOR THE PURCHASE OF ELECTRICITY FROM THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

AS CONSUMERS, HE ADDED, THE PUBLIC HAD THE RIGHT TO KNOW THE ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING THE SALE OF ELECTRICITY TO THE CLP AFTER THE INITIAL SIX YEARS' COMMISSIONING OF THE PLANT.

IN THIS CONNECTION, MR CHEUNG ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE DETAILED ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING THREE QUESTIONS:

- \* WILL THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY (HKNIC) BE BROUGHT UNDER THE PRESENT +SCHEME OF CONTROL+ SO THAT IT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO PROFITEER THROUGH THE RESALE OF NUCLEAR POWER TO THE CLP?
- \* ARE THERE ANY MEASURES TO ENSURE THAT THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY (GNIC) WOULD NOT SEEK TO INCREASE THE ELECTRICITY CHARGE AT THE LATER STAGE OF THE PLANT'S OPERATION, SO AS TO RECOVER THE LOSS WHICH IT MAY SUFFER BECAUSE OF THE PRICE ASSURANCE IN THE INITIAL SIX YEARS?
- \* AFTER THE COMMISSIONING OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, IS IT POSSIBLE FOR THE HKNIC TO CUT DOWN ITS PURCHASE OF ELECTRICITY FROM THE GNIC IF THE DEMAND IN KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES WERE TO FALL SHORT OF THE EXPECTED LEVEL?

ON SAFETY ASPECTS, MR CHEUNG SAID WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IMPENDING, HONG KONG PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO SEEK ASSURANCE FROM THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED THAT THE PLANT SHOULD REACH THE HIGHEST STANDARD OF SAFETY IN THE FUTURE CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT.

HE SAID THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT WAS A LONG-TERM PROJECT AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC ALL DISCLOSABLE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT IN THE COURSE OF THE PLANT'S CONSTRUCTION AND COMMISSION.

+IT IS ONLY THEN THAT THE DOUBTS AND WORRIES OF THE PEOPLE WOULD BE ALLAYED,+ HE SAID.

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ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF N-POWER QUERIED

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IT IS JUST NOT GOOD ENOUGH THAT WE ARE ASSURED THAT NUCLEAR POWER WILL NOT COST MORE THAN POWER GENERATED BY COAL FIRE, THE HON SELINA CHOW TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

+WHY IS IT NOT CHEAPER? AFTER ALL, SHOULD WE NOT BENEFIT ECONOMICALLY FOR HAVING SOMEWHAT SACRIFICED OUR PEACE OF MIND?+ SHE ASKED.

AS ONE DEEPLY CONSCIOUS OF THE INTEREST OF HONG KONG'S CONSUMERS, MRS CHOW SAID SHE WAS CONCERNED THAT HONG KONG DID NOT STAND TO BENEFIT FROM THE USE OF NUCLEAR POWER.

ON OTHER ASPECTS OF THE DAYA BAY PROJECT, SHE SAID THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FACT-FINDING DELEGATION'S REPORT HAD AMPLY TACKLED THE SAFETY ASPECTS AS WELL AS THE OPENNESS OF INFORMATION.

+NOW THAT VITAL CONTRACTS ARE SIGNED, THIS COUNCIL'S JOB IS JUST BEGINNING. WE MUST NOW FOCUS ON THE AREAS WHICH OUR PEOPLE ARE MOST CONCERNED ABOUT, AND ADDRESS THEM ONE BY ONE,+ SHE ADDED.

MRS CHOW RECALLED THAT HONG KONG'S DECISION ON DAYA BAY TAKEN IN 1983 WAS HAILED AS A MAJOR BOOST OF CONFIDENCE TO HONG KONG AND ITS FUTURE AT THAT TIME.

HOWEVER, SINCE THE CHERNOBYL INCIDENT, EMPHASIS HAD SHIFTED TO ONE OF SAFETY, AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING ENDORSEMENT OF THE PROJECT IN 1983 WERE LONG FORGOTTEN, SHE SAID.

+SO IS THE COMMITMENT THAT WAS CONSEQUENTIAL TO ITS ACCEPTANCE,+ SHE ADDED.

MRS CHOW SAID THERE WAS, OF COURSE, A LESSON TO BE LEARNT FROM CHERNOBYL, AND IT WOULD BE FOOLISH NOT TO DRAW ON THE WISDOM OF INTERNATIONAL BRAINS.

BUT TO KEEP ON MENTIONING CHERNOBYL AND DAYA BAY IN THE SAME BREATH WAS LIKE COMPARING THE COMET WITH THE JUMBO, SHE SAID.

+IT TOTALLY CONFUSES THE ISSUE, MISLEADS THE PUBLIC, FOCUSES ON THE WRONG PROBLEM AND CREATES UNNECESSARY PANIC,+ SHE ADDED.

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WORKING GROUP TO PURSUE PROMISES

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HAS SET UP A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT WORKING GROUP TO PURSUE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROMISES MADE BY THE CHINESE AND HONG KONG GOVERNMENTS OVER THE DAYA BAY PROJECT.

SPEAKING ON THE DAYA BAY MOTION IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE HON MARIA TAM SAID THAT THE SPECIAL WORKING GROUP WAS FORMED TO FOLLOW UP THE WORK OF THE FACT FINDING DELEGATIONS OF WHICH SHE WAS A LEADER.

SHE SAW THE TASK OF THIS GROUP AS +TO KEEP VIGIL+ ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL MEASURES PROMISED BY THE CHINESE AND HONG KONG GOVERNMENTS TO ENSURE THAT THE LONG-TERM INTEREST OF LOCAL PEOPLE WAS PROTECTED.

REFERRING TO THE VISIT TO PEKING IN SEPTEMBER, MISS TAM RECALLED THAT THE VICE MINISTER FOR NUCLEAR INDUSTRY, MR ZHOU PING, AND THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL NUCLEAR SAFETY ADMINISTRATION OF CHINA, MR ZHANG YUMAN, HAD ASSURED DELEGATION MEMBERS THAT THE DAYA BAY PLANT WOULD BE CONSTRUCTED, MANAGED AND OPERATED UP TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND OPENED TO SCRUTINY BY THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY.

A VICE PREMIER, MR LI PENG, HAD ALSO PROMISED THAT AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUCLEAR SAFETY AND REGULATIONS WOULD BE SET UP WITH HONG KONG PARTICIPATION.

MISS TAM SAID: +THIS IS AN IMPORTANT MEASURE IN SECURING AND SUSTAINING THE LONG-TERM CONFIDENCE OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG OVER THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR PLANT AND MUST BE PURSUED WITH VIGOUR ON BOTH SIDES TO ENSURE THAT THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF THE HONG KONG MEMBERSHIP COULD MAKE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE DECISIONS OF THIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE WHICH MUST OPERATE AT A LEVEL THAT COULD REACH THE VICE PREMIER'S EARS.+

TURNING TO THE ROLE OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, MISS TAM SAID THE GOVERNMENT PROMISED TO DO ITS UTMOST TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION ON THE NINE OBSERVATIONS THAT THE FACT FINDING DELEGATIONS ADDRESSED TO IT.

SHE POINTED OUT THAT CROSS-BOUNDARY ARRANGEMENTS TO MONITOR RADIOACTIVITY AT DAYA BAY AND THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND CO-ORDINATION OF CONTINGENCY PLANS REQUIRED JOINT EFFORTS FROM BOTH THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND THE GUANGDONG PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES.

+IT MUST NOW BE THE TIME TO HEAR THE DETAILS OF THE ACTION THE GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THE POPULATION IN HONG KONG IN THE YEARS TO COME,+ SHE SAID.

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AD HOC MONITORING A SENSIBLE MOVE  
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SETTING UP A LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AD HOC GROUP TO CONTINUE MONITORING ALL ASPECTS OF THE DAYA BAY PROJECT WAS DESCRIBED AS A SENSIBLE MOVE BY THE HON CHAN YING-LUN IN THE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE DEBATE ON THE DAYA BAY MOTION, MR CHAN SAID HE BELIEVED ALL THE SPEAKERS AIMED AT SAFEGUARDING THE INTERESTS OF HONG KONG PEOPLE.

DIFFERENT PEOPLE WOULD ADOPT DIFFERENT ACTIONS. HOWEVER, HE THOUGHT THE COUNCIL'S FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS HAD BEEN PRAGMATIC, AND HE FULLY SUPPORTED THEIR CONCRETE RECOMMENDATIONS.

MR CHAN ALSO SAID HE BELIEVED THE GOVERNMENT HAD TRIED ITS BEST SINCE 1983 TO SAFEGUARD THE PEOPLE'S INTERESTS AND ALSO TO ENSURE THAT ELECTRICITY TARIFF WAS STABLE.

BUT THE GOVERNMENT DID HAVE A DUTY THAT IT COULD NOT SHIRK IN EXPLAINING TO THE PEOPLE ALL DETAILS ABOUT THE DAYA BAY PROJECT, IN ORDER TO UPHOLD ITS IMAGE OF TRUSTWORTHINESS AND RELIABILITY.

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PROMOTE PUBLIC EDUCATION ON NUCLEAR POWER CALL  
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THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ORGANISATIONS CONCERNED SHOULD TAKE AN ACTIVE LEAD IN PROMOTING PUBLIC EDUCATION ON NUCLEAR POWER.

THE CALL WAS MADE BY THE HON PAULINE NG WHEN SHE SPOKE ON THE DAYA BAY MOTION IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SHE SAID THAT THE ANXIETY OF HONG KONG PEOPLE OVER THE SAFETY OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT WAS UNDERSTANDABLE.

+UNLIKE PEOPLE OF OTHER COUNTRIES, WHO ARE PROVIDED WITH ADEQUATE INFORMATION ABOUT NUCLEAR POWER BY THEIR GOVERNMENTS AND POWER COMPANIES AND ARE THUS ABLE TO HOLD WELL-INFORMED DISCUSSIONS ON NUCLEAR SAFETY, THE HONG KONG PUBLIC LACKS SUCH INFORMATION,+ SHE SAID.

MRS NG SAID SHE FELT THIS WAS UNFAIR TO THE PEOPLE AND SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND ORGANISATIONS CONCERNED SHOULD ACTIVELY PROMOTE PUBLIC EDUCATION ON NUCLEAR POWER.

REFERRING TO ARRANGEMENTS MADE CONCERNING THE PURCHASE OF ELECTRICITY FROM THE PLANT, MRS NG SAID SHE HOPED AN ASSURANCE COULD BE GIVEN THAT AS LONG AS ELECTRICITY WAS SUPPLIED BY THE PLANT, THE TARIFF CHARGEABLE TO HONG KONG CONSUMERS WOULD BE NO HIGHER THAN THE PRICE OF ELECTRICITY SUPPLIED BY THE TWO LOCAL POWER COMPANIES.

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### HUMAN FACTOR VITAL IN N-PLANT SAFETY

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WHILE THE SAFETY ASPECT OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT DEFINITELY NEEDS CAREFUL PLANNING BY EXPERTS THE HUMAN FACTOR IS NO LESS IMPORTANT, THE HON YEUNG PO-KWAN SAID TODAY.

+SUCH PROBLEMS AS NEGLIGENCE IN OPERATION, IMPROVEMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION AND TRAINING OF HIGHLY-QUALIFIED MANAGEMENT STAFF SHOULD BE DEALT WITH BY PRACTICAL ACTIONS AND MEASURES,+ HE SAID.

+IT IS ONLY RIGHT THAT A RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PRESENT A CLEAR ACCOUNT OF SUCH ISSUES TO THE PUBLIC,+ HE ADDED.

MR YEUNG SAID THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ALSO PROVIDE ASSURANCE THAT IN TERMS OF MANPOWER AND RESOURCES, ADEQUATE PROVISIONS HAD BEEN MADE TO MONITOR BACKGROUND RADIATION AND THAT NECESSARY STUDIES HAD BEEN MADE ON EMERGENCY MEASURES TO BE TAKEN IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT.

MR YEUNG SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT POSSIBLY PUBLISH ANY REPORTS OR DATA INVOLVING COMMERCIAL SECRETS, THE PUBLIC DID HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE PROVIDED WITH SUCH OTHER MATERIALS AS THE UK ATOMIC ENERGY AUTHORITY (HARWELL) REPORT, AND THE RISKS ASSESSMENT AND EVACUATION PLANNING REPORTS TO BE SUBMITTED NEXT YEAR.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY SHOULD ALSO PUBLISH THE RELEVANT DATA AND EXPLAIN THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN RESPECT OF THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN VIEW OF ITS OBLIGATION AS A PUBLIC UTILITY COMPANY TO ANSWER TO THE PUBLIC, HE SAID.

+A RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT ONLY CONSULT THE PUBLIC BUT ALSO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY INFORMATION TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC,+ HE POINTED OUT.

TO PUT THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG AT EASE, MR YEUNG SAID HE HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN CLOSE CONTACTS WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND, THROUGH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, WITH BOTH THE CHINESE AND FRENCH AUTHORITIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING AS MUCH INFORMATION ON THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT AS POSSIBLE.

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### SAFETY THE DETERMINING CONSIDERATION

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SAFETY IS THE DETERMINING CONSIDERATION IN THE OVERALL ANALYSIS OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT SINCE A DISASTER WOULD NULLIFY ALL ITS ECONOMIC BENEFITS, THE HON KIM CHAM SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION ON THE DAYA BAY ISSUE, MR CHAM SAID THE FINDINGS OF THE DELEGATIONS THAT EXAMINED SAFETY ASPECTS OF NUCLEAR PLANTS OVERSEAS HAD NO DOUBT CONTRIBUTED TO IMPROVED SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AT DAYA BAY.

MR CHAM EARLIER DESCRIBED ECONOMIC ASPECTS, AND SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNISE THAT THE ECONOMIC CALCULATION TO JUSTIFY A NEW PLANT, SUCH AS DAYA BAY, MUST REST ON PROJECTIONS AND FORECASTS OF FUTURE REVENUES AND COSTS.

IN THIS RESPECT, THE FUTURE PRICES OF FOSSIL FUEL AND RATES OF INFLATION WERE IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS. CAREFUL DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM AND THE ALTERNATIVES UNDER ANALYSIS WAS REQUIRED.

HE SAID HE FELT THAT HONG KONG COULD RELY ON THE EXPERTISE OF THE FINANCIAL ADVISERS TO MAKE A BALANCED AND EXHAUSTIVE ANALYSIS.

+THE ECONOMIC REASONING WITH ANY INVESTMENT OUTLAY ALSO HINGES ON CONDITIONS WHICH MAY CHANGE BECAUSE OF THE ACTION TAKEN,+ HE ADDED.

+HERE, THE OUTCOME OF FUTURE DATA AND ESTIMATES INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER AS COSTINGS, REVENUES AND FUNDING REQUIREMENTS CHANGE.+

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INCLUDE N-POWER TARIFF IN CONTROL SCHEME  
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APART FROM MAKING PUBLIC THE INFORMATION ON THE TARIFF FOR THE PURCHASE OF NUCLEAR-GENERATED ELECTRICITY, GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE A PRAGMATIC STEP BY INCLUDING THE TARIFF IN THE SCHEMES OF CONTROL OF THE TWO LOCAL POWER COMPANIES, THE HON JACKIE CHAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE MOVE WOULD PROVIDE REASONABLE CONTROL AND ENSURE THAT THE INTEREST OF HONG KONG WAS NOT JEOPARDISED, HE SAID.

+AN OPEN AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ADOPT A FRANK AND SINCERE ATTITUDE WHICH IS THE KEY TO THE COMMUNITY'S SUCCESS, PROSPERITY AND PEACEFULNESS,+ HE ADDED.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE PUBLIC HAD BEEN DEPRIVED OF THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE TO BUY EITHER COAL-FIRED OR NUCLEAR-GENERATED ELECTRICITY, BUT THEY SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT AS CONSUMERS TO KNOW HOW THE RATE OF TARIFF WOULD BE ARRIVED AT.

MR CHAN SAID HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY CHINA INSISTED ON THE SIX-YEAR GUARANTEE THAT THE TARIFF OF NUCLEAR-GENERATED ELECTRICITY WOULD NOT BE HIGHER THAN COAL OR OIL-FIRED ELECTRICITY.

+LOGICALLY, THE COST SHOULD BE HIGHEST DURING THE PLANT'S INITIAL OPERATION. YET ASSURANCE OF THE TARIFF IN THIS PERIOD HAS BEEN GIVEN.

+SEVERAL YEARS LATER WHEN THE PLANT ATTAINS ITS HIGHEST EFFICIENCY, THE COST SHOULD BECOME STEADY OR EVEN LOWER. YET THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG HAVE FAILED TO SECURE A LONGER-TERM GUARANTEE OF LOW TARIFF.+

+THIS IS REALLY BAFFLING,+ HE SAID.

ON SAFETY ASPECTS, MR CHAN SAID IT WAS UNKNOWN WHETHER THE CONTAINMENT BUILDING OF A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT WOULD ACHIEVE THE EXPECTED EFFECT WHEN AN ACCIDENT OCCURRED.

NOTING THAT AMERICAN AUTHORITIES HAD YET TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE RUPTURE OF THE CONTAINMENT, HE SAID IT WAS TOTALLY UNCONVINCING TO ASK THE PUBLIC TO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN SOME UNTESTED SAFETY-PROVED PRODUCT.

MR CHAN ALSO CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO LET PEOPLE KNOW OF INFORMATION ON SAFETY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, SO THAT AN ATMOSPHERE OF PEACE IN THE SOCIETY WOULD BE CREATED.

+IT WILL BE BEYOND OUR BELIEF TO LEARN THAT THE AUTHORITIES CONSIDER IT IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE PUBLIC THE INFORMATION ON POWER PLANT SAFETY,+ HE ADDED.

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BETTER UNDERSTANDING WOULD ALLAY PUBLIC FEAR  
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IT IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN URGENTLY TO ASSIST THE PUBLIC TO UNDERSTAND AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE THE SAFETY AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE DAYA BAY PROJECTS, THE HON CHENG HON-KWAN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THE PROBLEM, HE SAID, MIGHT TAKE A LONG TIME IN VIEW OF THE DEPTH OF CONCERN AND INSUFFICIENT SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE.

BUT THE GOVERNMENT AND THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY MUST REALISE THAT BETTER UNDERSTANDING WOULD ALLAY THE FEAR OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC MORE READILY AND HENCE ESTABLISH A HIGHER DEGREE OF CONFIDENCE, HE SAID.

+THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG DO HAVE THE RIGHT IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES TO BE PROVIDED WITH THE INFORMATION REQUESTED,+ HE ADDED.

/MR CHENG .....

MR CHENG SAID AS FUTURE CONSUMERS THE PUBLIC SHOULD BE ASSURED OF A LEVEL OF TARIFF WHICH WOULD BE COMPETITIVE IN COMPARISON WITH THAT FOR COAL-FIRED ELECTRICITY, AND HE WELCOMED ANY EVIDENCE WHICH MIGHT JUSTIFY THE PRICE ASSESSMENT AT THIS TIME.

