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THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 1993

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SCHOOLS ADVISED OF RAINSTORM ARRANGEMENTS

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IN RESPONSE TO MEDIA ENQUIRIES CONCERNING CERTAIN SCHOOLS WHICH WERE ALLEGED TO HAVE SENT CHILDREN HOME IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SUSPENDED ALL CLASSES YESTERDAY MORNING FOLLOWING THE RED RAINSTORM ALERT, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SAID:

"SCHOOLS ARE FULLY AWARE OF WHAT THEY SHOULD DO IN THE EVENT OF A RAINSTORM. THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ISSUED A GENERAL ADMINISTRATION CIRCULAR ON TROPICAL CYCLONES, HEAVY PERSISTENT RAIN AND THUNDERSTORMS TO ALL SCHOOLS LAST SEPTEMBER FOLLOWING THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW RAINSTORM WARNING SYSTEM."

THE CIRCULAR STIPULATED THAT IF THE WEATHER SITUATION SUDDENLY DETERIORATES, IT MAY BE NECESSARY FOR THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION TO ANNOUNCE THE SUSPENSION OF CLASSES.

IN SUCH AN EVENT, PUPILS SHOULD STAY HOME IF THEY HAVE NOT ALREADY SET OUT FOR SCHOOL, AND THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY ARRIVED AT SCHOOL SHOULD STAY THERE UNTIL THE SITUATION WARRANTS A SAFE JOURNEY HOME.

"EACH SCHOOL HAS BEEN ADVISED TO DRAW UP A CONTINGENCY PLAN IN ADVANCE TO COVER SUCH A SITUATION.

"THE PLAN SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE SCHOOL PREMISES WILL BE OPEN, THAT SOME TEACHERS LIVING CLOSE BY WILL BE AT SCHOOL TO LOOK AFTER THE PUPILS, AND THAT SAFE AND ADEQUATE ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE FOR THEM TO RETURN HOME AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME," HE SAID.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID SCHOOLS HAD ALSO BEEN ADVISED THAT PARENTS SHOULD BE INFORMED OF THESE ARRANGEMENTS AT THE START OF EACH SCHOOL YEAR.

"AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF CLOSURE WHILE SCHOOLS ARE IN SESSION DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT ALL PUPILS MUST BE SENT HOME IMMEDIATELY.

"ALL HEADMASTERS, PRINCIPALS AND THEIR STAFF MUST KEEP PUPILS IN SCHOOL UNTIL THEY CAN BE RELEASED TO RETURN HOME IN SAFETY," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

COMMENTING ON ALLEGATIONS MADE BY SOME PARENTS THAT THEIR CHILDREN WERE SENT HOME IMMEDIATELY AFTER CLASSES WERE SUSPENDED YESTERDAY, THE SPOKESMAN URGED THESE PARENTS TO REPORT THE INCIDENTS TO THE RELEVANT EDUCATION DEPARTMENT DISTRICT OFFICE SO THAT INVESTIGATIONS CAN BE CONDUCTED.

HE ADDED THAT THE DEPARTMENT WILL RE-ISSUE THE CIRCULAR TOMORROW (FRIDAY) TO REMIND SCHOOLS OF THE ARRANGEMENTS.

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GREATER PROTECTION FOR INSURANCE POLICY HOLDERS PROPOSED
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THE GOVERNMENT IS PROPOSING TO PROVIDE GREATER SECURITY FOR INSURANCE POLICY HOLDERS BY REQUIRING A GENERAL INSURER TO MAINTAIN, IN ADDITION TO THE STATUTORY SOLVENCY MARGIN, ADEQUATE ASSETS IN HONG KONG TO MATCH THE LIABILITIES FROM THAT BUSINESS.

THE PROPOSALS ARE SET OUT IN THE INSURANCE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1993 TO BE GAZETTED TOMORROW (FRIDAY). THE BILL WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON JUNE 30.

AT PRESENT, AN INSURER CARRYING ON BUSINESS IN HONG KONG IS NOT REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN ASSETS HERE SUFFICIENT TO MEET ITS LOCAL LIABILITIES.

ALTHOUGH THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY IS EMPOWERED BY THE INSURANCE ORDINANCE TO IMPOSE A LOCAL ASSET REQUIREMENT, THE INSURER'S FINANCIAL POSITION MUST PROVIDE HIM WITH ADEQUATE GROUNDS FOR SO DOING.