COMMENTING ON A PROMISE BY THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES TO RELEASE THE SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS IN DUE COURSE, HE SAID THAT THIS REFLECTED AN OPEN AND COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE WHICH LIKEWISE PREVAILED IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

LASTLY, MR CHENG POINTED OUT THAT SAFETY ASSESSMENT AND ECONOMIC REVIEW WERE AN ON-GOING PROCESS FOR A NUCLEAR POWER STATION AND THAT THE REQUEST FOR CONTINUING RELEASE OF RELEVANT DOCUMENTS OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER STATION WOULD PERSIST UNTIL IT HAD BEEN SAFELY COMMISSIONED.

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DUTY TO SAFEGUARD PEOPLE'S INTERESTS  
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LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS OWE IT TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG TO SAFEGUARD THEIR LONG-TERM INTERESTS, AND TO PRESERVE NOT ONLY THEIR CONFIDENCE BUT ALSO THE TERRITORY'S SOCIAL STABILITY AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY.

THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN SPEAKING ON THE MOTION ON THE DAYA BAY ISSUE.

+UNLESS WE LEGISLATORS ARE SEEN TO BE DOING OUR JOB PROPERLY, ALONG PRAGMATIC AND REALISTIC LINES, WE WILL NOT HAVE THE RESPECT AND SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WHOM WE REPRESENT,+ HE SAID.

IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT THE LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE WERE SUFFICIENTLY SAFEGUARDED, MR CHEONG-LEEN SAID HE MADE THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS:

- \* THE COUNCIL SHOULD STUDY THE REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY AFTER THE CHERNOBYL NUCLEAR DISASTER TO SEE WHETHER ANY ADDITIONAL SAFEGUARDS ARE APPLICABLE TO THE DAYA BAY PLANT-
- \* THE COUNCIL SHOULD CONTINUE TO SEEK THE LATEST INFORMATION FROM ADVANCED COUNTRIES IN THE NUCLEAR POWER FIELD-
- \* THE COUNCIL SHOULD START DISCUSSING WITH THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES THE SETTING UP OF A JOINT NUCLEAR POWER SAFETY AND MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN TIME FOR THE START-UP OF THE FIRST REACTOR AT DAYA BAY IN 1992.

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- \* THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD START EDUCATING THE PUBLIC AT ALL AGE LEVELS ON NUCLEAR POWER GENERATION;
- \* THE GOVERNMENT AND THE GUANGDONG PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES SHOULD COLLABORATE TO WORK OUT COMPREHENSIVE CONTINGENCY PLANS IN CASE OF ANY INCIDENT AT THE DAYA BAY PLANT= AND
- \* THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE ALL POSSIBLE MEASURES TO SAFEGUARD THE LONG-TERM ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF HONG KONG PEOPLE, BECAUSE THE COST OF ELECTRICITY SUPPLY FROM THE DAYA BAY PLANT WOULD BE A KEY FACTOR.

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EARLY ACTION NECESSARY ON SAFETY MEASURES  
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD EXPEDITE ACTION ON PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES AGAINST A NUCLEAR ACCIDENT AND ON PUBLIC EDUCATION ON CONTINGENCY MEASURES, THE HON CHUNG PUI-LAM TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN ADDITION, HONG KONG'S PARTICIPATION IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT SHOULD BE INSTITUTIONALISED, HE SAID DURING DEBATE ON THE DAYA BAY MOTION.

SAFETY STANDARDS SHOULD BE REVIEWED FROM TIME TO TIME AS THESE WERE BECOMING MORE STRINGENT INTERNATIONALLY.

ON THE ARRANGEMENT TO BUY ELECTRICITY FROM DAYA BAY, MR CHUNG SAID ALL INFORMATION, IN PARTICULAR SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS ON THE ECONOMICS, SHOULD BE MADE PUBLIC.

+IT IS NOT OUR INTENTION TO TOUCH ON THE RIGHT OF MAINTAINING BUSINESS CONFIDENTIALITY, A RIGHT WE SHOULD FIRMLY UPHOLD,+ HE SAID.

+WE WISH ONLY TO BE PROVIDED WITH INFORMATION THAT CAN BE MADE PUBLIC ABOUT THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT AND THE JOINT VENTURE,+ HE ADDED.

MR CHUNG POINTED OUT THAT MEMBERS WERE NOT SEEKING AN ASSURANCE RELATING TO THE LEVEL OF TARIFF BEYOND THE YEAR 2000, BUT RATHER THE MORE READILY AVAILABLE FORMULA FOR THE CALCULATION OF TARIFF APPLICABLE IN THE LONG TERM.

HE SAID HE DID NOT THINK THAT SUCH DATA COULD BE REGARDED AS COMMERCIAL SECRETS.

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ACCURATE INFORMATION CAN ENSURE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE  
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THE BEST WAY PUBLIC CONFIDENCE CAN BE ESTABLISHED AND MAINTAINED ON DAYA BAY IS TO ENSURE THAT ACCURATE INFORMATION IS MADE AVAILABLE ON BOTH THE SAFETY ASPECTS AND THE ECONOMIC AND TARIFF CONSIDERATIONS, THE HON THOMAS CLYDESDALE SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING ON THE DAYA BAY MOTION, MR GLYDESDALE SAID THAT SINCE THE BUILDING OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT SEEMED INEVITABLE, HONG KONG PEOPLE WERE ENTITLED TO DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT ITS SAFETY FEATURES AND ON THE CONTINGENCY PLANS WHICH CLEARLY WOULD BE DEVELOPED TO DEAL WITH ANY EMERGENCY.

+THEY ARE ALSO ENTITLED TO EXPECT THAT THE TARIFF THEY ARE REQUIRED TO PAY FOR ELECTRICITY FROM THE NUCLEAR PLANT WILL NOT EXCEED THE PRICE OF ELECTRICITY GENERATED BY MORE CONVENTIONAL MEANS,+ HE SAID.

MR CLYDESDALE SAID THAT WHEN FULLY OPERATIONAL, THE DAYA BAY PLANT WOULD BE SUPPLYING CHINA LIGHT AND POWER CO ONLY ABOUT 20 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL ELECTRICITY TO BE SOLD TO THE COMPANY'S CUSTOMERS.

+THE COST OF NUCLEAR POWER WILL THEREFORE HAVE ONLY A LIMITED EFFECT ON THE OVERALL TARIFF TO BE CHARGED TO THE CONSUMER,+ HE SAID.

MR CLYDESDALE ALSO QUOTED THE CHAIRMAN OF CHINA LIGHT AND POWER CO WHO EARLIER STATED THAT +OUR FORECASTS SHOW THAT THE COST OF ELECTRICITY PURCHASED FROM THE NUCLEAR STATION WILL BE LOWER THAN THAT OF AN EQUIVALENT COAL-FIRED STATION COMMISSIONED IN HONG KONG IN THE SAME TIME SCALE+.

+NOW I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT LORD KADOORIE WOULD MAKE THAT STATEMENT LIGHTLY SINCE THESE FORECASTS MUST HAVE PLAYED A SUBSTANTIAL PART IN THE OVERALL ASSESSMENTS WHICH THE COMPANY MADE BEFORE COMMITTING ITSELF TO THE JOINT VENTURE,+ HE SAID.

MR CLYDESDALE SAID HE BELIEVED NUCLEAR POWER WAS GOING TO BE THE MAIN POWER SOURCE OF THE FUTURE AND THAT IT WAS ALREADY ESTABLISHING AN OPERATIONAL AND SAFETY RECORD, WHICH, TAKEN IN ITS INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT, WAS BOTH IMPRESSIVE AND ENCOURAGING.

+WE MUST NOT ALLOW CHERNOBYL TO DISTORT THIS RECORD OUT OF ALL PROPORTION NOR TO ALLOW SCARE TACTICS BY THOSE WHO OPPOSE NUCLEAR POWER TO INFLUENCE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC UNDULY,+ HE SAID.

MR CLYDESDALE SAID THE VIEWS HE PROVIDED GENERALLY REPRESENTED THE STANDPOINT OF NOT SIMPLY INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS BUT ALSO LOCAL BUSINESSMEN WHO MADE UP OVER 70 PER CENT OF HIS CONSTITUENCY.

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ASSURANCES ON OPERATIONAL DETAILS SOUGHT  
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ASSURANCES MUST BE GIVEN THAT ALL INFORMATION ABOUT THE DAILY OPERATION OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT WILL BE MADE PUBLIC, THE HON HUI YIN-FAT SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING ON THE DAYA BAY MOTION, MR HUI SAID SUCH ASSURANCES WOULD ENSURE THAT THOSE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR MONITORING THE PLANT WOULD NOT HOLD BACK ANY INFORMATION WHICH THEY CONSIDERED AS NOT TOO IMPORTANT UNDER THE PRETEXT OF UPHOLDING +PUBLIC INTEREST+.

HE NOTED THAT THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT HAD REPEATEDLY STRESSED THAT ONE REASON FOR BUILDING THE DAYA BAY PLANT WAS TO INTRODUCE NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY INTO CHINA SO AS TO PROMOTE THE FOUR MODERNISATIONS PROGRAMMES.

+HOWEVER, IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER THE COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY INSTALLATIONS AND REGULATIONS CAN PLAY A USEFUL ROLE IN PROTECTING THE PLANT WHEN EAGER SCIENTISTS CONDUCT EXPERIMENTS IN THEIR QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES AND THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY SHOULD PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THIS POINT.

MR HUI ALSO SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY WOULD INSTALL SPECIAL INSTRUMENTS TO DETECT RADIATION, IT WAS NOT KNOWN WHAT ACTION THE GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC WHEN THE RADIATION LEVEL ABOVE THE SAFETY STANDARD WAS DETECTED IN HONG KONG.

HE HOPED THAT THE HARWELL CONSULTANCY REPORT COMMISSIONED BY THE GOVERNMENT WOULD MAKE DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS ON THIS.

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DISCLOSE FULL INFORMATION ON DAYA BAY

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FULL AND COMPLETE DISCLOSURE OF ALL RELEVANT INFORMATION CONCERNING THE SAFETY AND TARIFF OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT MUST BE MADE FORTHWITH, THE HON RICHARD LAI SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION ON DAYA BAY, MR LAI SAID THE PROPOSED PLANT HAD ALREADY EXACTED ITS TOLL IN POLARISING THE COMMUNITY AND TO SOME EXTENT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

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THE WAY THE WHOLE AFFAIR WAS HANDLED GAVE CAUSE TO PEOPLE TO FEEL THAT THE CONFIDENCE IN SECURING A STABLE AND PROSPEROUS FUTURE HAD BEEN ERODED, HE SAID.

+OUR IMMEDIATE TASK, ONE THAT IS WITHIN OUR POWER TO DO, IS TO RESTORE THE FAITH IN THE FAIRNESS AND OPENNESS OF OUR GOVERNMENT, WITHOUT WHICH THE FUTURE OF THIS BELOVED TERRITORY WOULD INDEED BE BLEAK,+ HE SAID.

MR LAI STRESSED THAT HE HAD NEVER BEEN ANTI-NUCLEAR OR ANTI-DAYA BAY, BUT SAID HE FELT THAT CRITICAL QUESTIONS ON THE ECONOMIC VIABILITY AND SAFETY OF THE PLANT MUST FIRST BE ANSWERED BEFORE GIVING HIS ENDORSEMENT TO THE PROJECT.

+I DO NOT BELIEVE IN TAKING RISK WITHOUT FIRST ASCERTAINING THE PAYOFF.

+I DON'T CONSIDER ANY RISK UNACCEPTABLE, BUT WE MUST KNOW WHAT BENEFITS THERE ARE BEFORE TAKING THAT RISK, NO MATTER HOW SMALL IT MAY BE,+ HE SAID.

+BUT UP TO NOW, WE HAVE ONLY BEEN SHOWERED WITH ARGUMENTS OF THE EFFORTS TO AND LIKELIHOOD OF MINIMISING THE RISK ASSOCIATING WITH THE PLANT, BUT KNOW VERY LITTLE OF THE BENEFITS THAT THE PLANT MAY BRING US,+ HE SAID.

MR LAI SAID IT WAS DISAPPOINTING THAT NONE OF THE EFFORTS WAS SUCCESSFUL IN BUYING MORE TIME FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS AND THE PUBLIC TO DELIBERATE.

HE SAID THE DAYA BAY ISSUE WAS NOT OVER YET, AND ASSURED THAT MEMBERS WOULD CONTINUE TO EXAMINE THE SALIENT FEATURES OF THE ECONOMIC AND SAFETY ISSUES INVOLVED.

ON SAFETY, MR LAI SAID THAT AFTER THE RECENT TRIP TO PEKING, HE WAS CONVINCED OF THE SINCERITY AND THE DETERMINATION OF THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES TO DO THEIR UTMOST TO ENSURE A SAFE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE PLANT.

+NEVERTHELESS, WE MUST NOT LET UP ON OUR EFFORTS TO SECURE THE BEST ARRANGEMENT IN TERMS OF SAFETY,+ HE ADDED.

TURNING TO THE ECONOMIC ASPECT OF THE ISSUE, MR LAI SAID HE REGRETTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT REVEAL THE LAZARD BROTHERS REPORT WHICH WOULD SHED LIGHT ON THE REASON FOR HONG KONG'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROJECT.

HE SAID HE WONDERED WHAT HAD TO BE CONCEALED TO PROTECT THE PROFITABILITY OF CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY, WHICH WAS THE ONLY ONE COMPANY INVOLVED IN NUCLEAR ENERGY PURCHASE.

/MR LAI .....

MR LAI ALSO QUESTIONED WHY THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY (HKNIC) WOULD NOT MAKE A GUARANTEE ON THE 25 PER CENT SHARE OF POWER FROM DAYA BAY. HE SAID THAT THE PRICE OF NUCLEAR POWER WOULD BE CHEAPER THAN COAL FIRE GENERATED ELECTRICITY WHEN THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY (GNIC) COULD MAKE SUCH A GUARANTEE ON THE 45 PER CENT OF NUCLEAR POWER TO BE SOLD TO HONG KONG.

+EVEN IF THE PRICE OF THE FIRST SIX YEARS' ELECTRICITY SUPPLIED BY GNIC WILL BE GUARANTEED, THE REST OF THE POWER (25 PER CENT) FROM DAYA BAY MAY BE MORE EXPENSIVE THAN COAL FIRED ELECTRICITY,+ HE SAID.

EVEN THOUGH THE PROFIT OF HKNIC WOULD BE IN LINE WITH THE MARGIN ALLOWED UNDER THE SCHEME OF CONTROL, CONSUMERS WOULD STILL SUFFER IF THE COST OF NUCLEAR POWER SHOULD SOAR, MR LAI SAID.

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MORE ADVANCED COUNTRIES ABANDONING N-PLANTS  
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MORE AND MORE GOVERNMENTS AND COMMUNITIES OF ADVANCED COUNTRIES HAVE GIVEN UP OR SUSPENDED THE USE OF NUCLEAR POWER AS THEY REALISE THE THREAT THAT NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS MAY HAVE ON THE SAFETY OF THEIR PEOPLE AND ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

THIS WAS STATED BY DR THE HON CONRAD LAM WHEN HE SPOKE IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION ON DAYA BAY IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

+NOW THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT HAS BEGUN, THE ANXIETIES OF THE PUBLIC WILL NOT BE ALLAYED UNLESS THE SAFETY MEASURES AND THE VARIOUS FEASIBLE CONTINGENCY PLANS ARE IMPLEMENTED IN GOOD TIME,+ HE SAID.

DR LAM SAID HE SINCERELY HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT ADOPT AN ATTITUDE OF ONLY GOOD NEWS AND CONCEAL THE BAD IN THE HANDLING OF THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE DAYA BAY ISSUE, IN PARTICULAR THE ECONOMIC AND SAFETY ASPECTS.

HE ADDED THAT THE NEWS OF THE SILENT MAJORITY ON THE DAYA BAY ISSUE SHOULD NOT BE ABUSED BEFORE THEY WERE ACTUALLY AIRED.

DR LAM SAID HE CONSIDERED THAT IT WOULD DO NO GOOD TO ANY PARTY IF THE INTERESTS AND OPINION OF THE HONG KONG PEOPLE WERE NOT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT BY CHINA PROPERLY.

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EARLIER IN HIS SPEECH, DR LAM SAID THE DAYA BAY ISSUE HAD CAUSED HECTIC DISCUSSION AND ARGUMENT WITHIN THE COUNCIL AS WELL AS BY THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE.

+ACTUALLY THIS IS A GOOD SYMPTOM SHOWING THAT ALL OF US ARE VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, DR LAM SAID HE REGRETTED THAT THE CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE HAD GENERATED CERTAIN UNDESIRABLE SIDE-EFFECTS WHICH WOULD AFFECT THE IMAGE OF THE COUNCIL IN THE EYES OF THE PUBLIC.

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NEED FOR COMMERCIAL SECRECY QUESTIONED  
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THE NEED FOR THE TERRITORY'S TWO POWER COMPANIES TO ADOPT COMMERCIAL SECRECY WAS QUERIED BY THE HON LEE YU-TAI IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

BOTH COMPANIES ENJOYED MONOPOLIES IN THE SUPPLY OF ELECTRICITY, MR LEE SAID IN SPEAKING ON THE MOTION ON THE DAYA BAY ISSUE.

HE SAID IT WAS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT COMMERCIAL SECRETS MUST BE KEPT IN SITUATION WHERE COMPETITION EXISTED, OTHERWISE BUSINESS MIGHT BE LOST TO COMPETITORS.

HOWEVER, IN HONG KONG THE TWO POWER COMPANIES WERE NOT IN THIS SITUATION.

+AS THERE IS NO COMPETITION FROM OTHER SUPPLIERS, IT IS DIFFICULT TO CONVINCE PEOPLE WHY THERE IS A NEED FOR COMMERCIAL SECRECY, BUT FOR EXCEPTIONAL AREAS LIKE CONDITION OF LOAN FINANCING,+ HE SAID.

REFERRING TO THE PRICE OF ELECTRICITY, MR LEE SAID CONSUMERS WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHETHER OR NOT THE INVESTMENT BY CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY (CLP) IN THE DAYA BAY PROJECT WOULD LEAD TO GREATER PROFIT FOR THE COMPANY AND HIGHER RATES OF TARIFF FOR ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION.

+THE LARGE AMOUNT OF INVESTMENT CLP PUTS INTO THE PROJECT MAY ENLARGE THE BASE ON WHICH PERMISSIBLE PROFIT LEVELS ARE CALCULATED,+ HE SAID.

+SO IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT THE NEW PROFIT LEVELS WILL MEAN A MORE EXPENSIVE ELECTRICITY BILL FOR THE CONSUMER,+ HE SAID.

/MR LEE .....

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MR LEE ALSO SAID THAT THE POWER AND PRIVILEGES ORDINANCE, WHICH EMPOWERED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO OBTAIN INFORMATION INCLUDING COMMERCIAL SECRETS, COULD BE INVOKED IF THE PUBLIC INTEREST SO WARRANTED.

HE SAID A GREAT MANY PEOPLE IN HONG KONG CONSIDERED THE NUCLEAR PLANT AS A GREAT THREAT TO THE SAFETY AND EVEN THE EXISTENCE OF THE TERRITORY.

+IT MAY TURN OUT TO BE AN ISSUE SO CRUCIAL TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST THAT MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL MAY FIND THEMSELVES FACED WITH THE DIFFICULT DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO INVOKE THE PROVISIONS OF THE POWER AND PRIVILEGES ORDINANCE,+ HE ADDED.

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE A BASIC DEMAND

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THE CALL BY LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR THE DISCLOSURE OF ALL RELEVANT INFORMATION CONCERNING DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IS A MOST BASIC DEMAND, THE HON PANG CHUN-HOI SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A DEMOCRATIC AND LIBERAL SOCIETY, HE SAID, IT WAS NECESSARY TO MAKE KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC ALL INFORMATION WHICH WAS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST AND OF GREAT CONCERN TO THE PEOPLE.

THE FACT THAT NO SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING WAS HELD BEFORE THE CONTRACT SIGNING OF THE DAYA BAY PROJECT HAD LED HONG KONG PEOPLE TO GIVE THE COUNCIL A VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE, HE SAID.

+SINCE THE SINO-BRITISH NEGOTIATIONS ON HONG KONG'S FUTURE, THE DAYA BAY PROJECT IS AN ISSUE OVER WHICH THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT, OUR MEMBERS AND THE PUBLIC HAS BEEN THE MOST HOSTILE,+ HE NOTED.

HE SAID THIS WAS BECAUSE THE FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS REPORTED AFTER THEIR TRIPS ABROAD THAT THEIR CONFIDENCE HAD GREATLY INCREASED. ACCORDING TO SEVERAL PUBLIC OPINION SURVEYS CONDUCTED RECENTLY, HOWEVER, MOST PEOPLE STILL WANTED TO STOP THE BUILDING OF THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT.

+THEIR ANXIETY HAS NOT BEEN ALLAYED AT ALL,+ HE SAID.

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CLOSE CONTACT WITH CHINA SUGGESTED

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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD HAVE CLOSE CONTACT WITH CHINA TO ENSURE THAT THE CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION AND MONITORING OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT MET INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

THIS WAS SUGGESTED BY THE HON POON CHI-FAI WHEN SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE DAYA BAY MOTION IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR POON ALSO CALLED FOR THE PROMOTION OF NUCLEAR EDUCATION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON NUCLEAR SAFETY AND ON THE ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF NUCLEAR POWER TO ASSURE THE PEOPLE THEY WOULD NOT BEAR ANY UNNECESSARY FINANCIAL BURDEN.

IN ORDER TO CLEAR DOUBTS, THE COMPANIES CONCERNED SHOULD PROVIDE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO INCREASE THE PEOPLE'S KNOWLEDGE AND DEEPEN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT, HE ADDED.

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MORE DATA ON RADIATION REQUIRED

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THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY AND THE GOVERNMENT HAD DONE NOTHING EFFECTIVE TO ALLAY THE FEARS OF HONG KONG PEOPLE CONCERNING THE DAYA BAY PLANT, PROFESSOR THE HON POON CHUNG-KWONG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING ON THE MOTION ON THE DAYA BAY ISSUE, PROFESSOR POON SAID HE STRONGLY FELT THAT THE GNPJVC SHOULD RELEASE TO THE PUBLIC INFORMATION ON SAFETY ASPECTS OF THE PLANT.

THE INFORMATION SHOULD INCLUDE SUCH TECHNICAL DATA AS RADIATION DOSES UNDER VARIOUS ACCIDENT SCENARIOS AND THE LIKELY IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH OF PEOPLE LIVING AT VARYING DISTANCES.

+A COMPARISON OF THESE DATA WITH THOSE WE OBTAINED DURING OUR FACT-FINDING TRIPS WILL SHOW WHETHER THE DAYA BAY PRESSURISED WATER REACTOR PLANT IS TO BE SO CONSTRUCTED AS TO PREVENT ANY SERIOUS RADIOACTIVE RELEASES EVEN IN THE VERY UNLIKELY EVENT OF A MAJOR ACCIDENT,+ PROFESSOR POON SAID.

HE ALSO ASKED WHETHER THE GNPJVC WOULD INCORPORATE THE SAND FILTERS SYSTEM IN THE FRENCH-DESIGNED DAYA BAY PLANT AS AN ADDITIONAL SAFETY FEATURE WHICH FRANCE INTENDED TO INTRODUCE IN ITS PWR PLANTS.

/COMMENTING ON .....

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COMMENTING ON WHAT HE PERCEIVED AS THE TWO MAJOR WORRIES OF THE PUBLIC, PROFESSOR POON RULED OUT A NUCLEAR-BOMB TYPE OF EXPLOSION OCCURRING IN A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT.

HE ALSO REJECTED THE POSSIBILITY OF A CHERNOBYL-TYPE DISASTER HAPPENING IN A PWR PLANT SUCH AS WAS PLANNED FOR DAYA BAY BECAUSE THE CHERNOBYL PLANT HAD NO PURPOSE-BUILT CONTAINMENT.

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PROMISES MUST BE KEPT  
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THE ONLY REALISTIC COURSE OF ACTION FOR THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO TAKE IN DISCHARGING ITS DUTY TO THE PEOPLE OVER THE DAYA BAY ISSUE IS TO ENSURE THAT PROMISES MADE BY CONCERNED PARTIES ARE FAITHFULLY KEPT AND IMPLEMENTED.

THE HON HELMUT SOHMEN SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), ADDING THAT DISCUSSION ON THE ISSUE HAD SUFFERED FROM EMOTIONAL OUTBURSTS WHICH OVERSHADOWED RATIONAL DELIBERATION.

TOPICS QUITE UNRELATED TO THE MAIN ISSUES WERE RAISED AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF GENERAL PUBLIC UNEASE WITH NUCLEAR POWER, BLURRING THE ESSENTIAL POINTS THAT NEEDED TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE WIDER CONTEXT OF GLOBAL AND LOCAL ENERGY PLANNING FOR REQUIREMENTS BEYOND THE END OF THIS CENTURY.

HOWEVER, MR SOHMEN SAID HE FULLY RESPECTED THE OPINIONS OF THOSE WHO SINCERELY BELIEVED THAT NUCLEAR POWER WAS UNNECESSARY, PREMATURE OR TOO RISKY. HE ALSO AGREED THAT NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS COULD NOT BE ABSOLUTELY SAFE AND TO CALL ATTENTION TO THIS FACT TO HELP PREVENT LETHARGY, SLOPPINESS OR NEGLIGENCE WAS A WORTHWHILE AND COMMENDABLE EXERCISE.

COMMENTING ON THE MOTION TO DISCLOSE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON SAFETY AND COMMERCIAL MATTERS, MR SOHMEN SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALREADY RELEASED A LOT OF INFORMATION TO THE COUNCIL AND TO THE PUBLIC IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS.

HE WONDERED WHETHER THE PRODUCTION OF MORE DOCUMENTS WOULD PUT PEOPLE'S MINDS AT REST.

HE ALSO QUESTIONED WHETHER THE PRODUCTION OF MORE DOCUMENTS WOULD INCREASE SAFETY AND GUARANTEE HIGHER CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE STANDARDS SINCE THE DECISION HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE TO PROCEED WITH BUILDING THE PLANT.

HOWEVER, DESPITE THESE RESERVATIONS, HE SUPPORTED THE MOTION.

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LEGCO DELEGATIONS HELP ENHANCE SAFETY OF DAYA BAY  
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DELEGATIONS ON NUCLEAR GENERATION HAVE OBTAINED A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF INFORMATION THAT CAN HELP TO ENHANCE THE SAFETY OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, THE HON DANIEL TSE SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE DAYA BAY MOTION, MR TSE SAID FROM THE INFORMATION COLLECTED BY THE DELEGATIONS THERE WAS NO SCIENTIFIC PROOF TO SHOW THAT THE PROJECT WAS NOT FEASIBLE.

COMMENTING ON THE DELEGATIONS FACT-FINDING WORK, MR TSE SAID: +WE DO NOT EXPECT EVERYONE TO AGREE WITH US AND WE DO NOT ASK FOR ANY SYMPATHY FROM OTHERS.

EARLIER IN HIS SPEECH, MR TSE DESCRIBED THE PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAVAIL EXPERIENCED BY DELEGATION MEMBERS AND GAVE AN ACCOUNT OF HOW HE CONSOLIDATED HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE OPERATION OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS BEFORE EMBARKING ON THE FACT-FINDING TRIP.

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MISGIVINGS ARISE AFTER CHERNOBYL  
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THE GOVERNMENTS OF CHINA AND HONG KONG SHOULD RECONSIDER THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT, THE HON ANDREW WONG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR WONG SAID HIS MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE PROJECT AROSE AFTER NEW POST-CHERNOBYL INFORMATION BECAME AVAILABLE.

+MY MISGIVINGS ARE SUCH THAT I CANNOT BUT ARRIVE AT THE TENTATIVE CONCLUSION THAT DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IS NOT TO THE LONG-TERM INTEREST OF BOTH CHINA AND HONG KONG,+ MR WONG SAID.

AT THE OUTSET MR WONG DECLARED HIS SUPPORT FOR THE MOTION BECAUSE HE BELIEVED THAT THE GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO PROVIDE THE COUNCIL DETAILS OF THE ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING SAFETY AND THE TARIFF FOR THE PURCHASE OF ELECTRICITY FROM DAYA BAY SO THAT +THIS COUNCIL CAN BEGIN TO MEANINGFULLY PERFORM THE ROLE OF SUPERVISING THE ADMINISTRATION.+

HE ALSO SAID THE GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO EXPLAIN TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE COUNCIL WHY SUCH ARRANGEMENTS WOULD SUFFICIENTLY SAFEGUARD THE LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF HONG KONG PEOPLE.

/MR WONG .....

MR WONG THEN REFERRED TO + THREE POINTS OF MAJOR CONSTITUTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE+ BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE DAYA BAY CONTROVERSY.

THE FIRST CONCERNED THE POWERS AND PRIVILEGES OF THE COUNCIL WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN USED TO DRAFT A MOTION IN MUCH STRONGER TERMS, HE SAID.

HOWEVER, MR WONG SAID THAT SUCH POWER OUGHT TO BE EXERCISED IN +MODERATION+ BECAUSE AS +MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, WE ARE HERE TO MONITOR, CRITICISE AND SUPERVISE, BUT NOT TO DIRECT, LESS SO TO GOVERN.+

THE SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL POINT RELATED TO THE GOVERNOR'S DUAL ROLE AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND AS PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATURE.

AFTER EXPLAINING THE +UNENVIABLE TASK+ OF THE TWO ROLES, MR WONG SUGGESTED THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OUGHT TO BE A MEMBER WHO DID NOT CARRY ANY GOVERNMENT PORTFOLIO AND WAS NOT A SERVING MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

HE PROPOSED THAT IN THE INTEREST OF SMOOTH TRANSITION TOWARDS THE SEPARATION OF THE TWO ROLES, THE GOVERNOR APPOINT A +NON-EXECUTIVE+ MEMBER AS +DEPUTY PRESIDENT+ TO PRESIDE OVER THE COUNCIL IN HIS ABSENCE.

ON THE THIRD CONSTITUTIONAL POINT CONCERNING THE DUAL EXECUTIVE-LEGISLATIVE ROLE OF MEMBERS, MR WONG SAID THERE WAS A SEGMENT OF PUBLIC OPINION WHICH CALLED FOR A COMPLETE SEPARATION BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE AND THE LEGISLATURE.

+I DO NOT BELIEVE THIS IS A WISE COURSE OF REFORM,+ HE SAID. +THE CORRECT COURSE LIES IN AN UNEQUIVOCAL DELINEATION OF THE EXECUTIVE ROLE AND THE LEGISLATIVE-CUM-SUPERVISION ROLE, NOT IN THE ARTIFICIAL SEPARATION OF MEMBERS.

+BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF THE EXECUTIVE, IT IS ALWAYS THOSE MEMBERS WHO DO NOT HOLD GOVERNMENT PORTFOLIOS AND ARE NOT EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS WHO PRIMARILY PERFORM THE SUPERVISORY ROLE,+ HE SAID, AND THEN WENT ON TO PROPOSE THAT ALL STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES WHICH WERE SUPERVISORY AND SCRUTINEERING IN NATURE SHOULD COMPRISE NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS ONLY.

HE THEN CALLED FOR THE SETTING UP OF SUCH A STANDING OR SELECT COMMITTEE ON ELECTRICITY OR ENERGY POLICY.

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STATEMENT BY LYDIA DUNN

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THE FOLLOWING IS A STATEMENT MADE BY THE HON LYDIA DUNN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AT THE END OF THE DEBATE ON THE DAYA BAY MOTION TODAY:

+THIS HAS BEEN A LONG DEBATE. THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ARE DEEPLY AND SINCERELY HELD. AS I SAID AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS DEBATE, WE, ALL OF US HAVE A COMMON INTEREST BUT IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT WE HAVE DIFFERENT OPINIONS.

+IT IS RIGHT THAT THESE SHOULD BE FRANKLY EXPRESSED. BUT THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR DISCOURTESY IN THIS CHAMBER. I PROFOUNDLY REGRET ANY DISCOURTESY SHOWN TO THE PRESIDENT OF THIS COUNCIL.+

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STATEMENT BY S. L. CHEN

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THE FOLLOWING IS A STATEMENT MADE BY THE HON S.L. CHEN UNDER STANDING ORDER 28 (1) IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY):

+AS THE ACTING SENIOR MEMBER WHO CHAIRED THE IN-HOUSE MEETING TO WHICH MR MARTIN LEE REFERRED TO IN HIS SPEECH, I WISH TO STATE CATEGORICALLY THAT THE VOTING PROCEDURE WAS FREELY AND DEMOCRATICALLY CONDUCTED. I AND NONE OF THE MEMBERS WHO VOTED WERE ASKED BY GOVERNMENT TO VOTE ONE WAY OR THE OTHER.

+I DEEPLY REGRET THE SHADOW CAST BY MR LEE ON THE INTEGRITY OF THOSE OF HIS COLLEAGUES WHO HAPPENED TO DISAGREE WITH HIM. I FEEL STRONGLY THAT THIS POINT SHOULD BE PLACED ON OFFICIAL RECORD.+

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NO INTENTION TO ABDICATE MEDICAL RESPONSIBILITY  
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IT WAS NOT PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION IN SETTING UP A CONSULTANCY TO ABDICATE ITS RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES TO THE POPULATION AS A WHOLE, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

WINDING UP THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE CONSULTANTS' REPORT ON THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS, HE SAID THE PROPOSED HOSPITAL AUTHORITY, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE REPORT, SHOULD BE FUNDED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE CONTINUED PROVISION OF ADEQUATE HOSPITAL SERVICES, PARTICULARLY FOR DISADVANTAGED PATIENTS.

+THIS IS GOVERNMENT POLICY AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE SO,+ HE STRESSED.

IN ADDITION, MR CHAMBERS SAID, HE WOULD LIKE TO REPEAT PUBLICLY THE ASSURANCE THAT HAD BEEN GIVEN TO STAFF WORKING IN THE PUBLIC HOSPITAL SYSTEM THAT THERE WOULD BE CONSULTATION ON THE DETAILS OF ANY NEW ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WOULD AFFECT THEIR CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT BEFORE THESE WERE IMPLEMENTED.

+ONCE AGAIN I SHOULD POINT OUT THAT THE CONSULTANTS DID NOT GO INTO DETAILS ABOUT THIS ASPECT OF THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS, + HE SAID, +AND WE ARE AT PRESENT EXAMINING SEVERAL DIFFERENT METHODS OF ACHIEVING A GREATER DEGREE OF INTEGRATION.+

THANKING ALL MEMBERS FOR SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE AND THEIR EFFORTS IN STIMULATING AND COLLECTING PUBLIC RESPONSES TO THE REPORT, MR CHAMBERS SAID IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO PUBLISH A FULL REPORT ON THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY THE PUBLIC ON THE CONSULTANTS' REPORT.

+A TOTAL OF 99 SUBMISSIONS HAS BEEN RECEIVED, INCLUDING THOSE FORWARDED TO ME BY THE STANDING PANEL,+ HE SAID, ADDING THAT A LARGE PROPORTION OF THE PUBLIC COMMENTS MADE HAD BEEN REFLECTED IN THE DEBATE.

SOME MEMBERS HAD SPOKEN ABOUT THE SCOPE OF THE CONSULTANTS' BRIEF AND THE NEED TO CONSIDER NOT JUST HOSPITAL SERVICES, BUT ALSO PRIMARY HEALTH CARE, PREVENTIVE SERVICES INCLUDING HEALTH EDUCATION, COMMUNITY NURSING, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES.

+WHEN IT WAS DECIDED ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO TO COMMISSION CONSULTANTS TO CARRY OUT THIS REVIEW, IT WAS FELT THAT TO INCLUDE ALL ASPECTS OF THE HEALTH SERVICES WOULD RESULT IN AN ALMOST UNMANAGEABLE BRIEF,+ MR CHAMBERS SAID.

/+AND SINCE .....

+AND SINCE IT WAS CONSIDERED THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT AREA WHICH NEEDED REVIEW WAS THE MANAGEMENT OF THE PUBLIC HOSPITAL SYSTEM, THE TERMS OF REFERENCE GIVEN TO THE CONSULTANTS WERE WORDED ACCORDINGLY.+

MR CHAMBERS SAID HE AGREED THAT IF THE RECOMMENDATION TO ESTABLISH A STATUTORY HOSPITAL AUTHORITY WAS IMPLEMENTED, IT WOULD BE NEEDED TO CONSIDER THE EFFECT THAT THIS WOULD HAVE ON THE WHOLE OF THE PRESENT MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND NOT JUST THE GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS.

+THERE ARE OBVIOUS LINKS BETWEEN THE HOSPITALS AND THE OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE HEALTH SERVICES AND THE EFFECTS ON THESE OF THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS WOULD HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY EXAMINED,+ HE SAID.

MR CHAMBERS NOTED THAT THE PROPOSED HOSPITAL AUTHORITY, CLEARLY THE MOST IMPORTANT SINGLE RECOMMENDATION IN THE REPORT, RECEIVED MAJORITY SUPPORT FROM MEMBER SOCIETIES OF THE FEDERATION OF MEDICAL SOCIETIES OF HONG KONG, AND WIDELY SUPPORTED BY DISTRICT BOARDS AND THE SUBVENTED HOSPITAL BODIES.