"THIS IS UNSATISFACTORY AS LOCAL POLICY HOLDERS WILL HAVE NO ASSURANCE THAT THEIR LEGITIMATE CLAIMS AGAINST AN INSURER CAN BE MET IN THE EVENT OF THAT INSURER'S INSOLVENCY," A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

"THESE CONCERNS APPLY PARTICULARLY TO AN OVERSEAS INSURER, AS THE AUTHORITY MAY NOT BE AWARE OF PROBLEMS AFFECTING ITS WORLDWIDE OPERATIONS UNTIL IT IS TOO LATE TO TAKE ANY EFFECTIVE ACTION," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"THERE HAVE BEEN INCIDENTS IN THE PAST WHEN THE INTERESTS OF POLICY HOLDERS HAVE SUFFERED BECAUSE AN AILING INSURER'S ASSETS HAVE BEEN REMOVED OVERSEAS AND HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT OR IMPOSSIBLE TO RECOVER," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

TO RECTIFY THE SITUATION, A SERIES OF PROPOSALS WERE INTRODUCED.

CLAUSE 2 OF THE BILL WOULD THUS IMPOSE A REQUIREMENT ON THE INSURER TO MAINTAIN ASSETS IN HONG KONG OF UP TO 80 PER CENT OF ITS LIABILITIES ARISING FROM ITS HONG KONG GENERAL BUSINESS PLUS THE SOLVENCY MARGIN, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE SAME PERCENTAGE IS ALSO REQUIRED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

A LIST OF ASSETS WHICH MAY QUALIFY AS HONG KONG ASSETS IS SET OUT IN CLAUSE 1.

"BY REQUIRING THE INSURER TO MAINTAIN ASSETS IN HONG KONG SUFFICIENT TO COVER ITS LOCAL LIABILITIES, THE PROPOSED ASSET-MATCHING REQUIREMENT WOULD GREATLY ENHANCE PROTECTION FOR POLICY HOLDERS IN THE EVENT OF THE INSURER'S BANKRUPTCY," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY WOULD ALSO BE EMPOWERED, AT HIS DISCRETION, TO ADMIT AS HONG KONG ASSETS, IN INDIVIDUAL CASES, ITEMS NOT SPECIFIED IN THE LIST.

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"THIS COULD ENABLE THE AUTHORITY TO RESPOND FLEXIBLY TO CHANGING MARKET CIRCUMSTANCES AND, TO ENABLE THE GENERAL INSURERS TO MAINTAIN A PRUDENT SPREAD OF INVESTMENTS," HE SAID.

THE REQUIREMENT WOULD ONLY APPLY, INITIALLY, TO GENERAL INSURERS, THE SPOKESMAN SAID, BUT HE ADDED THAT THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY WOULD CONSIDER WHETHER AND HOW TO EXTEND THE REQUIREMENT TO LONG-TERM INSURERS.

"FURTHER, REINSURERS HERE AS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM WOULD BE EXEMPT FROM THE REQUIREMENT. THIS IS BECAUSE REINSURANCE CONTRACTS NORMALLY COVER MORE THAN ONE JURISDICTION WITHIN ONE CONTRACT AND THE REINSURER WOULD PROBABLY HAVE DIFFICULTY ATTRIBUTING PARTICULAR LIABILITIES TO A PARTICULAR JURISDICTION," HE SAID.

"THE PROPOSED ASSET-MATCHING REQUIREMENT IS A COMMON FEATURE OF OTHER JURISDICTIONS," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

HE SAID TO FACILITATE COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENT BY INSURERS, A GRACE PERIOD OF ABOUT SIX MONTHS WOULD BE ALLOWED FROM ENACTMENT OF THE BILL.

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VISA-FREE ENTRY OF PRC NATIONALS IN TRANSIT
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THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (THURSDAY) THAT WITH EFFECT FROM AUGUST 1, NATIONALS OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA (PRC) TRANSITING THROUGH HONG KONG TO AND FROM OVERSEAS WILL BE GRANTED VISA-FREE ENTRY OF SEVEN DAYS.

AT PRESENT, PRC PASSPORT HOLDERS TRAVELLING THROUGH HONG KONG ARE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN A VISA TO ENTER HONG KONG.

SUCH VISAS ARE ISSUED UPON ENTRY AT LOWU, OR THROUGH AN OVERSEAS BRITISH VISA POST.

TO EASE THE CONGESTION AT LOWU AND TO FACILITATE THE TRAVELLERS, HOLDERS OF PRC PASSPORTS TRAVELLING THROUGH HONG KONG WILL BE ALLOWED VISA-FREE ENTRY OF SEVEN DAYS IF THEY ARE GENUINELY IN TRANSIT.

THEY WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVE THAT THEY HAVE VALID PASSPORTS, CONFIRMED ONWARD TICKETS AND ONWARD FACILITIES, INCLUDING ENTRY FACILITIES FOR THE COUNTRIES EN ROUTE, IF NECESSARY.

THE VISA-FREE ARRANGEMENT WILL ALSO COVER PRC TRANSITEES WHO TRAVEL TO AND FROM TAIWAN ON TWO-WAY PERMITS.

WITH THESE CHANGES, PRC TRANSITEES MAY ENTER HONG KONG VIA ANY IMMIGRATION CONTROL POINT.

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"IN LIBERALISING THE VISA ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRC TRANSITEES, WE ARE NOT RELAXING OUR IMMIGRATION CONTROL BUT RATHER SIMPLIFYING THE PROCEDURES INVOLVED IN EXERCISING THE CONTROL," A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE SPOKESMAN ALSO REITERATED THE GOVERNMENT POLICY OF REPATRIATING ALL ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS. "THERE WILL BE NO AMNESTY," HE SAID.

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WHARF CABLE TO BROADCAST API
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THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY MET TODAY (THURSDAY) AND DECIDED THAT WHARF CABLE SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO BROADCAST A MAXIMUM OF ONE MINUTE OF ANNOUNCEMENTS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST (API) PER EVERY TWO CLOCK HOURS PER CHANNEL ON SUBSCRIPTION TELEVISION.

THIS IS HALF THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT REQUIRED OF THE TWO WIRELESS TELEVISION STATIONS.

IN COMING TO THIS DECISION, THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY HAS HAD REGARD TO THE MULTI-CHANNEL NATURE OF SUBSCRIPTION TELEVISION AND THE AVAILABILITY OF MORE AIR TIME FOR THE BROADCAST OF API'S.

THE API REQUIREMENT WOULD NOT APPLY TO STAR TV'S SATELLITE TELEVISION CHANNELS CARRIED BY WHARF CABLE.

STAR TV, BEING A REGIONAL SERVICE, IS NOT REQUIRED UNDER ITS LICENCE TO BROADCAST LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE MESSAGES.

MOREOVER, THE API REQUIREMENT FOR PAY-PER-VIEW CHANNELS WOULD BE CONFINED TO ESSENTIAL EMERGENCY MESSAGES SUCH AS WEATHER INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY.

THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY ALSO CONSIDERED ATV'S APPLICATION FOR THE EXTENSION OF HORSE RACING PROGRAMMES ON THE WORLD CHANNEL ON WEDNESDAYS AND SATURDAYS DURING THE HORSE RACING SEASON 1993/94 FROM ONE-AND-A-HALF HOURS TO TWO HOURS BY ADVANCING THE STARTING TIME FROM 9 PM TO 8.30 PM.

THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY ACCEPTED THAT THE EXTENSION WAS NOT IN CONFLICT WITH THE FAMILY VIEWING POLICY WHICH STIPULATES THAT NOTHING UNSUITABLE FOR CHILDREN COULD BE SHOWN BETWEEN 4 PM AND 8.30 PM AND THAT WITH THE ADVENT OF SATELLITE AND SUBSCRIPTION TELEVISION, THE EXTENSION OF HORSE RACING PROGRAMMES SHOULD NOT UNDULY REDUCE THE CHOICE OF PROGRAMMING OF VIEWERS WHO ARE NOT INTERESTED IN HORSE RACING.

THE EXTENSION WOULD BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW AFTER THE 1993/94 SEASON.

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AS A REGULAR AGENDA ITEM, THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY CONSIDERED REPORT OF ITS COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE AND ENDORSED THE COMMITTEE'S DECISIONS IN RESPECT OF ALL THE COMPLAINTS DEALT WITH IN THE PAST MONTH.

SEVEN COMPLAINTS ABOUT UNSATISFACTORY TELEVISION RECEPTION AND ONE COMPLAINT ABOUT UNSATISFACTORY RADIO RECEPTION HAD ALSO BEEN REFERRED TO THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY FOR INVESTIGATION.

THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED RECEIPT OF AN APPLICATION FROM THE NEWS CORPORATION LTD TO ACQUIRE THE SHARES OF TVB. THE APPLICATION WILL BE DEALT WITH EXPEDITIOUSLY.