+BUT SEVERAL MAJOR RESERVATIONS HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL,+ MR CHAMBER POINTED OUT.

REGARDING THE CONCERN THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATUTORY AUTHORITY WOULD IMPLY THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE RELINQUISHING ITS RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES, AND THAT THIS WOULD PENALISE THOSE WHO RELY ON SUCH SERVICES, MR CHAMBERS ASSURED THAT IT WAS NOT PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO ABDICATE ITS RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS AREA.

TURNING TO OTHER RESERVATIONS RAISED BY MEMBERS, MR CHAMBERS SAID THE REPORT DID NOT SPELL OUT IN DETAIL HOW THESE HOSPITALS WOULD BE INTEGRATED INTO THE SYSTEM, AND IT WAS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT THE VARIOUS HOSPITAL BOARDS WERE WORRIED ABOUT THEIR FUTURE.

+IF THIS RECOMMENDATION IS TO BE IMPLEMENTED WE SHALL CLEARLY HAVE TO DISCUSS THE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE BOARDS, AND I CAN GIVE AN ASSURANCE THAT THIS WILL BE DONE.+

MR CHAMBERS SAID THAT THE CONTRIBUTION MADE BY SUBVENTED HOSPITALS WERE GREATLY VALUED WHILE ASSURING THAT THEIR INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS WOULD BE PRESERVED.

COST IMPLICATIONS WERE ANOTHER DOUBT EXPRESSED, MR CHAMBERS SAID, AND HE DID NOT THINK THE CONSULTANTS WOULD CLAIM THAT THE FIGURES QUOTED WERE MORE THAN A VERY BROAD ESTIMATE OF THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF THEIR PROPOSAL.

+A GREAT DEAL OF WORK REMAINS TO BE DONE ON THIS ASPECT OF THE REPORT AND THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS WILL INEVITABLY BE ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS IN REACHING DECISIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONSULTANTS' RECOMMENDATIONS,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HOSPITAL AUTHORITY COULD COST A VERY LARGE SUM OF MONEY, AND BEFORE A DECISION TO GO AHEAD WAS TAKEN, IT WAS NEEDED TO CONSIDER VERY CAREFULLY WHETHER THIS WAS THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION, OR WHETHER SOME OTHER MEANS OF IMPROVING THE SERVICE WOULD BE MORE COST-EFFECTIVE.

APART FROM THE MAJOR RECOMMENDATION ON A HOSPITAL AUTHORITY, HE ADDED, THE REPORT CONTAINED A LARGE NUMBER OF MORE SPECIFIC PRACTICAL PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE HOSPITAL SYSTEM, IN SUCH AREAS AS INTERNAL HOSPITAL ORGANISATION, REDUCING OVERCROWDING, THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT AND COST CONTROL.

IN GENERAL THESE WERE LESS CONTROVRSIAL, MR CHAMBERS SAID, ADDING THAT IN FACT SOME OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS WERE ALREADY BEING IMPLEMENTED IN SOME HOSPITALS, AND MANY OF THEM COULD BE IMPLEMENTED WITHOUT WAITING FOR A DECISION ON THE SETTING UP OF A HOSPITAL AUTHORITY.

ONE SUCH PROPOSAL WAS THAT A CHARGE SHOULD BE MADE FOR ATTENDANCE AT ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS, IN ORDER TO DETER ABUSE OF THESE SERVICES, HE SAID.

WHILE PROFESSIONAL BODIES IN GENERAL DID NOT OBJECT TO THIS, OTHERS, INCLUDING DISTRICT BOARDS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS, HAVE POINTED OUT THAT SUCH CHARGES WERE NOT LIKELY TO BE EFFECTIVE IN DETERRING INAPPROPRIATE USE OF SUCH SERVICES; IF THERE WAS ANY ABUSE, THIS WAS DUE TO THE LACK OF ADEQUATE OUT-PATIENT CLINIC FACILITIES, PARTICULARLY IN THE LATE EVENING.

+THIS IS SOMETHING WE SHALL NEED TO LOOK AT AGAIN VERY CAREFULLY,+ HE SAID.

MR CHAMBERS SAID SOME MEMBERS SUPPORTED THE RECOMMENDATION OF PROVIDING THE SO-CALLED +B-CLASS+ BEDS TO CATER FOR THE NEEDS OF THE MIDDLE INCOME GROUP.

+SEVERAL MEMBERS CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT THE PROVISION OF HIGHER CLASS ACCOMMODATION OF THIS KIND MUST NOT BE AT THE EXPENSE OF PROVISION FOR GENERAL WARDS.+

SUBJECT TO THIS RESERVATION, MR CHAMBERS SAID, THIS RECOMMENDATION HAD GENERAL SUPPORT AND ONE SUBVENTED HOSPITAL HAD ALREADY TOLD HIM OF ITS WILLINGNESS TO SERVE AS A VENUE FOR A PILOT PROJECT AS RECOMMENDED BY CONSULTANTS.

HE SAID THE PROPOSAL TO ALLOW CONSULTANTS WORKING IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS TO HAVE LIMITED RIGHTS OF PRIVATE PRACTICE HAD AROUSED A GOOD DEAL OF OPPOSITION.

FEARS HAD BEEN EXPRESSED IN VARIOUS QUARTERS AND BY SEVERAL MEMBERS THAT THIS ARRANGEMENT COULD LEAD TO DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT OF PATIENTS AND OTHER ABUSES.

MR CHAMBERS SAID HE AGREED WITH RECOMMENDATIONS THAT THERE WAS A NEED TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE TRAINING TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF STAFF.

+MORE TRAINING, ESPECIALLY IN MANAGEMENT IS NECESSARY TO ENABLE STAFF TO UNDERTAKE THE INCREASED RESPONSIBILITIES IN HOSPITAL AND WARD MANAGEMENT THAT WOULD ARISE FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REPORT.+

AS TO THE CONCERN THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REPORT'S RECOMMENDATIONS MIGHT MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO DEFER A NUMBER OF NEW HOSPITAL PROJECTS, MR CHAMBERS SAID IN A LONG-TERM PREDICTION THE PROPOSED NEW SYSTEM SHOULD EVENTUALLY REDUCE THE DEMAND FOR ADDITIONAL BEDS BY ENSURING MORE EFFICIENT USE OF EXISTING RESOURCES.

+THERE IS CERTAINLY NO INTENTION TO SLOW DOWN THE PRESENT BUILDING PROGRAMME, WHICH INCLUDES TWO NEW HOSPITALS AND MAJOR EXTENSIONS TO FOUR OTHERS,+ HE STRESSED.

REFERRING TO THE NEED TO INCLUDE IN THE REVIEW OUTPATIENT SERVICES WHICH ARE PART AND PARCEL OF THE MEDICAL SERVICES, MR CHAMBERS SAID IF IT WAS DECIDED TO GO AHEAD WITH THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY CONCEPT, IT SHOULD INEVITABLY HAVE TO CONSIDER THE EFFECT ON THE REST OF THE HEALTH SERVICES.

+I AM SURE THAT IF THE DECISION WERE TO IMPLEMENT ONE OF THE CONSULTANTS' OTHER OPTIONS OR SOME MODIFICATION OF THEM WE WOULD SIMILARLY HAVE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE ROLE OF THE CLINICS AND OTHER PARTS OF THE SERVICE,+ HE SAID.

MR CHAMBERS CONCLUDED THAT THE VIEWS OF ALL MEMBERS IN THE DEBATE WOULD BE OF VERY GREAT ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT IN CONSIDERING WHAT ACTION TO TAKE ON THE USEFUL REPORT.

+WE ALREADY HAVE A MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICE OF WHICH HONG KONG CAN BE JUSTLY PROUD - THE RESULTS OF THIS CAN BE SEEN IN OUR STATISTICS FOR EXPECTATION OF LIFE, INFANT MORTALITY AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES, IN ALL OF WHICH WE ARE AMONGST THE TOP FEW COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD,+ MR CHAMBERS SAID.

+BUT THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE SYSTEM CAN BE IMPROVED, AND THAT IS WHY WE COMMISSIONED THIS REPORT.+

HE DESCRIBED THE COMMENTS EXPRESSED IN THE DEBATE AS HELPFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE THAT THERE WAS AN UNITED AIM OF ENSURING THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG OF THE BEST POSSIBLE MEDICAL SERVICES THAT HONG KONG'S RESOURCES COULD PROVIDE.

HEALTH CARE MUST REMAIN GOVT RESPONSIBILITY  
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD REMAIN RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING HEALTH CARE FOR THE PUBLIC AND FOR ENSURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD MEDICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES.

THIS IS ONE OF 16 CONSENSUS VIEWS REACHED BY THE OMELCO STANDING PANEL ON HEALTH SERVICES FOLLOWING A SIX-MONTH STUDY ON THE CONSULTANCY REPORT +THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS+.

THE PANEL'S CONSENSUS VIEWS WERE OUTLINED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY ITS CONVENER, DR THE HON CHIU HIN-KWONG, DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE REPORT.

THEY ARE:

- \* THE SPIRIT OF THE REPORT TO IMPROVE MEDICAL SERVICES IN HONG KONG IS SUPPORTED.
- \* THE TERMS OF REFERENCE ARE TOO LIMITED IN THAT THEY ONLY INCLUDE THE REVIEW ON THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS.
- \* GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING HEALTH CARE FOR THE PUBLIC AND FOR ENSURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GOOD MEDICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES.
- \* GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONTINUE TO PROVIDE FULLY SUBSIDISED MEDICAL SERVICES FOR THE NEEDY.
- \* THERE ARE RESERVATIONS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT HOSPITAL AUTHORITY.
- \* IN REGARD TO INTERNAL HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT, THE PROPOSALS THAT THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE SHOULD BE A DOCTOR; THE WARD MANAGER; THE SENIOR NURSING OFFICER; AND THE FORMATION OF A TRIPARTITE MANAGEMENT TEAM COMPRISING THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, CHIEF NURSING OFFICER AND CHIEF HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATOR ARE SUPPORTED.
- \* THE STAFF RATIO OF A CONSULTANT UNIT SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE MEDICAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION.
- \* IF THE INDEPENDENT HOSPITAL AUTHORITY IS TO BE SET UP OUTSIDE THE CIVIL SERVICE STRUCTURE, THE CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF EXISTING CIVIL SERVICE STAFF SHOULD NOT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED UPON TRANSFER.

- \* THE RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE MEDICAL FACILITIES OF THE SUBVENTED HOSPITALS AND TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF IN THE SUBVENTED SECTOR ARE SUPPORTED.
- \* RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE CHAPTER +REDUCING OVERCROWDING+ ARE SUPPORTED. THESE INCLUDE A GOOD AND PROPER MANAGEMENT IN THE PROVISION OF AN EFFICIENT ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY SERVICE. THERE ARE RESERVATIONS IN THE TRANSFER OF PATIENTS IN THE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT.
- \* RECOMMENDATION CONTAINED IN THE CHAPTER +WORKING ENVIRONMENT+ ARE SUPPORTED.
- \* WHILE THE RECOMMENDATION TO PROVIDE LIMITED RIGHTS OF PRIVATE PRACTICE FOR CONSULTANTS IS SUPPORTED, PROVIDED THAT A GOOD MONITORING SYSTEM IS DEvised TO PREVENT ABUSE OF PRIVILEGES, THERE IS RESERVATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO ALLOW LIMITED VISIT BY PRIVATE DOCTORS TO PUBLIC HOSPITALS.
- \* RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE CHAPTER +COSTS AND COST CONTROL+ ARE SUPPORTED.
- \* THE CONCEPT THAT THOSE WHO CAN AFFORD TO PAY SHOULD PAY IS SUPPORTED, BUT THE CHARGE SHOULD BE +REASONABLE AND AFFORDABLE+.
- \* CALCULATION OF STANDARD BED DAY CHARGE IS SUPPORTED.
- \* THE RECOMMENDATION TO INTRODUCE THE PILOT SCHEME FOR THE 'B' CLASS BEDS IN NEW HOSPITALS OR NEW WINGS IS SUPPORTED, PROVIDED THAT:
  - (A) THE NEW 'B' CLASS BEDS WILL NOT BE INTRODUCED AT THE EXPENSE OF THE EXISTING CLASS III BEDS; AND
  - (B) THE NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF CLASS III BEDS SHOULD NOT BE REDUCED IN THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF HOSPITAL BEDS.

DR CHIU TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT DURING ITS DELIBERATIONS THE PANEL HELD 18 MEETINGS AND TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION 82 SUBMISSIONS FROM VARIOUS PROFESSIONAL BODIES, STAFF ASSOCIATIONS, DISTRICT BOARDS, SOCIAL WELFARE AGENCIES, CONCERNED GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS, AS WELL AS PUBLIC OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THE NEWS MEDIA.

HE OBSERVED THAT A MAJORITY OF THE 82 SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED BY THE PANEL SUPPORTED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT HOSPITAL AUTHORITY (IHA), THOUGH MOST OF THE STAFF ASSOCIATIONS OF THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND SOME COMMUNITY CONCERNS GROUPS WERE AGAINST THE IDEA.

DR CHIU SAID THE REASONS ADVANCED BY THOSE WHO DISAGREED WITH THE CONCEPT COVERED FOUR MAIN AREAS:

- \* THEY FEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL SHIRK ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE MEDICAL CARE TO ITS PEOPLE, AND IT IS SEEN AS A FIRST STEP TOWARDS 'PRIVATISATION';
- \* THEY TAKE THE NEW ESTABLISHMENT AS A THREAT TO THEIR WORKING CONDITIONS;
- \* THEY QUERY WHETHER THE TIME IS RIGHT FOR A MAJOR CHANGE IN HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT; AND
- \* THEY BELIEVE THAT MOST OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE REPORT CAN BE IMPLEMENTED WITHIN THE EXISTING STRUCTURE AND THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM IS LACK OF RESOURCES.

SPEAKING IN HIS PERSONAL CAPACITY, DR CHIU SAID HE STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE VIEW THAT THE PROVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES MUST BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT. THIS MEANT FUNDING, OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE IHA MUST INVOLVE THE GOVERNMENT.

HE REGARDED THE IHA AS THE CORNERSTONE FOR HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT, BUT DID NOT BELIEVE IT COULD WORK IF THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT PREPARED TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE RESOURCES.

+UNLESS WE HAVE THIS COMMITMENT FROM THE GOVERNMENT,+ HE SAID, +WE WILL HESITATE TO ACCEPT THE REPORT.+

DR CHIU STRESSED THAT THE IHA, IF SET UP, SHOULD NOT FOLLOW THE LINES OF THE KCRC AND MTRC WHICH ARE RUN ON COMMERCIAL PRINCIPLES, AS THE PROPOSED FEE-CHARGING SYSTEM COULD NOT COVER THE EXPENDITURE OF EXISTING MEDICAL SERVICES LET ALONE EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT OF HOSPITAL CARE.

ADDRESSING THE ANXIETY OF STAFF IN ACUTE HOSPITALS, DR CHIU REJECTED THE CONSULTANTS' PROPOSAL THAT FRINGE BENEFITS OF THE FUTURE IHA STAFF SHOULD BE LOWER THAN THOSE OF COMPARABLE GRADES IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.

HOSPITAL STAFF WERE ALREADY CARRYING HEAVY CLINICAL WORKLOAD, WORKED IN AN UNPLEASANT ENVIRONMENT AND LACKED PROFESSIONAL STIMULUS, HE SAID.

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+I FEEL TERRIBLY SORRY THAT WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO SOLVE THE UNDERSTAFFING PROBLEMS WHICH COMMONLY EXIST IN ACUTE HOSPITALS OR TO IMPROVE THEIR WORKING ENVIRONMENT, HAVING PARTICULAR REGARD TO THEIR CONTRIBUTION, THEIR DEDICATION AND THEIR ENDURANCE IN THE PAST,+ HE SAID.

ON THE QUESTION OF TIMING, DR CHIU REMINDED DOUBTERS THAT THE MEDICAL PROFESSION, CONCERNED COMMUNITY GROUPS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC HAD BEEN CALLING FOR A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF HOSPITAL CARE FOR MORE THAN A DECADE.

+WE ARE IN DESPERATE NEED FOR SUCH CHANGES, SO WHY DO WE TURN OUR BACKS AGAINST IT BY CLAIMING THIS IS NOT THE TIME?+ HE ASKED.

+THE LONG WAITING LIST, THE OVERCROWDING, MANPOWER SHORTAGE AND POOR WORKING ENVIRONMENT IN ACUTE HOSPITALS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.

+IF THE PRESENT SYSTEM IS ALLOWED TO CONTINUE, IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE OVERWHELMING PRESSURE ON IT WILL CAUSE IT TO DISINTEGRATE AND COLLAPSE,+ HE WARNED.

AS FOR INTRODUCING THE RECOMMENDATIONS WITHIN THE EXISTING SYSTEM, DR CHIU SAID LOCAL MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE OVERCROWDING FOR EXAMPLE COULD ONLY PRODUCE marginally IMPROVEMENTS, BUT MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS REQUIRED RADICAL CHANGE.

+ANY ATTEMPT TO PATCH UP THE WORN-OUT SYSTEM ON AN AD HOC AND PIECEMEAL BASIS WILL NOT BEAR FRUIT,+ HE SAID. +OUR PRESENT SYSTEM, LIKE A SERIOUSLY ILL PERSON, WILL NEED MAJOR SURGERY.+

THE PRESENT PRACTICE OF OPERATING PUBLIC HOSPITALS UNDER TWO SEPARATE SYSTEM WITH DIFFERENT CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR STAFF WAS HIGHLY UNSATISFACTORY, DR CHIU SAID.

+THE IHA WILL SEE A NEW ARRANGEMENT WHICH IS A BETTER INTEGRATED SYSTEM WITH A FAIRER DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES WHICH WOULD MAKE EASIER THE TRANSFER OF PATIENTS FROM OVERCROWDED TO UNDER-UTILISED HOSPITALS,+ HE SAID.

OTHER BENEFITS, HE ADDED, WOULD BE FAIRER TERMS OF SERVICE FOR ALL STAFF AND FREEDOM FROM THE INFLEXIBILITIES OF THE CIVIL SERVICE.

THERE SHOULD ALSO BE INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY AND BETTER ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE HOSPITAL STAFF, HE SAID.

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FIRST STEP TOWARDS HEALTHIER STATE  
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THE AUSTRALIAN CONSULTANTS' REPORT IS BUT THE BEGINNING OF EFFORTS TOWARDS A HEALTHIER STATE AND A LOT MORE SHOULD BE DONE IN REVAMPING MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES OTHER THAN HOSPITAL CARE, THE HON PAULINE NG SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE CONSULTANTS' REPORT.

MRS NG COMMENTED ON TWO ASPECTS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE REPORT - THE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT AND THE ROLE OF NURSING STAFF IN HOSPITALS AND THEIR PROSPECTS.