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RESULTS OF 1992 SURVEY ON DRUG USE AMONG STUDENTS
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A TERRITORY-WIDE SURVEY HAS FOUND THAT MORE SECONDARY SCHOOL AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTE STUDENTS HAVE ABUSED PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES.

THE SURVEY COVERED THE USE OF HEROIN AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTE STUDENTS FOR THE FIRST TIME.

SOME KEY FINDINGS OF THE 1992 SURVEY ON DRUG USE AMONG STUDENTS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTES WERE RELEASED TODAY (THURSDAY) AFTER BEING STUDIED BY THE ACTION COMMITTEE AGAINST NARCOTICS (ACAN).

THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED BY THE NARCOTICS DIVISION, GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT, AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE SECOND SURVEY IN 1990 WITH THE OBJECTIVE TO COLLECT MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND UP-TO-DATE DATA.

A TOTAL OF SOME 110,000 STUDENTS WERE ENUMERATED, FROM 130 CHINESE-SPEAKING SCHOOLS, SEVEN TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AND 22 INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS.

ALL THE STUDENTS SURVEYED WERE ASKED TO COMPLETE CONFIDENTIALLY AND ANONYMOUSLY A QUESTIONNAIRE WITH 46 QUESTIONS COVERING SUCH POINTS AS THE NON-MEDICAL USE OF PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES AND HEROIN, THEIR ATTITUDES AND REASONS FOR ABUSING THE SUBSTANCES AND HEROIN, AND THEIR SOURCES OF SUCH DRUGS.

THE 1992 SURVEY REVEALED THAT 2.9 PER CENT OF STUDENTS IN CHINESE-SPEAKING SECONDARY SCHOOLS HAD EVER ABUSED PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES. THE CORRESPONDING RATE IN THE 1990 SURVEY WAS 2.1 PER CENT.

ALSO, 0.3 PER CENT OF STUDENTS IN THESE SCHOOLS REPORTED THAT THEY HAD EVER ABUSED HEROIN. THE PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS REPORTED TO HAVE ABUSED HEROIN AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES IN THE FOUR WEEKS PRECEDING THE SURVEY WERE 0.1 AND 0.8 ONLY, INDICATING THAT THE MAJORITY WERE NO LONGER ABUSING THE DRUGS.

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THE PROPORTION OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE FULL-TIME COURSE OF TECHNICAL INSTITUTES, AND REPORTED TO HAVE EVER ABUSED PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES WAS 2.7 PER CENT. THE CORRESPONDING FIGURE IN THE 1990 SURVEY RESULTS WAS 2.5 PER CENT.

OF THOSE ENROLLED IN FULL-TIME COURSES, 0.4 PER CENT REPORTED TO HAVE EVER ABUSED HEROIN.

AGAIN, THE PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS REPORTED TO HAVE ABUSED HEROIN AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES IN THE FOUR WEEKS PRECEDING THE SURVEY WERE MUCH LOWER, AT 0.1 PER CENT AND 0.6 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY.

THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS REPORTED TO HAVE EVER ABUSED PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES WAS 8.1 PER CENT. THE CORRESPONDING RATE IN 1990 WAS 5.3 PER CENT. 1.6 PER CENT OF STUDENTS REPORTED TO HAVE EVER ABUSED HEROIN.

NEVERTHELESS ONLY 0.6 PER CENT AND 2.4 PER CENT OF THE STUDENTS REPORTED TO HAVE ABUSED HEROIN AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES RESPECTIVELY IN THE FOUR WEEKS PRECEDING THE SURVEY.

THE COMMON AGES OF THOSE STUDENTS IN CHINESE-SPEAKING AND INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS REPORTED TO HAVE ABUSED HEROIN OR PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES WERE BETWEEN 14 AND 16.

FOR TECHNICAL INSTITUTES, THE MAJORITY OF HEROIN OR PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCE ABUSERS WERE MALE, AND THEIR COMMON AGES WERE BETWEEN 16 AND 18.

THE MAIN REPORTED REASONS FOR HEROIN OR PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCE ABUSE WERE CURIOSITY, FOLLOWED BY PEER INFLUENCE AND BOREDOM/DEPRESSION.

THE LATEST SURVEY ALSO COVERED THE USE OF ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS. THE REPORTED PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS EVER SMOKED RANGED FROM 25.6 PER CENT TO 39.0 PER CENT.

THE RELEVANT PERCENTAGES FOR ALCOHOL (INCLUDING BEER, WINE AND SPIRITS) RANGE FROM 73.1 PER CENT TO 88.3 PER CENT.

MORE DETAILED ANALYSES WILL BE INCLUDED IN A REPORT OF THE 1992 SURVEY TO BE PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 1993.

COMMENTING ON THE SURVEY FINDINGS, THE CHAIRMAN OF ACAN, PROF C N CHEN, SAID THE SURVEY HAD PROVIDED A CLEARER INDICATION OF THE DRUG PROBLEMS AMONG STUDENTS.

"TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM, ACAN CONSIDERED AT ITS MEETING THIS AFTERNOON THAT DEMAND REDUCTION EFFORTS, PARTICULARLY AIMED AT YOUNGSTERS, SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED," HE ADDED.

IN SO FAR AS TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION SERVICES ARE CONCERNED, THE SOCIETY FOR THE AID AND REHABILITATION OF DRUG ABUSERS AND OTHER VOLUNTARY AGENCIES HAVE BEEN CONSULTED ON DESIGNATING SPECIAL FACILITIES FOR YOUNG OPIATE DRUG ABUSERS.

THEY WILL ALSO BE CONSULTED ON EXPANDING THEIR REGIONAL OFFICES/CENTRES TO INCLUDE ADVISORY SERVICES ON DRUG TREATMENT.

ON PUBLICITY, PROF CHEN SAID A NEW SERIES OF ANNOUNCEMENTS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST CONCERNING DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE WOULD BE RELEASED NEXT MONTH FOR TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCAST, TOGETHER WITH CORRESPONDING POSTER AND LEAFLET.

THE MAIN THEME WILL BE AN APPEAL TO PARENTS TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO THEIR CHILDREN TO STEER THEM AWAY FROM SUBSTANCE ABUSE.

"ON PREVENTIVE EDUCATION, THE DRUG EDUCATION SCHOOL TALKS WILL BE EXTENDED TO INCLUDE PRIMARY SIX FROM SEPTEMBER 1993 ONWARDS. DRUG EDUCATION SEMINARS ARE ALSO ORGANISED FOR PARENTS, TEACHERS, SOCIAL WORKERS, AND FINAL YEAR STUDENTS OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION," HE ADDED.

LIAISON WITH VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IS BEING STEPPED UP BY THE NARCOTICS DIVISION, WHICH WILL ENHANCE EFFECTIVE MONITORING OF DRUG TRENDS AND APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM.

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CONSULTATIVE PAPER ON LEGAL AID RELEASED

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THE GOVERNMENT ISSUES A CONSULTATIVE PAPER TODAY (THURSDAY) TO SOLICIT COMMENTS ON THE PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP'S REVIEW OF THE LAW, POLICY AND PRACTICE GOVERNING THE PROVISION OF LEGAL AID SERVICES IN HONG KONG.

THE WORKING GROUP HAS COMPLETED A PRELIMINARY STUDY, WHICH FOCUSED ON ASSEMBLY OF FACTS AND IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES AND POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN THE PROVISION OF LEGAL AID.

THE WORKING GROUP'S FINDINGS ARE SET OUT IN THE CONSULTATIVE PAPER ON LEGAL AID.

"COPIES OF THE CONSULTATIVE PAPER ARE AVAILABLE, IN BOTH ENGLISH AND CHINESE, AT PUBLIC ENQUIRY SERVICE COUNTERS OF THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION," A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID.

"MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO OFFER THEIR COMMENTS ON THE FINDINGS OF THE WORKING GROUP."

COPIES ARE ALSO MADE AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, URBAN COUNCIL, REGIONAL COUNCIL, DISTRICT BOARDS AND OTHER INTERESTED GROUPS.

THE LEGAL PROFESSION IS ALSO BEING CONSULTED ON THE SUBJECT, HE SAID.

"OUR AIM IS TO FORMULATE THE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS, AFTER TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE FEEDBACK ON THE CONSULTATIVE PAPER, TOWARDS THE END OF THIS YEAR," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

ALL COMMENTS ON THE CONSULTATIVE PAPER SHOULD BE SENT TO THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION ON THE FIFTH FLOOR, MAIN WING, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, LOWER ALBERT ROAD, CENTRAL, HONG KONG, ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 16 THIS YEAR.

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PROTECTION OF INVESTORS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993

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THE PROTECTION OF INVESTORS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993, WHICH SEEKS TO CLARIFY THE SCOPE OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE PROTECTION OF INVESTORS ORDINANCE, WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON JUNE 30.