SHE SAID SHE HAD DOUBTS ABOUT THE JUSTIFICATION TO IMPOSE A FEE IN THE DEPARTMENT FOR SERVICES WHICH SHOULD OTHERWISE BE FREE FOR THE SAKE OF DETERRING SOME WHO WERE REGARDED AS HAVING +ABUSED THE SYSTEM+.

SHE SAID SHE FELT THE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT SHOULD NOT CHARGE FEES AS IT PROVIDED SHORT-TERM TREATMENT FOR EITHER HOSPITALISATION OR REFERRAL TO CLINICS FOR FOLLOW UP.

ON THE OTHER HAND, MRS NG SUGGESTED THAT THE PROBLEM OF OVER-USE OF THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE LOOKED AT POSITIVELY WITH A VIEW TO SOLVING IT.

SHE POINTED OUT THAT THOSE WHO SUFFERED FROM ILLNESS WENT TO THE DEPARTMENT BECAUSE THERE WERE NO ALTERNATIVES AND IT WOULD BE UNFAIR TO ACCUSE THEM OF ABUSING THE SYSTEM.

SHE SUGGESTED THAT THERE SHOULD BE MORE CLINICS FOR THE EVENING, SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS, AND THAT EACH HOSPITAL WITH AN ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT SHOULD HAVE A 24-HOUR CLINIC.

ON THE ROLE OF NURSING STAFF, MRS NG SAID SHE FELT THE MATTER SHOULD BE LOOKED AT POSITIVELY IN CONSIDERING IMPROVEMENTS TO HOSPITAL CARE.

+THE FACT THAT NURSING STAFF HAVE CLOSE CONTACT WITH PATIENTS IN LOOKING AFTER THEIR DIFFERENT NEEDS MEANS A GOOD UTILISATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THEM IS ESSENTIAL IN INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF HOSPITALS,+ SHE SAID.

MRS NG SAID SHE FULLY ENDORSED THE REPORT'S RECOMMENDATION TO STRENGTHEN THE MEDICAL AND NURSING STRUCTURE SO THAT THE NURSING OFFICERS' AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY COULD BE MATCHED OR EVEN EXPANDED.

+EXPANDING THE ROLE OF NURSES INCLUDES NOT ONLY STRENGTHENING THE NURSING STRUCTURE, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION PROSPECTS, BUT ALSO INCREASING THE PRODUCTIVITY AND STAFF MORALE IN THE NURSING GRADE AND IN THE HOSPITAL AS A WHOLE+, SHE SAID.

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CRUCIAL LINK MISSING IN CONSULTANTS' REPORT  
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THE CONSULTANTS REPORT ON +THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITAL+ HAS NOT GIVEN OVERALL CONSIDERATION TO OR A PLAN FOR LINKING UP THE TWO ENDS IN MEDICAL SERVICES - PREVENTIVE AND CLINICAL SERVICES AT THE FRONT END AND COMMUNITY NURSING SERVICES AND CONVALESCENT HOMES AT THE OTHER.

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE REPORT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE HON YEUNG PO-KWAN SAID HOSPITAL SERVICES WAS BUT THE IMPORTANT LINK IN THE MIDDLE PART OF THE WHOLE RANGE OF MEDICAL SERVICES.

+THE THREE ASPECTS OF PREVENTION, CURE AND CONVALESCENCE IN HEALTH SERVICES CANNOT BE SEPARATED. THE DELIVERY OF THESE SERVICES CANNOT BE DONE IN ISOLATION; OVERALL COORDINATION IS NECESSARY,+ HE SAID.

MR YEUNG SAID HE SUPPORTED THE SPIRIT OF THE REPORT, BUT ADDED THAT IT WAS ORIENTED AT THE STUDY OF HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT RATHER THAN IMPROVING THE OVERALL MEDICAL STRUCTURE.

+IT HAS OVERLOOKED PRIMARY HEALTH CARE OUTSIDE HOSPITALS AND MADE NO MENTION OF THE COORDINATION BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HOSPITALS. AS A RESULT, IT STILL LACKS AN OVERALL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS OF MEDICAL SERVICES,+ HE SAID.

NOTING THAT THE IDEAL FOR FUTURE MEDICAL SERVICES SHOULD BE TO REDUCE, AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, THE NUMBER OF PATIENTS REQUIRING HOSPITAL ADMISSION, MR YEUNG SAID, +TO ACHIEVE THIS, PREVENTIVE SERVICE IS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN CURE.+

+THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD STRENGTHEN PRIMARY HEALTH CARE AND EXPAND THE PRESENT CENTRAL HEALTH EDUCATION UNIT. HEALTH EDUCATION SHOULD BE ALL-ROUNDED, WHILE MEDICAL AND HEALTH KNOWLEDGE SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE CURRICULUM OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS,+ HE ADDED.

MR YEUNG URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HEALTH EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE PUBLIC'S MEDICAL AND HEALTH KNOWLEDGE, SO AS TO FOSTER THE CONCEPT THAT +EVERYBODY HAS A PART TO PLAY TO ENSURE THAT THE COMMUNITY ENJOYS HEALTH+.

MR YEUNG CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO ENCOURAGE THE POPULARISATION OF MEDICAL INSURANCE SO THAT THE BASIC RIGHTS OF EMPLOYEES COULD BE SAFEGUARDED IN CASE OF SICKNESS.

ON THE COORDINATION BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HOSPITALS, MR YEUNG SAID HE BELIEVED THAT MORE COMMUNICATION WAS NECESSARY, ESPECIALLY IN THE CASE OF PATIENT TRANSFER.

/+DETAILED TREATMENT .....

+DETAILED TREATMENT RECORDS, LABORATORY TEST RESULTS AND DOCTORS' REFERRAL LETTERS ARE REQUIRED WHEN A PATIENT IS TRANSFERRED FROM ONE HOSPITAL TO ANOTHER. SUCH A MEASURE WILL RENDER MEDICAL SERVICES MORE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT,+ HE SAID.

MR YEUNG ALSO URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO FURTHER INCREASE GRANTS TO SUBSIDISED HOSPITALS.

+IT WILL, ON THE ONE HAND, REDUCE THE PRESSURE ON THE SERVICES OF PUBLIC HOSPITALS, WHILE, ON THE OTHER HAND, AFFIRM AND INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF THE SUBSIDISED HOSPITALS TO SERVE MORE USEFUL PURPOSES AND PROVIDE MORE SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC,+ HE SAID.

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INCLUDE SUBVENTED HOSPITALS IN NEW STRUCTURE  
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THE INCLUSION OF SUBVENTED HOSPITALS IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROPOSED HOSPITAL AUTHORITY WOULD BRING ALL-ROUND BENEFITS TO HONG KONG'S MEDICAL SERVICES, THE HON CHENG HON-KWAN TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE REPORT ON THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS, MR CHENG SAID FOR FINANCIAL REASONS MANY OF THE SUBVENTED HOSPITALS WERE AT PRESENT UNABLE TO ATTRACT WELL-QUALIFIED MEDICAL AND NURSING STAFF, AND CONSEQUENTLY STANDARDS WERE QUITE UNSATISFACTORY.

+IT IS HIGH TIME FOR THESE HOSPITALS TO BE BROUGHT UP TO THE SAME STANDARDS AS THOSE RUN BY THE GOVERNMENT -- A MOVE WHICH, IT IS HOPED, WILL HELP RELIEVE OVERCROWDING IN GOVERNMENT'S REGIONAL HOSPITALS,+ HE SAID.

AS THERE WOULD BE PARITY IN PAY SCALES, MANY GOVERNMENT SERVANTS IN THE MEDICAL SERVICES WERE CONCERNED THAT THERE MIGHT BE A LEVELLING-DOWN IN THEIR INTERESTS OR BENEFITS, MR CHENG SAID.

HE CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO ASSURE THEM THAT THEIR CONDITIONS OF SERVICE WOULD NOT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED.

MR CHENG SAID HE BELIEVED THAT SETTING UP AN INDEPENDENT HOSPITAL AUTHORITY, WITH REGIONAL BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT WHICH INCLUDED HOSPITAL AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES, WOULD CERTAINLY INCREASE EFFICIENCY.

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+THE LOCAL VOICE IN EACH REGION WOULD BE HEARD, A CHAIN OF ACCOUNTABILITY WOULD BE ESTABLISHED THROUGHOUT THE ADMINISTRATION, AND THERE WOULD BE A DEGREE OF PUBLIC SCRUTINY WHICH IS NOT POSSIBLE AT PRESENT,+ HE SAID.

ON PROPOSALS TO MAKE BETTER USE OF UNDER-UTILISED HOSPITALS, MR CHENG SAID THAT THIS MIGHT PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEFER NEW HOSPITAL PROJECTS.

+WITH GROWING POPULATION AND INCREASING NEED, WE MUST THINK HARD BEFORE DEFERRING ANY OF THESE PROJECTS,+ HE NOTED.

MR CHENG SAID HE AGREED THAT THERE WAS A NEED TO PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION OF A STANDARD BETTER THAN THE THIRD CLASS WARDS BUT LESS EXPENSIVE THAN THE SEMI-PRIVATE ONES.

HOWEVER, HE SAID IT MUST NOT BE DONE AT THE EXPENSE OF THIRD-CLASS BEDS WHICH SERVED THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION.

ON THE AMBULANCE SERVICE PROVIDED BY THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT, MR CHENG SUGGESTED THAT MORE SHOULD BE REQUIRED OF SUCH A SERVICE THAN MERELY +PROVIDING TRANSPORT+ FOR PATIENTS AS REFERRED TO BY THE REPORT.

+THIS IS AN AREA WHICH CLEARLY NEEDS MORE CONSIDERATION THAN HAS BEEN GIVEN, POSSIBLY DUE TO LIMITATIONS IN THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE REPORT,+ HE SAID.

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MISUNDERSTANDING OVER REPORT'S AIMS  
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A SERIOUS MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE REPORT ON THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS WAS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS TRYING TO REDUCE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES IN PROVIDING MEDICAL SERVICES, ESPECIALLY FOR THE LOWER INCOME GROUPS, THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE REPORT, MR CHEONG-LEEN SAID HE WAS REASSURED BY STATEMENTS MADE BY OFFICIALS AT MEETINGS OF THE OMELCO HEALTH SERVICES PANEL THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS TOTALLY COMMITTED TO STEADILY IMPROVING MEDICAL SERVICES, PROVIDING FULLY SUBSIDISED MEDICAL SERVICES FOR THE NEEDY BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, MAINTAINING A MORE EFFICIENT, MORE CARING AND MORE RESPONSIBLE MEDICAL SERVICE STRUCTURE AND STAFF.

/HE SUPPORTED .....

HE SUPPORTED THE REPORT'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO REDUCE OVERCROWDING IN HOSPITALS BY PROVIDING ADDITIONAL OBSERVATION BEDS AND BY TRANSFERRING PATIENTS FROM OVERCROWDED HOSPITALS TO OTHER HOSPITALS WHERE BEDS WERE AVAILABLE AND WHERE SUCH PATIENTS COULD BE PROPERLY TAKEN CARE OF.

+THE QUESTION IS: CAN THE GOVERNMENT GO ABOUT DOING THIS WITHOUT HAVING TO WAIT UNTIL A DECISION ON WHETHER OR NOT TO SET UP A SEPARATE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY IS MADE?+ MR CHEONG-LEEN SAID.

HE URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO STUDY IN DEPTH THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF SETTING UP A HOSPITAL AUTHORITY BEFORE MAKING A DECISION.

ON THE PROPOSAL CONCERNING B-CLASS BEDS, MR CHEONG-LEEN SUPPORTED THE INTRODUCTION OF A PILOT SCHEME FOR SUCH BEDS IN NEW HOSPITALS OR NEW WINGS, PROVIDED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF THIRD CLASS BEDS.

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CERTAIN ASSURANCES NEEDED FIRST  
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD GIVE CERTAIN ASSURANCES BEFORE IMPLEMENTING THE PROPOSED MEDICAL SERVICE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM UNDER WHICH ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE INDEPENDENT, THE HON CHUNG PUI-LAM TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE REPORT ON THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS, HE SAID THAT:

- \* THE RECURRENT FUNDS AND CONSTRUCTION EXPENDITURE ALLOCATED FOR SUBSIDISING MEDICAL SERVICES SHOULD NOT BE REDUCED TO ENSURE THE AVAILABILITY OF FREE MEDICAL SERVICES REQUIRED BY THE POOR AND THE SICK;
- \* PROSPECTS OF SALARY INCREASE AND PROMOTION FOR MEDICAL STAFF BASED ON THE EXISTING CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM SHOULD NOT BE AFFECTED; THE NEW SYSTEM SHOULD ONLY PRESENT THEM WITH A BETTER FUTURE.

MR LAM SAID THE RECOMMENDATIONS ON SETTING UP A HOSPITAL AUTHORITY, REGIONAL BOARDS AND A STAFF ADVISORY COMMISSION WERE FAIRLY CONSTRUCTIVE IN DEVELOPING THE LARGE MEDICAL NETWORK.

THERE WERE SOME AREAS WHICH CALLED FOR FURTHER REVIEW. THE REPORT ONLY CONCENTRATED ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT OF A MEDICAL SERVICE SYSTEM WITH A VIEW TO ACHIEVING A BETTER VALUE FOR TAXPAYERS' MONEY, WHILE OUTPATIENT AND COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES WERE NOT MENTIONED.

IF OUTPATIENT SERVICE WAS ADEQUATE, THE DEMAND FOR HOSPITAL BEDS AND FOR ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT SERVICE MIGHT BE REDUCED.

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COMMUNITY HEALTH HAS IMPORTANT ROLE  
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ONE LONG-TERM SOLUTION TO OVERCROWDING IN HOSPITALS LIES IN THE WIDE PROMOTION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE, THE HON HUI YIN-FAT SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE MEDICAL SERVICES REPORT, MR HUI SAID THAT HOSPITAL CARE COULD NOT BE SEPARATED FROM COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE.

HE URGED THAT PROVISION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AT THE HIGHEST POLICY-MAKING LEVEL AND MORE RESOURCES SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR ITS PROMOTION.

ADEQUATE CHANNELS SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED FOR CO-OPERATION AMONG HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL NETWORK, SUCH AS COMMUNITY NURSING SERVICE, HOME HELP AND MEDICAL SOCIAL WORK.

HOWEVER, MR HUI CRITICISED THE REPORT FOR FAILING TO OUTLINE LONG-TERM PLANS FOR BUILDING NEW HOSPITALS AND CLINICS, AND, IN PARTICULAR, PLANS TO OPEN MORE INFIRMARIES. HE SAID THE ULTIMATE ANSWER TO A SHORTAGE OF BEDS LAY IN INCREASING THE SUPPLY.

ON THE QUESTION OF CHARGES FOR BEDS, HE SAID IT WAS IMPERATIVE THAT ALL CHARGES SHOULD BE SET AT A REASONABLE LEVEL AFFORDABLE BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

HE ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT ALL PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND MEDICAL SOCIAL SERVICE CASES SHOULD BE EXEMPTED FROM NEW CHARGES SHOULD THEY BE IMPOSED.

HE BELIEVED THE INTRODUCTION OF CLASS B BEDS WAS PREMATURE, PARTLY BECAUSE ADDITIONAL FACILITIES FOR SERVING A NEW CATEGORY OF PATIENTS HAD YET TO BE MADE AVAILABLE AND PARTLY BECAUSE HE WAS NOT CONVINCED OF THE NEED FOR COST RECOVERY WHEN THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE SHOULDERING THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE A MEDICAL SERVICE FOR THE COMMUNITY.

HOWEVER, HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE PRACTICABLE TO TRY OUT THE SCHEME IN PRIVATE HOSPITALS.

REFERRING TO THE PROPOSED INDEPENDENT HOSPITAL AUTHORITY, MR HUI SAID IT COULD BE GENERALLY SUPPORTED ON TWO CONSIDERATIONS.

FIRST, AN INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY WOULD RESULT IN BETTER ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES AND STAFF, CLOSING THE GAP BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HOSPITALS, AND WOULD IMPROVE THE DEMAND AND SUPPLY SITUATION WHICH DIRECTLY AFFECTED THE WELL-BEING OF THE PUBLIC.

SECOND, THROUGH DECENTRALISATION, HOSPITAL BOARDS AT REGIONAL LEVEL COULD DEVELOP AND INTEGRATE DISTRICT HEALTH SERVICES, COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE PROJECTS AND SPECIAL CLINICS.

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BETTER FACILITIES FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH NEEDED  
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THERE SHOULD BE IMPROVEMENTS IN FACILITIES FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH AND ASSISTANCE IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ORDER TO RETAIN THE SERVICE OF DOCTORS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR, THE HON LEE YU-TAI SAID AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE REPORT ON THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE POINTED OUT THAT MEDICAL SERVICE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR WAS UNDER THE PRESSURE OF AN EXCESSIVE WORKLOAD WHICH WAS AGGRAVATED BY THE SHORTAGE OF DOCTORS RESULTING FROM UNFILLED VACANCIES AND STAFF TURNOVER IN BOTH GOVERNMENT AND SUBVENTED HOSPITALS.

MR LEE SAID HE WAS IN FAVOUR OF IMPROVING FRINGE BENEFITS OF THE SUBVENTED SECTOR TO ACHIEVE PARITY WITH THE CIVIL SERVICE BUT WARNED THAT EVEN IF PAY AND BENEFITS WERE IMPROVED, DOCTORS WOULD STILL BE TEMPTED TO GO INTO LUCRATIVE PRIVATE PRACTICE.

+THE ONLY ADVANTAGE WHICH THE PUBLIC SECTOR CAN OFFER IS INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT,+ HE SAID.

HE THEREFORE SUGGESTED THAT THE PUBLIC SECTOR MUST IMPROVE FACILITIES FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH, REDUCE WORKLOAD AND GIVE ASSISTANCE IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION OF HIGHER QUALIFICATIONS IN ORDER TO RETAIN DOCTORS IN THE SERVICE.

REFERRING TO THE PROBLEM OF OVERCROWDING AT PUBLIC HOSPITALS, MR LEE SAID THE PUBLIC MUST BE EDUCATED NOT TO ABUSE MEDICAL SERVICES AND NEW BUILDING PROJECTS SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED WITH FULL SPEED.

HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF USING ALTERNATIVE TRADITIONAL CHINESE TREATMENTS SUCH AS HERBALISM, BONE-SETTING AND ACUPUNCTURE, OFFERED BY TRADITIONAL CHINESE ORGANISATIONS, SHOULD BE LOOKED INTO WITH A VIEW TO INTEGRATING THESE INTO THE MEDICAL SERVICE SYSTEM.