"THE ORDINANCE AIMS AT PROVIDING FOR THE PROTECTION OF INVESTORS IN SECURITIES AND OTHER FORMS OF PROPERTY," THE SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, MR MICHAEL CARTLAND, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

"SOME OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS REFLECT SUGGESTIONS MADE BY THE LAW SOCIETY AND THE HONG KONG CAPITAL MARKETS ASSOCIATION FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS TO THE ORDINANCE," HE ADDED.

THE MAJOR PROPOSALS CONCERN THE EXEMPTION FROM VARIOUS PROHIBITIONS OF ADVERTISEMENTS AND DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE ISSUE OF CAPITAL MARKET INSTRUMENTS, INCLUDING:

- * NET ASSET RATHER THAN PAID-UP SHARE CAPITAL WILL BE USED AS A MORE MEANINGFUL MEASURE OF THE NET WORTH OF A CORPORATION ISSUING A DEBT MARKET INSTRUMENT. THE LEVEL WILL BE INCREASED FROM HK\$75 MILLION TO HK\$100 MILLION SO THAT ONLY MORE SUBSTANTIAL CORPORATE ISSUERS WOULD BE ELIGIBLE FOR EXEMPTION;
- * EXEMPTION WILL BE EXTENDED TO AN INSTRUMENT ISSUED BY A CORPORATION WHICH COMPLIES WITH THE NET ASSET REQUIREMENT, PROVIDED THE INSTRUMENT IS GUARANTEED BY AN AUTHORISED INSTITUTION, A MULTILATERAL AGENCY OR AN EXEMPTED BODY (EXCEPT LISTED CORPORATIONS NOT MEETING THE ASSET REQUIREMENT OR WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARIES OF A LISTED CORPORATION);
- * EXEMPTION WILL BE EXTENDED TO INSTRUMENTS ISSUED BY A WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY AND GUARANTEED BY ITS LISTED PARENT CORPORATION PROVIDED THAT THAT CORPORATION COMPLIES WITH THE NET ASSET REQUIREMENT;
- * THE SECURITIES AND FUTURES COMMISSION (SFC) WILL BE ALLOWED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT FEATURES OF A DEBT MARKET INSTRUMENT IN DECIDING ON APPLICATIONS FOR AUTHORISATION OF ANY ADVERTISEMENT, INVITATION OR DOCUMENT RELATED THERETO; AND
- * THE SFC WILL BE EMPOWERED TO REFUSE TO AUTHORISE ANY ADVERTISEMENT, INVITATION OR DOCUMENT RELATING TO SECURITIES, PROPERTY OTHER THAN SECURITIES, OR INVESTMENT ARRANGEMENTS IF IT IS SATISFIED THAT THE MATTER IS NOT IN THE INTERESTS OF THE INVESTING PUBLIC.

APART FROM THESE CLARIFICATIONS OF THE SCOPE OF THE ORDINANCE, IT IS PROPOSED TO ADD A NEW CATEGORY OF EXEMPTION FOR ADVERTISEMENT, INVITATION OR DOCUMENT RELATING TO ISSUES OF SECURITIES, INCLUDING DEBT SECURITIES AND WARRANTS, LISTED ON THE STOCK EXCHANGE OF HONG KONG LTD (SEHK).

"SUCH ISSUES WOULD ALREADY HAVE COMPLIED WITH SEHK'S LISTING REQUIREMENTS AND HENCE SHOULD BE EXEMPTED FROM DOUBLE VETTING UNDER THIS ORDINANCE," MR CARTLAND SAID.

"THIS UPDATING AND CLARIFICATION TO THE SCOPE OF THE ORDINANCE SHOULD FACILITATE THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAPITAL MARKETS IN HONG KONG," MR CARTLAND ADDED.

THE BILL WILL BE GAZETTED TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

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UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT STATISTICS FOR FEBRUARY - APRIL
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THE SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR FEBRUARY - APRIL WAS 2.4%, AND THE UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATE WAS 1.8%, ACCORDING TO THE LATEST LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS RELEASED TODAY (THURSDAY) BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

THE PROVISIONAL SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR THE PERIOD MARCH - MAY WAS 2.3%, WHILE THE PROVISIONAL UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATE WAS 2.0%.

THE LATEST STATISTICS SUGGEST THAT BOTH THE UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATES REMAINED BROADLY STABLE.

DURING THE PERIOD FEBRUARY - APRIL 1993, THE NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED PERSONS, ADJUSTED FOR VARIATIONS IN THE NUMBER OF FIRST-TIME JOB-SEEKERS, WAS ESTIMATED AT 68,100, WHILE THE NUMBER OF UNDEREMPLOYED PERSONS WAS ESTIMATED AT 50,300.

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

THE SURVEY FOR FEBRUARY - APRIL 1993 COVERED A QUARTERLY SAMPLE OF SOME 12,000 HOUSEHOLDS OR 41,600 PERSONS, SELECTED SCIENTIFICALLY TO REPRESENT THE LAND-BASED CIVILIAN NON-INSTITUTIONAL POPULATION IN HONG KONG.

RELEVANT DATA WAS 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 INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION.

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 MARCH 1993 WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE BY JULY AT \$23.50 A COPY.

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THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 1993

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CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY URGED TO TAKE PART IN
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

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THERE IS BROAD SCOPE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TO PLAY A MAJOR PART IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION OR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, AT THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF BUILDING CONFERENCE TODAY (THURSDAY).

MR EASON SAID ONE OF THE MANY WAYS IN WHICH THE INDUSTRY COULD PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE WAS TO PREVENT THE MISUSE OF LANDFILLS.

HE SAID OF THE ROUGHLY 20,000 TONNES PER DAY OF WASTE DISPOSED OF AT LANDFILLS IN 1992, SOME 60 PER CENT OR 12,000 TONNES PER DAY WAS CONSTRUCTION WASTE WHICH SHOULD BE DISPOSED OF AT PUBLIC DUMPS.

BASED ON THE AVERAGE DISPOSAL COST PER TONNE OF WASTE AT A LANDFILL, THIS MEANS THAT SOME \$300 MILLION WORTH OUT OF THE \$500 MILLION WORTH OF SPACE WAS USED UP BY INERT CONSTRUCTION WASTE.

"IF THIS CONTINUES, WE WILL BE WASTING VALUABLE DISPOSAL FACILITIES IRRESPONSIBLY. MORE SERIOUSLY, WE WILL BE USING THEM UP MUCH MORE QUICKLY THAN WE SHOULD, AND INCREASING AND ACCELERATING THE DEMAND FOR NEW FACILITIES," HE SAID.

MR EASON SAID TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM, THE GOVERNMENT PLANNED TO IMPOSE A CHARGE ON THE DISPOSAL OF WASTE AT LANDFILLS AS CHARGING WOULD MOTIVATE WASTE PRODUCERS TO REDUCE OR REDIRECT THEIR WASTE.

"IT SHOULD ENCOURAGE MORE ON-SITE SORTING OF CONSTRUCTION WASTE, SO THAT THE BULK OF THE MATERIAL CAN BE ACCEPTED AT PUBLIC DUMPS WHERE DISPOSAL WILL CONTINUE TO BE FREE OF CHARGE."

ON CONSTRUCTION NOISE NUISANCE, HE SAID THE NOISE CONTROL (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE ENACTED IN MAY WOULD GO A LONG WAY TO HELP CONTROL THIS PROBLEM.

MR EASON SAID THERE WAS A NEED FOR GREATER COMMITMENT TO CHANGE IN THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE TO ACHIEVE REAL PROGRESS ON IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT.

SOME OF THE INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL SECTORS WERE UNDERTAKING THIS STEP THEMSELVES THROUGH IMPLEMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT PROCEDURES AND HE HOPED THAT THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY WOULD TAKE THIS ON BOARD.

BY WAY OF EXAMPLE AND ENCOURAGEMENT, MR EASON SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SHORTLY COMMISSION CONSULTANTS TO UNDERTAKE SUCH AUDITS WITHIN SELECTED GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS FOR EVENTUAL EXTENSION TO ALL PARTS OF GOVERNMENT.

SIMILARLY, THE GOVERNMENT IS UNDERTAKING ENERGY AUDITS OF ITS OWN BUILDINGS TO REVIEW HOW AND HOW MUCH ENERGY IS CONSUMED AND WHERE IT IS POSSIBLE TO USE LESS TO ACHIEVE THE SAME LEVEL OF OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE.

/AND IN-DEPTH

AN IN-DEPTH ENERGY MANAGEMENT STUDY HAS BEEN DONE OF WAN CHAI TOWER AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM IT ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED. THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT IS IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A DEPARTMENTAL ENERGY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME.

"I HOPE THE PRIVATE SECTOR, INCLUDING THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY, WILL DEVELOP A SIMILAR CONSCIOUSNESS AND ADOPT SIMILAR PRACTICES WHEREVER IT CAN," HE SAID.