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ESTABLISHMENT OF IHA RECEIVES SUPPORT  
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THE PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT HOSPITAL AUTHORITY RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM THE HON LIU LIT-FOR TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR LIU SAID ONE OF THE AREAS THE IHA SHOULD MOVE INTO QUICKLY WAS TO IMPROVE THE IMBALANCE RATE OF OCCUPANCY OF HOSPITAL BEDS IN SUBVENTED AND GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS.

HE SAID THE CURRENT OCCUPANCY OF SUBVENTED HOSPITAL BEDS IS MUCH LOWER THAN THAT IN GOVERNMENT, AND WELCOMED THE CONCEPT OF THE IHA TO COORDINATE AND INTERGRATE THE EXISTING MEDICAL RESOURCES WITH A GREATER DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY AND EFFICIENCY.

HE SAID HE ALSO WELCOMED THE FACT THAT UNDER THE IHA, LOCAL HOSPITALS WOULD BE MANAGED BY REGIONAL BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT COMPOSED OF BALANCED REPRESENTATIONS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY AND PROFESSIONAL BODIES WHICH WOULD PLAY AN EFFECTIVE CO-ORDINATING, MANAGING AND MONITORING ROLE.

HOWEVER, MR LIU POINTED OUT THERE WAS A NEED TO PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF SUCH DISTINGUISHED TRADITIONS LIKE THE TUNG WAH GROUP OF HOSPITALS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME MAKING BETTER AND FULLER USE OF THEIR UNDER-UTILISED RESOURCES.

+DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE BODIES CONCERNED WITH THE OBJECT OF ACHIEVING COOPERATION,+ HE SUGGESTED.

ON PROPOSALS TO CHARGE PATIENTS ABUSING THE SERVICES OF THE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS IN HOSPITALS, MR LIU SAID HE HAD NO OBJECTION PROVIDED IMPROVEMENTS WERE CARRIED OUT AS RECOMMENDED IN THE CONSULTANCY REPORT.

HE ALSO ASKED GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER WAIVING OR REDUCING CHARGES FOR PATIENTS WITH LOW INCOME AND SUPPORTED THE INTRODUCTION OF CLASS 'B' BEDS ON CONDITION THAT THE PRESENT NUMBER OF THIRD CLASS BEDS WOULD NOT BE REDUCED.

IN CONCLUDING, MR LIU REMINDED THE GOVERNMENT OF ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE PEOPLE WITH MEDICAL SERVICES AND MAINTAINING THE STANDARD OF HEALTH IN HONG KONG.

+THE GOVERNMENT MUST CLEARLY SHOW THAT IT WILL NOT SHIRK OFF OR REDUCE ITS OBLIGATIONS IN THIS RESPECT BUT, ON THE CONTRARY, WILL ALLOCATE ADEQUATE RESOURCES SO THAT THE VARIOUS IMPROVEMENT MEASURES CAN BE MADE,+ HE SAID.

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CONSIDER CAREFULLY REPORT'S RECOMMENDATIONS  
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MUST CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEDICAL REPORT IN THE LIGHT OF EXISTING PROBLEMS AND REVIEW THEM ONE BY ONE IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY THE CRUX OF THE PROBLEM AND PROVIDE SOLUTIONS STEP BY STEP, THE HON PANG CHUN-HOI SAID IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SAID HE AGREED THAT PROBLEMS DID INDEED EXIST IN CURRENT MEDICAL SERVICES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT.

HE NOTED THAT ALL THESE WERE COMPLICATED PROBLEMS WHICH COULD NOT BE RESOLVED INSTANTLY. THEY NEEDED TO BE IMMEDIATELY REVIEWED AND IMPROVED.

BUT, HE STRESSED, BEFORE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM, LOW-COST MEDICAL SERVICE WAS REQUIRED BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT, THEREFORE, HAD TO BE VERY CAREFUL IN CARRYING OUT REFORMS TO THE EXISTING MEDICAL SYSTEM AND IN ORDER NOT TO CREATE SOCIAL INSTABILITY, DECISIONS SHOULD NOT BE MADE TOO HASTILY.

ON THE OTHER HAND, MR PANG SAID HE DOUBTED WHETHER IT WAS WORTHILE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO EMPLOY OVERSEAS CONSULTANTS TO STUDY LOCAL ISSUES CLOSELY CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNITY OF HONG KONG AND THE LIVELIHOOD OF ITS PEOPLE.

HE REITERATED THAT IN FUTURE THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER WHETHER THIS WAS APPROPRIATE.

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CALL FOR +INTEGRATED+ MEDICAL SERVICES

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THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES OUTSIDE HOSPITALS SHOULD BE LOOKED INTO URGENTLY AND CAREFULLY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE AUSTRALIAN CONSULTANTS' RECOMMENDATIONS, PROFESSOR THE HON POON CHUNG-KWONG SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE MEDICAL REPORT PROF POON ARGUED THAT MEDICAL SERVICES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE HOSPITALS WERE INTEGRATED AND SHOULD NOT BE REVIEWED SEPARATELY.

/HE POINTED .....

HE POINTED OUT THAT THIS WAS ONE OF TWO +STRIKING DEFICIENCIES+ IN THE CONSULTANTS REPORT. PROF POON SAID IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE HOSPITAL SERVICES TO BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT PROPER ADJUSTMENTS TO THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES OUTSIDE HOSPITALS WHICH INCLUDED PRIMARY CARE, CONTINUING AMBULATORY CARE, AND CONVALESCENT AND REHABILITATIVE CARE.

HE SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE IT POSSIBLE TO SUCCESSFULLY INTRODUCE MEASURES TO REDUCE OVERCROWDING IN HOSPITALS IF THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES OUTSIDE HOSPITALS WERE NOT SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED AT THE SAME TIME.

PROF POON SAID MANY DISEASES NORMALLY TREATED IN HOSPITALS COULD IN FACT BE TREATED ENTIRELY OUTSIDE OF HOSPITALS IF WE HAD PROPER AND ADEQUATE PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SERVICES.

ANOTHER DEFICIENCY IN THE REPORT IDENTIFIED BY PROF POON AND HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG RELATED TO THE SUBJECT OF TEACHING HOSPITALS.

THE REPORT LACKED ANY CLEAR DEFINITION OF A TEACHING HOSPITAL, NOR DID IT RECOGNISE THE SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS IN TERMS OF STAFFING, RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF A UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL, HE SAID.

+WE SHOULD ALL RECOGNISE THAT A UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL IS NOT SIMPLY A REGIONAL SERVICE HOSPITAL WITH AN ADDITIONAL ELEMENT IN TEACHING, AS THE AUSTRALIAN CONSULTANTS APPEAR TO BELIEVE,+ HE SAID.

THE ROLE OF A UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL WAS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF GENERAL HOSPITALS AND THEREFORE HAD DIFFERENT REQUIREMENTS.

HE SAID A UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL MUST BE ALLOWED ACCESS TO THOSE CLINICAL FACILITIES IN OTHER HOSPITALS OR CENTRES, WHICH IT DID NOT HAVE, FOR TEACHING PURPOSES.

HE SAID HE BELIEVED THAT TEACHING COULD BE CARRIED OUT IN MOST, IF NOT ALL, REGIONAL HOSPITALS PROVIDED THAT THESE HOSPITALS WERE PROPERLY UPGRADED.

HOWEVER, HE SAID HE STRONGLY FELT THAT THERE MUST BE A MAIN TEACHING HOSPITAL FOR EACH MEDICAL SCHOOL WHERE THE MAJOR PART OF TEACHING OF UNDERGRADUATE MEDICAL STUDENTS AND THE ORGANISATION OF SUCH TEACHING CAN TAKE PLACE.

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MORE DETAILED STUDIES REQUIRED  
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THE PROPOSAL TO SET UP A HOSPITAL AUTHORITY DESERVES MORE DETAILED STUDIES AND CONSIDERATION BEFORE A DECISION ON IT IS MADE, THE HON TAI CHIN-WAH SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE REPORT ON THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS, MR TAI SAID THAT IN VIEW OF THE LARGE SUM OF MONEY AND THE DRASTIC CHANGE INVOLVED, CAREFUL CONSIDERATION MUST BE GIVEN TO SEE WHETHER THE RESULTANT BENEFITS IN TERMS OF IMPROVED EFFICIENCY AND BETTER USAGE OF FACILITIES WOULD OUTWEIGH THE COSTS INVOLVED.

+IN MY OPINION, EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE PROVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES SHOULD BEGIN AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE WITHOUT NECESSARILY WAITING FOR THE SETTING UP OF AN INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY,+ HE SAID.

+IN FACT, MANY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE REPORT CAN BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE EXISTING ESTABLISHMENT.+

MR TAI SAID ADMINISTRATIVE AND OTHER SUPPORT STAFF SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED TO RELIEVE THE WORKLOAD FACING THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF. HE ADDED THAT THE INTRODUCTION OF OBSERVATION WARDS ADJACENT TO THE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS AND MORE TRANSFERS OF PATIENTS FROM ACUTE WARDS TO CONVALESCENT WARDS WOULD EASE OVERCROWDING IN HOSPITALS. THIS COULD BE DONE WITHOUT RADICAL CHANGE TO THE PRESENT SYSTEM.

HE EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE PROPOSAL TO CHARGE PATIENTS FOR ATTENDANCE AT ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS AS A MEANS TO PREVENT ABUSE.

+IT IS FAIR, THOUGH, TO CHARGE A FEE AT A LEVEL AFFORDABLE BY AN AVERAGE CITIZEN AS A MEANS TO RECOVER PART OF THE COSTS OF THE SERVICE,+ HE SAID.

ON THE PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE B-CLASS BEDS FOR THOSE WHO PREFERRED TO PAY MORE FOR BETTER SERVICES AND THE POSSIBILITY OF INTRODUCING A HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME, MR TAI SAID THESE MATTERS SHOULD BE EXPLORED FURTHER.

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SUFFICIENT FUNDS FOR SERVICES AN OBLIGATION

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GOVERNMENT IS DULY OBLIGED TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT FUNDS FOR MEDICAL SERVICES SO THAT NO ONE WILL BE UNABLE TO RECEIVE PROPER MEDICAL CARE DUE TO FINANCIAL HARDSHIPS, THE HON ROSANNA TAM SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE REPORT ON THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS, MRS TAM SAID ON COST RECOVERY IT WAS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT MEDICAL SERVICES WERE COSTLY AND COULD NOT BE LEFT TO MARKET MECHANISM.

THE PROVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES, SHE ADDED, RELIED HEAVILY ON GOVERNMENT IN RESOURCE FUNDING, MANPOWER TRAINING AND MANAGEMENT.

SHE SAID: +THERE IS NO SPECIFIC REQUEST IN THE REPORT FOR GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE ITS COMMITMENTS IN THE PROVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES AND BEAR THE HUGE EXPENSES OF IT.

+ON THE CONTRARY, IT FOCUSES ON EXTENDING AND RAISING CHARGES IN MEDICAL SERVICES.+

MRS TAM SAID SHE FELT THAT THE IMPLICATIONS OF A POSSIBLE CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT'S COMMITTED PHILOSOPHY IN MEDICAL PROVISION WARRANTED MORE ATTENTION.

SHE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE PERCENTAGE SHARE OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN THE TOTAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE HAD DROPPED THIS YEAR WHEN COMPARED WITH THAT IN 1971.

IT WAS PROJECTED THAT FOR THE COMING DECADE, POPULATION WOULD CONTINUE TO GROW WITH AN AGING POPULATION, THE ECONOMY WOULD CONTRACT AND THE NEED FOR MEDICAL SERVICES WOULD BE GREATER, SHE SAID.

+THEREFORE, GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT ONLY MAINTAIN ITS EXISTING LEVEL OF MEDICAL SERVICES, BUT ALSO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT FUNDS TO RAISE THE STANDARDS, BOTH IN TERMS OF QUANTITY AND QUALITY.+

IN ADDITION, MRS TAM ALSO EXPRESSED RESERVATION ON THE INTRODUCTION OF 'B' CLASS HOSPITAL BEDS AS PROPOSED IN THE REPORT.

+IT IS MY OPINION, THAT THE INCREASE OF 'B' CLASS BEDS SHOULD OFFER BETTER HOSPITAL SERVICES TO THOSE WHO COULD AFFORD AND HENCE SHOULD BE ABLE TO RECOVER MORE COSTS IN THEORY. THERE SHOULD, HOWEVER, BE PRACTICAL PROBLEMS. THIS IS BECAUSE THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH HOSPITAL BEDS,+ SHE SAID.

/+AS LONG .....

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+AS LONG AS THE PROBLEM OF OVERCROWDING IN HOSPITALS REMAINS UNSOLVED, 'B' CLASS BEDS CAN ONLY BE CREATED AT THE EXPENSE OF THIRD CLASS BEDS. THIS WOULD AGGRAVATE THE PROBLEM OF INSUFFICIENT THIRD CLASS BEDS. AS A RESULT, THE GENERAL PUBLIC WILL SUFFER.+

ON THE PROPOSAL TO SET UP A HOSPITAL AUTHORITY INDEPENDENT OF GOVERNMENT, MRS TAM SAID SHE FELT THAT IT WOULD INCUR A HIGH COST WHICH THE REPORT HAD NOT DEALT WITH IN DETAIL.

+IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER THE SIMPLE FINANCIAL ESTIMATES IN THE REPORT WOULD FULLY REFLECT THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE TO BE INCURRED BY THE AUTHORITY.+

MRS TAM ALSO SAID THAT HONG KONG WAS AT THE THRESHOLD OF POLITICAL CHANGES, AND ANY DRASTIC REFORM INTRODUCED INTO THE SOCIETY MIGHT LEAD TO SPECULATIONS AND SENSITIVE REACTION. SUCH SOCIAL COST SHOULD ALSO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

+I HAVE TO ASK WHETHER THE OPTION OF A HOSPITAL AUTHORITY IS THE ONLY WAY TO IMPROVE HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT; OR SHOULD WE NOT FIRST CONSIDER IMPROVEMENTS TO THE EXISTING STRUCTURE WITHOUT CHANGING IT FUNDAMENTALLY? INCREASED ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY AND STRENGTHENED TIES BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND SUBVENTED HOSPITALS SHOULD BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE THE SAME OBJECTIVES,+ SHE SAID.

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PUBLIC AGAINST CUT IN GOVT ROLE  
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PEOPLE DO NOT WANT TO SEE ANY CURTAILMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO HOSPITAL SERVICES, THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON THE REPORT ON THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS.

MR TAM SAID MEDICAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT FORMED AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES.

IF THE REPORT WERE TO BE IMPLEMENTED, THE NATURE OF SUCH WELFARE SERVICES WOULD GRADUALLY DIMINISH.

+IN A SOCIETY LIKE HONG KONG WHERE SOCIAL SERVICES ARE ALREADY INSUFFICIENT, SUCH A SETBACK WOULD BE HARD TO ACCEPT,+ HE SAID.

/ON THE .....

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ON THE PROPOSAL TO SET UP A HOSPITAL AUTHORITY, MR TAM SAID THAT STAFF OF GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS WERE OF THE OPINION THAT THIS WOULD FORCE THEM TO BE DETACHED FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE ESTABLISHMENT AND THAT THEIR PAY, FRINGE BENEFITS, PROMOTION PROSPECT AND MORALE WOULD BE AFFECTED.

HE AGREED THAT THE INTENTION TO ACHIEVE EQUAL TREATMENT FOR STAFF OF GOVERNMENT AND OF SUBVENTED HOSPITALS WAS GOOD, BUT HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THE WAY TO DO IT BY A +SETBACK+ METHOD WOULD AFFECT THE MORALE OF CIVIL SERVANTS IN THE HOSPITAL FIELD.

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EARLY ACTION NEEDED TO IMPROVE SERVICES  
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER THE DESIRABILITY OF SETTING UP AN INDEPENDENT HOSPITAL AUTHORITY AND SHOULD IMPROVE MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE OUTCOME OF SUCH AN OPTION.

THESE WERE THE UNANIMOUS VIEWS OF THE OMELCO HEALTH SERVICES PANEL AS EXPRESSED BY DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP WHEN SHE CONCLUDED THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE MEDICAL CONSULTANCY REPORT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) ON BEHALF OF THE PANEL MEMBERS.

LISTING THE THREE UNANIMOUS VIEWS, DR IP SAID: +GOVERNMENT SHOULD DULY REVIEW THE OUTPATIENT SERVICES WHICH ARE PART AND PARCEL OF MEDICAL SERVICES AND, IN PARTICULAR, HOW IT WORKS IN TANDEM WITH MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS TO PROVIDE BETTER HOSPITAL AND FOLLOW-UP CARE AND TO REDUCE HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS.

+IN THE LIGHT OF THE VARIOUS VIEWS EXPRESSED ON THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY OPTION, GOVERNMENT SHOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER THE DESIRABILITY OF THE SETTING UP OF SUCH A BODY AND TO LOOK INTO WAYS WHICH WILL ACHIEVE THE SAME GOAL OF IMPROVING EXISTING MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS.

+GOVERNMENT SHOULD BRING ABOUT IMPROVEMENTS IN MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOSPITALS WITHOUT NECESSARILY WAITING FOR THE OUTCOME OF THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY OPTION.+

CAUTIONING THAT CHANGES MUST NECESSARILY BE EVOLUTIONARY, DR IP SAID: +IF THERE IS TO BE AN INDEPENDENT HOSPITAL AUTHORITY, THERE SHOULD BE A GRADUAL INCLUSION OF HOSPITALS UNDER THE AUTHORITY RATHER THAN TO TURN ALL HOSPITALS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OVERNIGHT.

/+IF GOVERNMENT .....

+IF GOVERNMENT CIVIL SERVANTS WERE TO BECOME THE AUTHORITY'S STAFF, THERE SHOULD BE A GRADUAL SHIFT RATHER THAN A MAJOR TAKEOVER.+

SHE BELIEVED THAT ANY DRASTIC CHANGES WOULD BE UNNECESSARILY EXPENSIVE, DETRIMENTAL TO THE MEDICAL SERVICE AND CERTAINLY AGAINST THE PUBLIC INTEREST.

AND IF THERE WERE TO BE AN INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY, SHE SAID, IT SHOULD BE A MEDICAL ONE AND SHOULD INTEGRATE BOTH HOSPITAL AND CLINIC SERVICES.

SHE CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO +SUPPLEMENT THIS REPORT WITH ONE ON CLINIC SERVICES, SO AS TO OFFER HONG KONG A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF OUR MEDICAL SERVICES AS A WHOLE.+

COMMENTING ON THE REPORT GENERALLY, DR IP SAID IT HAD SUCCEEDED IN ADMITTING AND PUTTING ON RECORD THE PROBLEMS HONG KONG FACED WITHIN THE MEDICAL SYSTEM.

HOWEVER, SHE ADDED: +IT IS TOO AMBITIOUS TO EXPECT THIS REPORT TO BE A CURE FOR ALL OF OUR PROBLEMS. IN FACT, THIS REPORT HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN TO ADVISE US ON HOW TO RECTIFY OUR DEFICIENCIES.+

SHE SAID THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT MADE IN THE REPORT WAS THE STRESS ON +THE NEED FOR GOVERNMENT TO HAVE VERY CLEAR HEALTH CARE OBJECTIVES AND A SOUND UNDERSTANDING OF THE BASIC ECONOMICS OF HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS.+

ON THIS POINT, SHE ECHOED THE HON HUI YIN-FAT'S REQUEST FOR FORMULATION OF A MEDICAL AND HEALTH POLICY.

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BILL BANS UNLAWFUL TRANSFER OF TRAVEL DOCUMENT  
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A BILL PROPOSING TO BAN THE UNLAWFUL TRANSFER OF A TRAVEL DOCUMENT OR OTHER DOCUMENTS ISSUED UNDER THE IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE IMMIGRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON DAVID JEAFFRESON, SAID THERE WAS AT PRESENT NO PROVISION UNDER THE IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE WHICH PROHIBITED THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF SUCH DOCUMENTS.

/+AS A RESULT, .....

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+AS A RESULT, ONLY A THEFT CHARGE UNDER THE THEFT ORDINANCE CAN BE INSTITUTED AGAINST A PERSON WHO TRANSFERS HIS TRAVEL DOCUMENT, WHICH REMAINS THE PROPERTY OF THE ISSUING AUTHORITY, TO ANOTHER PERSON,+ HE SAID.

+THIS IS NEITHER APPROPRIATE NOR EASY TO PROVE IN COURT.+

THE AMENDMENT WILL MAKE ANY PERSON TRANSFERRING SUCH DOCUMENTS GUILTY OF AN OFFENCE AND LIABLE TO A MAXIMUM PENALTY OF \$20 000 AND TWO YEARS' IMPRISONMENT ON SUMMARY CONVICTION, AND TO A FINE OF \$50 000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR 14 YEARS ON CONVICTION ON INDICTMENT.

MR JEAFFRESON SAID THAT 85 CASES RELATING TO THE USE OF FORGED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS HAD COME TO THE ATTENTION OF THE DIRECTOR OF IMMIGRATION IN 1985. MANY OF THESE MIGHT HAVE INVOLVED UNLAWFUL TRANSFERS IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, WHEN A PERSON USED ANOTHER PERSON'S PASSPORT BY SUBSTITUTING THE PHOTOGRAPH.

THE FIGURE FOR THE FIRST EIGHT MONTHS OF THIS YEAR WAS 50.

+WHILE THE PROBLEM IS NOT ALARMING AT THIS STAGE, THE AMENDMENT PROPOSED SHOULD HELP TO DETER POTENTIAL OFFENDERS,+ MR JEAFFRESON SAID.

+FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE BILL, WE GAVE PARTICULAR PUBLICITY TO THE PROPOSAL THAT ANY PERSON WHO SELLS OR LENDS HIS TRAVEL DOCUMENT TO ANOTHER PERSON FOR THE PURPOSE OF ASSISTING HIM TO STAY IN HONG KONG OR TRAVEL ABROAD, WHETHER OR NOT FOR A FINANCIAL GAIN, WOULD BE GUILTY OF AN OFFENCE. WE SHALL BROADCAST THE SAME MESSAGE AGAIN AFTER ENACTMENT OF THE BILL.+

THE BILL ALSO PROPOSES TO AMEND THE IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE TO BROADEN THE EXISTING SCOPE OF +OWNER+ TO INCLUDE OWNERS IN RELATION TO A VEHICLE.

MR JEAFFRESON EXPLAINED THAT UNDER THE IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE, ANY VEHICLE USED IN THE COMMISSION OF THE OFFENCE OF LANDING AND REMAINING IN HONG KONG WITHOUT PERMISSION WOULD BE LIABLE TO FORFEITURE. BUT THE ABSENCE OF A DEFINITION OF +OWNER+ IN RELATION TO A VEHICLE IN THE CURRENT LEGISLATION HAD CREATED PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES IN SERVING A NOTICE OF SEIZURE, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE VEHICLE WAS SUBJECT TO A HIRE PURCHASE AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH THE ACTUAL OWNER WAS THE FINANCE COMPANY.

THE PROPOSED DEFINITION WOULD INCLUDE THE PERSON IN WHOSE NAME A VEHICLE WAS REGISTERED UNDER THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE, THE PERSON BY WHOM THE VEHICLE WAS KEPT AND USED AND, IN RELATION TO A VEHICLE WHICH WAS THE SUBJECT OF A HIRING AGREEMENT OR A HIRE PURCHASE AGREEMENT, THE PERSON IN POSSESSION OF THE VEHICLE UNDER THE AGREEMENT.

/ANOTHER PROPOSAL .....

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ANOTHER PROPOSAL IN THE BILL ALLOWS CERTIFIED COPIES OF MICROFILMED RECORDS KEPT BY THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT TO BE ADMITTED AS TRUE COPIES AS EVIDENCE IN THE COURTS WITHOUT FURTHER PROOF. BUT THE APPROPRIATE WEIGHT TO BE GIVEN TO SUCH EVIDENCE WOULD BE A MATTER FOR THE COURTS TO DECIDE.

AT PRESENT, THE USE OF MICROFILMS IN COURTS REQUIRED DIRECT ORAL EVIDENCE FROM EACH OFFICER WHO HAS TAKEN PART IN MAKING THEM, AND THIS REPRESENTED A STRAIN ON THE MANPOWER RESOURCES OF THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT, MR JEAFFRESON SAID.

THE DEPARTMENT NOW KEPT 4.1 MILLION MICROFILMED FILES AND ABOUT 147 MILLION MICROFILMED PASSENGER ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE CARDS, HE ADDED.

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\$1 169.7 MILLION SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION  
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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1986-87 AMOUNTED TO \$1 169.7 MILLION.

MR JACOBS SAID THE SUM INCLUDED \$500 MILLION FOR PAYMENT TO THE MASS TRANSIT FUND TO ENABLE THE PROCEEDS OF A DEBT REPAYMENT BY THE KOWLOON CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION TO BE SET ASIDE TOWARDS AN EQUITY INJECTION OF \$1 000 MILLION FOR THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION IN 1987-88.

OTHER SUMS OF SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION APPROVED HAD BEEN OFFSET EITHER BY SAVINGS UNDER THE SAME OR OTHER HEADS OF EXPENDITURE OR BY DELETION OF FUNDS UNDER THE ADDITIONAL COMMITMENT VOTES. THESE INCLUDED SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION OF \$360.1 MILLION FOR THE FORMATION OF THE NEW HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT.

+APPROVED COMMITMENTS WERE INCREASED BY \$585.4 MILLION DURING THE PERIOD, AND NEW COMMITMENTS OF \$83.1 MILLION WERE ALSO APPROVED,+ MR JACOBS SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THESE ITEMS HAD BEEN APPROVED EITHER BY FINANCE COMMITTEE OR UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY.

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CAS PRAISED FOR WIDE RANGE OF SERVICES  
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THE CIVIL AID SERVICES WAS PRAISED BY THE GOVERNOR, SIR EDWARD YOUDE, THIS (WEDNESDAY) EVENING FOR PROVIDING A WIDE RANGE OF SERVICES WHICH WERE MUCH VALUED BY THE COMMUNITY AND THE GOVERNMENT.

UNABLE TO ATTEND HIMSELF, SIR EDWARD'S MESSAGE WAS READ OUT AT THE ANNUAL CAS DINNER. HE POINTED OUT THAT VOLUNTARY SERVICE SUCH AS THAT UNDERTAKEN BY THE CAS HAD MADE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO HONG KONG'S WELL-BEING.

+THE EFFICIENCY AND GOOD SPIRITS WITH WHICH YOU ALWAYS MEET YOUR CHALLENGES IS VERY MUCH TO BE COMMENDED,+ SIR EDWARD SAID, ADDING THAT THE PLEDGE TO THE COMMUNITY WHICH THE COMMISSIONER OF CAS HAD RENEWED WOULD BE WARMLY WELCOMED BY ALL THOSE WHO BENEFITTED FROM THEIR SERVICE.

THE CAS COMMISSIONER, SIR ROGER LOBO, DESCRIBED 1985-86 AS AN EVENTFUL YEAR FOR THE CAS. HE SAID THIS APPLIED EQUALLY TO THE TRAINING, CIVIC DUTIES AND OPERATIONAL TASKS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY THE TEAM OF OVER 6 000 VOLUNTEERS.

THE MOST DIFFICULT OPERATIONAL TASK UNDERTAKEN WAS DURING THE LARGE FOREST FIRE AT SHING MUN COUNTRY PARK IN JANUARY THIS YEAR. FOR THREE DAYS THE CAS ASSISTED THE COUNTRY PARK AUTHORITY AND FIRE SERVICES IN COMBATING THE DISASTROUS BLAZE.

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE, SIR ROGER SAID THE CAS NEEDED TO OPEN NEW UNITS IN VIEW OF THE INCREASE IN DEMAND FOR THEIR SERVICE.

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KOWLOON CITY BY-ELECTION TOMORROW

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REGISTERED VOTERS IN THE HO MAN TIN SOUTH CONSTITUENCY HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO EXERCISE THEIR CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY BY VOTING IN A BY-ELECTION FOR THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD.

THE BY-ELECTION WILL FILL A SEAT VACATED BY MR LEE WAI-HAU.

THERE ARE TWO CANDIDATES: MR CHIANG SAI-CHEONG (30), A TEACHER AND MR SO CHOI-HING (42), AN INTERIOR DECORATOR.

TWO POLLING STATIONS WILL BE OPEN BETWEEN 7.30 AM AND 10.30 PM. THEY ARE AT THE MUSIC HALL OF OI MAN ESTATE AND THE HOLY CARPENTER SOCIAL SERVICES CENTRE AT BLOCK 8, GROUND FLOOR, VALLEY ROAD ESTATE.

/THE KOWLOON .....

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THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT OFFICER, MR ALEX FONG, URGED VOTERS TO EXERCISE THEIR CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY AND DEMONSTRATE THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE DISTRICT BOARD AND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

ELECTORS ARE REMINDED THAT THEY SHOULD ONLY VOTE AT THE DESIGNATED STATIONS SPECIFIED IN THE POLLING CARDS.

THEY MUST CAST THEIR VOTES IN PERSON AND MAY NOT VOTE FOR MORE THAN ONE CANDIDATE.

A BROADCASTING VAN WILL BE TOURING THE HO MAN TIN AREA TOMORROW APPEALING FOR ELECTORS TO VOTE.

PRESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD  
BY-ELECTION:

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A PRESS CENTRE FOR THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD HO MAN TIN SOUTH CONSTITUENCY BY-ELECTION WILL BE SET UP TOMORROW AT THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT OFFICE, FIRST FLOOR, MORNING JOY BUILDING, 141-143 KAU PUI LUNG ROAD, TO KWA WAN, KOWLOON.

THE PRESS CENTRE WILL BE OPEN FROM 7.30 AM, WHEN THE POLLING STARTS, UNTIL THE TWO POLLING STATIONS CLOSE AT 10.30 PM. PRESS ENQUIRIES MAY BE MADE TO THE CENTRE ON 3-7110171 OR TO THE NEWS AND PUBLICITY UNIT AT CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION HEADQUARTERS ON 3-673917.

HOURLY TURNOUT FIGURES WILL BE GIVEN OVER THE GIS TELEPRINTER NETWORK THROUGHOUT THE DAY.

THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT OFFICER, MR ALEX FONG, WILL GIVE A BRIEFING ON THE MORNING POLLING SITUATION AT THE PRESS CENTRE AT 11 AM. MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.

THE DEPUTY REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR HONG KONG AND KOWLOON, MR KEVIN MAK, WILL VISIT THE OI MAN ESTATE MUSIC HALL POLLING STATION AT 5.45 PM AND THE HOLY CARPENTER SOCIAL SERVICES CENTRE AT 5.55 PM.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY, MR T.H. CHAU, WILL ALSO VISIT THE TWO POLLING STATIONS LATER IN THE EVENING AND WILL GIVE A BRIEFING AT THE VOTE COUNT STATION AT MARTHA BOSS COMMUNITY CENTRE AT 10.45 PM. THE COMMUNITY CENTRE IS LOCATED AT 89, CHUNG HAU STREET, HO MAN TIN.

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WAGE INDEXES FOR JUNE PUBLISHED

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THE OVERALL NOMINAL WAGE INDEX FOR JUNE 1986, AT 134.0, INCREASED BY 5.8 PER CENT COMPARED WITH JUNE 1985 AND BY 1.8 PER CENT COMPARED WITH MARCH 1986, ACCORDING TO STATISTICS PUBLISHED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

A COMPARISON OF THE JUNE 1986 AND JUNE 1985 INDEXES SHOWS THAT THE NOMINAL WAGE INDEX FOR THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR INCREASED BY 5.5 PER CENT; FOR THE WHOLESALE-RETAIL, IMPORT-EXPORT TRADES AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR BY 4.5 PER CENT; FOR THE TRANSPORT SERVICES SECTOR BY 8.4 PER CENT; FOR THE BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR BY 7.6 PER CENT; AND FOR THE PERSONAL SERVICES SECTOR BY 6.4 PER CENT.

A COMPARISON OF THE JUNE 1986 AND MARCH 1986 INDEXES (BUT BEARING IN MIND THE INFLUENCE OF SEASONAL FACTORS) SHOWS THAT THE NOMINAL WAGE INDEX FOR THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR INCREASED BY 1.9 PER CENT; FOR THE WHOLESALE-RETAIL, IMPORT-EXPORT TRADES AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR BY 1.0 PER CENT; FOR THE TRANSPORT SERVICES SECTOR BY 1.8 PER CENT; FOR THE BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR BY 3.2 PER CENT; AND FOR THE PERSONAL SERVICES SECTOR BY 3.5 PER CENT.

THE NOMINAL WAGE INDEXES FOR THE PERIOD JUNE 1985 TO JUNE 1986 FOR SELECTED MAJOR ECONOMIC SECTORS ARE GIVEN IN TABLE 1. DETAILED BREAKDOWNS FOR THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR ARE GIVEN IN TABLE 2.

THE OVERALL REAL WAGE INDEX, AT 103.0 IN JUNE 1986, WAS 2.6 PER CENT HIGHER THAN THAT IN JUNE 1985 AND 0.4 PER CENT HIGHER THAN THAT IN MARCH 1986.

FROM JUNE 1985 TO JUNE 1986, THE REAL WAGE INDEX FOR THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR INCREASED BY 2.3 PER CENT; FOR THE WHOLESALE-RETAIL, IMPORT-EXPORT TRADES AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR BY 1.4 PER CENT; FOR THE TRANSPORT SERVICES SECTOR BY 5.1 PER CENT; FOR THE BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR BY 4.4 PER CENT; AND FOR THE PERSONAL SERVICES SECTOR BY 3.2 PER CENT.

COMPARING JUNE 1986 WITH MARCH 1986, THE REAL WAGE INDEX FOR THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR INCREASED BY 0.4 PER CENT; FOR THE TRANSPORT SERVICES SECTOR BY 0.4 PER CENT; FOR THE BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR BY 1.9 PER CENT; AND FOR THE PERSONAL SERVICES SECTOR BY 2.0 PER CENT WHILE THAT FOR THE WHOLESALE-RETAIL, IMPORT-EXPORT TRADES AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR DECREASED BY 0.3 PER CENT.

THE REAL WAGE INDEXES FOR THE PERIOD JUNE 1985 TO JUNE 1986 FOR SELECTED MAJOR ECONOMIC SECTORS ARE GIVEN IN TABLE 3.

/THESE NOMINAL .....

THESE NOMINAL AND REAL WAGE INDEXES ARE DERIVED FROM THE SURVEY OF WAGES, SALARIES AND EMPLOYEE BENEFITS CONDUCTED EACH QUARTER BY THE DEPARTMENT, COVERING BOTH MANUAL AND NON-MANUAL WORKERS (EXCLUDING WORKERS AT THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL LEVELS) IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR, THE WHOLESALE-RETAIL, IMPORT-EXPORT TRADES AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR, THE TRANSPORT SERVICES SECTOR, THE BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR AND THE PERSONAL SERVICES SECTOR.

SUCH INDEXES MEASURE CHANGES IN WAGE RATES BY HOLDING THE STRUCTURAL PATTERN OF THE LABOUR FORCE WITH RESPECT TO INDUSTRY, OCCUPATION, SEX AND MODE OF PAYMENT THE SAME AS THAT OF MARCH 1982, WHICH IS THE BASE PERIOD OF THE WAGE INDEXES.

WHILE THE NOMINAL WAGE INDEX MEASURES CHANGES IN WAGE RATES IN MONEY TERMS, THE REAL WAGE INDEX, WHICH IS OBTAINED BY DEFLATING THE NOMINAL WAGE INDEX BY THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX(A), MEASURES CHANGES IN THE PURCHASING POWER OF WAGES.

A DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN DREW ATTENTION TO THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE WAGE INDEXES AND THE INDEXES OF PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED WHICH ARE ALSO PUBLISHED AT QUARTERLY INTERVALS.

HE POINTED OUT THAT WHILE WAGE RATES PROVIDE A MEASURE OF THE UNIT PRICE OF LABOUR, PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED IS A MEASURE OF PER CAPITA EARNINGS.

WAGE RATES REPRESENT THE AMOUNT OF REMUNERATION FOR NORMAL HOURS OF WORK, AND ARE DEFINED TO INCLUDE BASIC WAGES AND SALARIES, COST-OF-LIVING ALLOWANCE, MEAL BENEFITS, COMMISSION AND TIPS, GOOD ATTENDANCE BONUS AND NIGHT SHIFT ALLOWANCE.

IN ADDITION, YEAR-END BONUS AND OTHER GUARRANTEED AND REGULAR BONUSES AND ALLOWANCES THAT ARE PAID LESS FREQUENTLY THAN MONTHLY, ARE CONVERTED TO AN EQUIVALENT MONTHLY RATE WHEN COMPILING THE WAGE RATE INDEXES.

TOTAL PAYROLL, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS THE AMOUNT OF DIRECT CASH PAYMENTS THAT EMPLOYEES RECEIVE FROM EMPLOYERS. APART FROM THE ABOVE MENTIONED CASH RECEIPTS, IT ALSO INCLUDES OVERTIME PAY AND OTHER NON-GUARRANTEED AND IRREGULAR BONUSES AND ALLOWANCES.

HENCE, STATISTICS ON PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED TEND TO BE SENSITIVE TO CHANGES IN THE NUMBER OF HOURS ACTUALLY WORKED, THE TIMING OF THE PAYMENT OF BONUSES AND BACK-PAY, AND THE COMPOSITION OF THE LABOUR FORCE.

AS A RESULT, MOVEMENTS IN WAGE RATES DO NOT NECESSARILY CONFORM WITH THOSE IN PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED.

THE SURVEY FINDINGS ARE PUBLISHED IN A REPORT OF WAGES, SALARIES AND EMPLOYEE BENEFITS STATISTICS VOLUME I, JUNE 1986 WHICH WILL BE ON SALE SHORTLY AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE.

VOLUME II OF THE REPORT CONTAINING DETAILED OCCUPATIONAL STATISTICS, SUCH AS WAGE RATES, NUMBER OF NORMAL HOURS OF WORK AND NUMBER OF STANDARD WORKING DAYS IS EXPECTED TO BE AVAILABLE AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE EARLY IN NOVEMBER.

ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE WAGE INDEXES CAN BE DIRECTED TO THE WAGES AND LABOUR COSTS STATISTICS SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT AT 5-455774 OR 5-416062.

Table 1 : Nominal Wage Indexes by Selected Major Economic Sectors

Selected Major Economic Sectors	Indexes (March 1982 = 100)				
	Jun.	Sept.	Dec.	Mar.	Jun.
	1985	1985	1985	1986	1986
Manufacturing	126.7	127.5	128.1	131.2	133.7
Wholesale/Retail, Import/Export trades and Restaurants and Hotels	120.0	120.8	122.6	124.1	125.4
Transport Services	142.5	145.4	145.6	151.7	154.4
Business Services	129.9	130.3	131.0	135.4	139.8
Personal Services	122.4	124.6	124.5	125.8	130.2
All Sectors Above	126.7	127.8	128.6	131.6	134.0

/Table 2 : .....

Table 2 : Nominal Wage Indexes for Major Industries in the Manufacturing Sector

Industry	Indexes (March 1982 = 100)				
	Jun. 1985	Sept. 1985	Dec. 1985	Mar. 1986	Jun. 1986
Garments	120.6	120.6	121.0	122.9	125.7
Gloves	135.7	138.3	138.9	140.8	142.0
Handbags	121.4	123.0	124.2	124.9	125.8
Cotton Spinning/Weaving	128.4	128.8	129.6	135.5	139.8
Knitting	130.1	129.9	130.8	134.2	137.4
Bleaching and Dyeing	132.0	133.1	134.0	139.1	144.9
Printing	132.0	133.4	133.3	135.7	139.9
Plastic Products	128.0	127.7	127.9	132.2	134.1
Metal Products	128.3	130.1	130.5	135.3	137.2
Electrical Appliances	136.0	137.3	136.5	143.3	145.7
Electronics	130.0	132.1	132.8	136.2	137.2
Watches and Clocks	132.6	134.6	134.7	141.8	145.0
Manufacturing	126.7	127.5	128.1	131.2	133.7

Table 3 : Real Wage Indexes by Selected Major Economic Sectors

Selected Major Economic Sectors	Indexes (March 1982 = 100)				
	Jun.	Sept.	Dec.	Mar.	Jun.
	1985	1985	1985	1986	1986
Manufacturing	100.4	99.1	100.8	102.3	102.7
Wholesale/Retail, Import/Export trades and Restaurants and Hotels	95.1	93.9	96.5	96.7	96.4
Transport Services	112.9	113.1	114.6	118.2	118.7
Business Services	103.0	101.4	103.1	105.5	107.5
Personal Services	97.0	96.9	98.1	98.1	100.1
All Sectors Above	100.4	99.4	101.3	102.6	103.0

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1986

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UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT STATISTICS RELEASED  
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THE UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION REMAINED STABLE WHILE THE UNDEREMPLOYMENT SITUATION IMPROVED IN THE JUNE-AUGUST 1986 QUARTER, COMPARED WITH THE QUARTER ENDING MAY 1986, ACCORDING TO THE LATEST LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS RELEASED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

THE SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR JUNE-AUGUST 1986 WAS 3.0 PER CENT, WHICH WAS THE SAME AS THAT FOR THE QUARTER ENDING MAY 1986. THE RATE FOR JUNE-AUGUST 1985 WAS 3.2 PER CENT. THE DECREASE OF 0.2 PERCENTAGE POINT COMPARED WITH THE SAME QUARTER OF LAST YEAR IS STATISTICALLY NOT SIGNIFICANT.

THE NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED PERSONS IN THE QUARTER JUNE-AUGUST 1986 WAS ESTIMATED AT 81 700, COMPARED WITH 80 300 FOR THE QUARTER ENDING MAY 1986 AND 85 600 FOR THE SAME QUARTER OF LAST YEAR.

THE UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATE FOR JUNE-AUGUST 1986 WAS 1.5 PER CENT, WHICH COMPARES WITH THE RATE OF 2.4 PER CENT FOR THE QUARTER ENDING MAY 1986. THE RATE FOR JUNE-AUGUST 1985 WAS 2.0 PER CENT. THE DECREASES OF 0.9 PERCENTAGE POINT COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS QUARTER AND OF 0.5 PERCENTAGE POINT COMPARED WITH THE SAME QUARTER OF LAST YEAR ARE BOTH STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT.

THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF UNDEREMPLOYED PERSONS FOR THE QUARTER JUNE-AUGUST 1986 WAS 39 900, COMPARED WITH 64 200 FOR THE QUARTER ENDING MAY 1986 AND 53 400 FOR JUNE-AUGUST 1985.

CONSISTENT WITH THE LATEST RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO), PERSONS WHO WORKED LESS THAN 35 HOURS A WEEK DUE TO ECONOMIC REASONS (SUCH AS SLACK WORK, MATERIAL SHORTAGE, MECHANICAL BREAKDOWN AND INABILITY TO FIND FULL-TIME WORK) WERE REGARDED AS UNDEREMPLOYED ONLY IF THEY WERE EITHER SEEKING OR AVAILABLE FOR MORE WORK.

COMMENTING UPON THESE FIGURES, THE COMMISSIONER FOR CENSUS AND STATISTICS SAID THAT BECAUSE THE PROPORTION OF FIRST-TIME JOB-SEEKERS (PEOPLE WHO HAVE JUST LEFT SCHOOL) VARIES FROM MONTH TO MONTH, UNEMPLOYMENT RATES THAT HAD BEEN SEASONALLY ADJUSTED TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE VARIATIONS IN THE FIRST-TIME JOB-SEEKERS SHOULD BE USED IN MAKING COMPARISONS OVER TIME.

THE COMMISSIONER ADDED THAT, BASED ON A SYSTEM OF MANUAL EXTRACTION OF INFORMATION FROM SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES FOR THE LATEST MONTH, PROVISIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATES COVERING THE LATEST THREE-MONTH PERIOD COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE WITHIN TWO WEEKS AFTER THE SURVEY. THESE PROVIDE AN EARLY INDICATION OF THE LATEST TREND IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT SITUATION.

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THE PROVISIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED) FOR JULY-SEPTEMBER 1986 WAS 3.0 PER CENT AND THE PROVISIONAL UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATE WAS 1.3 PER CENT. HOWEVER, IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE WILL BE LOWER AFTER SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT. (THE UNADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR JUNE-AUGUST 1986 WAS 3.2 PER CENT.)

THE UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT STATISTICS WERE OBTAINED FROM A CONTINUOUS GENERAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

THIS SURVEY COVERS A QUARTERLY SAMPLE OF SOME 14 000 HOUSEHOLDS OR 51 000 PERSONS, SELECTED SCIENTIFICALLY TO REPRESENT THE LAND-BASED CIVILIAN NON-INSTITUTIONAL POPULATION IN HONG KONG.

PERSONAL AND LABOUR FORCE DATA WERE OBTAINED IN THE SURVEY BY INTERVIEWING EACH INDIVIDUAL MEMBER AGED 15 AND ABOVE IN THE HOUSEHOLDS SAMPLED. IN THE SURVEY, THE DEFINITIONS USED IN MEASURING UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT FOLLOW CLOSELY THOSE RECOMMENDED BY THE ILO.

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS IS GIVEN IN THE REPORT ON THE GENERAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY WHICH IS PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES A YEAR. THE NEXT REPORT COVERING THE QUARTER ENDING SEPTEMBER 1986 SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FROM THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE AROUND DECEMBER 20, 1986.

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VOLUNTARY WORKERS SOUGHT FOR TAP MUN PROJECT  
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YOUNG PEOPLE, AGED BETWEEN 14 AND 25, IN TAI PO ARE INVITED TO TAKE PART AS VOLUNTARY WORKERS IN A TAP MUN COMMUNITY PROJECT.

ORGANISED BY THE DISTRICT BOARD'S SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE, THE PROJECT AIMS AT PROVIDING COMMUNITY SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND ELDERLY PEOPLE IN TAP MUN.

THOSE SELECTED WILL ATTEND TWO TRAINING COURSES TO BE HELD IN NOVEMBER AND JANUARY.

AFTER THE FIRST COURSE, VOLUNTARY WORKERS WILL CONDUCT A SURVEY IN TAP MUN, PROBING LOCAL PROBLEMS AND GATHERING RELATED INFORMATION ON POPULATION, EDUCATION LEVEL, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF LIFE IN THE AREA.

THEY WILL THEN WORK ON DETAILS OF THE COMMUNITY PROJECT AND CARRY IT OUT IN MARCH.

APPLICATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE AT 1 TING KOK ROAD OR THE DISTRICT BOARD SECRETARIAT ON THE THIRD FLOOR, TAI PO COMMERCIAL CENTRE, 152-172 KWONG FUK ROAD.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS NOVEMBER 8. FURTHER ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON 0-6577111 EXTENSION 244 OR 0-6563257.

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1986

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### SAFETY AWARD SCHEME LAUNCHED

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CONSTRUCTION WORKERS WILL HAVE THE CHANCE TO WIN A FREE TRIP BY TAKING PART IN THE SAFETY AWARD SCHEME ORGANISED BY THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD.

ANNOUNCING DETAILS AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SCHEME'S WORKING PARTY, MR POON TO-CHUEN, SAID THE AIM IS TO PROMOTE SAFETY IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.

HE NOTED THAT THIS IS THE FOURTH YEAR THE SCHEME IS BEING HELD, ADDING THAT MANY WORKERS, CONTRACTORS AND CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES TOOK PART IN THE EVENT IN THE PAST THREE YEARS.

+THEIR ENTHUSIASM AND SUPPORT FOR THE SCHEME IS MOST HEARTENING,+ MR POON SAID.

THIS YEAR, THE SCHEME OFFERS TWO AWARDS - THE SAFETY CAPTIONING AWARD AND THE SAFETY SITE AWARD.

THERE WILL BE THREE PRIZES FOR EACH AWARD. WINNERS OF THE SAFETY CAPTIONING AWARD WILL BE GIVEN TRAVEL COUPONS WHILE WINNERS OF THE SAFETY SITE AWARD WILL BE PRESENTED WITH ROAST PIGS SYMBOLISING SAFETY TO CONSTRUCTION WORKERS.

ENTRIES FOR THE SAFETY SITE AWARD WILL CLOSE ON NOVEMBER 15 AND FOR THE SAFETY CAPTIONING AWARD ON DECEMBER 31.

APPLICATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE FACTORY INSPECTORATE DIVISION OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT, HARBOUR BUILDING, CENTRAL, AND AT THE BUILDING CONTRACTORS' ASSOCIATION, 182 HENNESSY ROAD, WAN CHAI.

ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE SCHEME CAN BE MADE TO THE FACTORY INSPECTORATE DIVISION AT 5-8523555 AND 5-8523556, THE BUILDING CONTRACTORS' ASSOCIATION AT 5-724414, AND THE WORKERS' UNIONS' LIAISON OFFICE AT 3-886887.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE CONFERENCE WERE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE, MR PETER NIE, AND THE CHIEF FACTORY INSPECTOR OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT, MR YIP YUK-LUN.

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TWO KOWLOON BAY SITES OFFERED FOR RENT  
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THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT IS OFFERING TWO KOWLOON BAY SITES ON SHORT-TERM TENANCY.

ONE OF THE SITES, AT LAM LOK STREET, MEASURES 3 325 SQUARE METRES. IT IS FOR THE STORAGE OF NON-DANGEROUS GOODS AND THE TENANT'S VEHICLES; REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLES; AND STORAGE, ASSEMBLY OR FABRICATION OF BUILDING CONTRACTORS' GOODS, EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS AND MACHINES.

THE SITE, HOWEVER, CANNOT BE USED FOR STORING AND FABRICATING CONCRETE AND CEMENT; BATCHING ASPHALT; AND SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF NATURAL SAND, AGGREGATE AND CEMENT.

THE OTHER SITE, MEASURING 1.11 HECTARES, AT LAM WAH STREET IS FOR STORAGE; OR REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLES; OR REPAIR, MAINTENANCE OR CONSOLIDATION OF CONTAINERS; OR ALL OR ANY OF THE ABOVE.

TENANCIES FOR THE SITES ARE TWO YEARS INITIALLY, RENEWABLE QUARTERLY AFTERWARDS.

TENDERS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY NOON ON OCTOBER 31.

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BRIEFING ON TAI PO TRAFFIC  
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THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TAI PO DISTRICT BOARD'S TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE, DR STEPHEN TANG LUNG-WAI, WILL BRIEF THE MEDIA ON MATTERS DISCUSSED AT A RECENT COMMITTEE MEETING.

THE BRIEFING WILL BE HELD AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE DISTRICT BOARD SECRETARIAT ON THE THIRD FLOOR, TAI PO COMMERCIAL CENTRE, 152-172 KWONG FUK ROAD.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE BRIEFING.

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DETAILS OF TAVA SCHEME

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THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AID, MR PATRICK MOSS, WILL HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO ANNOUNCE DETAILS OF EX GRATIA PAYMENTS TO BE MADE TO APPLICANTS UNDER THE SUPPLEMENTARY TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS ASSISTANCE SCHEME.

THE CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD AT 2.30 PM AT THE GIS PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM, FIFTH FLOOR, BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, CENTRAL.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.

LABELS FOR PEAK RESIDENTS, REHEARSAL CLOSURE

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SPECIAL POLICE LABELS PERMITTING PEAK RESIDENTS TO ENTER PEAK ROAD WEST OF MAGAZINE GAP ROAD DURING ITS CLOSURE IN THE EVENING OF OCTOBER 22 ARE AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION AT THE PEAK POLICE STATION.

ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE LABELS MAY BE MADE ON 5-8496242.

THE ROAD WILL BE CLOSED FROM 6 PM AS PART OF THE SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ROYAL FIREWORKS DISPLAY THAT NIGHT.

TO FACILITATE REHEARSALS FOR THE ROYAL VISIT, EDINBURGH PLACE NORTH BETWEEN QUEEN'S PIER AND HMS TAMAR, AND EDINBURGH PLACE EAST BETWEEN HMS TAMAR AND CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL WILL BE CLOSED TO TRAFFIC BETWEEN 1 PM AND 5 PM ON FRIDAY (OCTOBER 17).

AT THE SAME TIME, THE GREEN MINIBUS STAND AT THE HMS TAMAR WILL BE SUSPENDED, AND ROUTES 1, 2, 3 AND 3A ON THEIR JOURNEYS TO CENTRAL WILL BE DIVERTED VIA PEDDER STREET, CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL AND CONNAUGHT PLACE TO TERMINATE AT A TEMPORARY GREEN MINIBUS STAND OUTSIDE CENTRAL POST OFFICE.

FROM CONNAUGHT PLACE, THESE ROUTES WILL HAVE TO TRAVEL VIA CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL BEFORE RESUMING NORMAL ROUTING.

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NO MAIL DELIVERY

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THERE WILL BE NO MAIL DELIVERY ON OCTOBER 22 WHICH IS A PUBLIC HOLIDAY, A POST OFFICE SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY.

ALL POST OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED ON THAT DAY, HE ADDED.

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# Royal Visit.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1986

## TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF DOUBLE HAVEN

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A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY THAT THE AREA AROUND DOUBLE HAVEN (YAN CHAU TONG) IN THE NEW TERRITORIES WILL BE TEMPORARILY CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC FROM 6 PM ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18 TO 7 AM ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT IT IS LIKELY THAT HM YACHT BRITANNIA WILL BE LOCATED IN DOUBLE HAVEN DURING THIS PERIOD, PROVIDING AN INTERLUDE FOR THE ROYAL PARTY BETWEEN THEIR VISIT TO CHINA AND THEIR VISIT TO HONG KONG.

IN THE LIGHT OF NORMAL SECURITY REQUIREMENTS, AND TO ENSURE REASONABLE PRIVACY FOR HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN, A TEMPORARY CLOSURE ORDER UNDER THE PUBLIC ORDER ORDINANCE WILL BE MADE AND WILL BE GAZETTED ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17.

DESPITE THE CLOSURE ORDER, SAID THE SPOKESMAN, THE POLICE WILL PERMIT FISHERMEN AND NORMAL TRAFFIC TO AND FROM VILLAGES IN THE AREA TO ENTER DOUBLE HAVEN, PROVIDED THAT THEY KEEP A REASONABLE DISTANCE FROM THE BRITANNIA. CARE HAS ALSO BEEN TAKEN TO MAKE SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS IN RESPECT OF THE TA CHIU FESTIVAL TO BE HELD SHORTLY ON CROOKED ISLAND (KAT O CHAU). +PEOPLE,+ HE SAID, +WILL BE ABLE TO GET TO THE ISLAND FOR THE FESTIVAL BY A DIFFERENT ROUTE.+

THE TEMPORARY CLOSED AREA MEASURES ABOUT FOUR KILOMETRES IN EACH DIRECTION FROM THE CENTRE OF DOUBLE HAVEN. STARTING AT TUI MIN CHAU IT INCLUDES THE COASTLINE TO CHEUNG WO. THE BOUNDARY THEN GOES NORTH EAST TO A POINT OFF BLUFF HEAD AND THEN DUE NORTH TO ROUND ISLAND (PAK SHA CHAU).

一九八六年十月十五日

星期三

### 皇家遊艇在印洲塘停泊

政府發言人今日表示，由十月十八日星期六下午六時至十月廿一日上午七時，新界印洲塘附近地區將會暫時封閉，不許市民進入。

發言人說，皇家遊艇「不列顛尼亞號」可能會在上述一段時間內在印洲塘碇泊，俾女皇伉儷及隨員在訪問中國之後而又未開始在港訪問行程之前，有一段空餘時間。

有鑑於正常的保安需要，以及保證女皇能夠合理地不受干擾，會根據公安條例頒布一項臨時封閉令，並會在十月十七日星期五在憲報公布。

發言人謂，雖然實施封閉令，但警方仍會准許漁民及其他日常進出區內村落的人士進入印洲塘，但他們需要與不列顛尼亞號保持合理距離。同時對於吉澳洲快將進行一連幾日的打熊，亦有特別安排。他說：「市民可以用另一條路綫到島上參加打熊儀式。」

臨時封閉的地區包括印洲塘四周約四公里的範圍，由對面洲開始，沿海岸綫至長窩，然後向東北伸延至黃竹角咀對開，再轉向正北，直至白沙洲。

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編輯注意：臨時封閉區的地圖，稍後用傳真機發出。