MR EASON SAID THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY HAD AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN THE DESIGNING AND BUILDING OF ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDINGS AS CONTRARY TO THE GLASS TOWERS WHICH ARE A WASTE OF RESOURCES.

TO HELP PROMOTE THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDINGS, MR EASON SAID THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE WHICH HE CHAIRED WOULD LAUNCH AN AWARD SCHEME NEXT YEAR.

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OPERATION TO STAMP OUT ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

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A 24-HOUR OPERATION AGAINST ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION JOINTLY MOUNTED BY THE POLICE, THE LABOUR AND IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENTS THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY HAS RESULTED IN THE ARRESTS OF 163 PERSONS.

THE OPERATION WAS PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ONGOING EFFORT TO FLUSH OUT ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

THE 53 SUSPECTED ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS ARRESTED BY THE POLICE HAD BEEN REFERRED TO THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT. THOSE FOUND TO BE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WILL BE REPATRIATED.

THE OTHER EIGHT PERSONS WERE ARRESTED BY IMMIGRATION INVESTIGATORS.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN REITERATED TODAY (THURSDAY) THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF ANY AMNESTY FOR ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

"OUR LATEST OPERATION SHOULD DRIVE HOME THE POINT THAT THERE WILL BE NO CHANGE TO THIS POLICY. ANYONE FOOLISH ENOUGH TO BELIEVE OTHERWISE IS ONLY CHEATING HIMSELF," HE SAID.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID APART FROM CONTINUOUS CHECKS THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY, THERE WAS NO LET-UP IN ANTI-ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION EFFORTS AT THE BORDER.

"A HIGH STATE OF VIGILANCE WILL CONTINUE TO BE MAINTAINED BY THE POLICE AND THE SECURITY FORCES BOTH AT THE LAND AND SEA BORDERS," HE SAID.

DURING THE JOINT OPERATION, WHICH BEGAN AT 5 AM YESTERDAY (WEDNESDAY) AND ENDED AT 5 AM TODAY, THE POLICE HAD STEPPED UP THEIR IDENTIFICATION SPOT CHECKS IN PUBLIC PLACES AND CARRIED OUT CHECKS AT SUSPICIOUS LOCATIONS.

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AS A RESULT, A TOTAL OF 8,252 PERSONS AND 1,131 VEHICLES WERE STOPPED FOR IDENTIFICATION CHECKS.

ON THE LABOUR FRONT, INSPECTORS OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT VISITED 2,385 ESTABLISHMENTS TO WEED OUT ANY ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WHO MAY BE WORKING, AND TO CHECK THAT EMPLOYERS FULFIL THEIR LEGAL OBLIGATION OF KEEPING PROPER RECORDS OF THEIR EMPLOYEES.

A TOTAL OF 8,223 EMPLOYEES HAD THEIR PROOF OF IDENTITY CHECKED DURING THE OPERATION.

FIVE ESTABLISHMENTS WERE FOUND NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE A RECORD OF EMPLOYEES FOR INSPECTION.

THE SPOKESMAN REMINDED EMPLOYERS THAT THEY COULD BE FINED UP TO \$250,000 AND JAILED FOR UP TO THREE YEARS IF THEY WERE FOUND TO BE EMPLOYING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

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17,000 SIGN UP AS VOTERS

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IN THE FIRST PHASE OF THIS YEAR'S VOTER REGISTRATION EXERCISE, 17,436 NEW APPLICANTS HAVE JOINED THE ELECTORAL ROLL.

THIS HAS HOWEVER BEEN OFFSET BY A REDUCTION OF 25,224 ENTRIES DUE TO DEATHS, LOSS OF CONTACT AND DOUBLE REGISTRATION.

THE PROVISIONAL REGISTER CARRIES 1,926,033 ENTRIES, REPRESENTING A LOSS OF 7,788 ELECTORS AND A VERY MINOR DROP OF THE REGISTRATION RATE FROM 52.5 PER CENT TO 51.9 PER CENT.

"THE SITUATION IS QUITE NORMAL IN A YEAR DURING WHICH NO MAJOR RECRUITMENT DRIVE IS MOUNTED; AND THE NET LOSS IS LIKELY TO BE REDUCED BY THE CLOSE OF THE SECOND PHASE ON JULY 1 WHEN LATE APPLICATIONS ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT," REGISTRATION OFFICER, MR LAI KWAN-TAT, EXPLAINED.

MR LAI URGED ALL ELIGIBLE RESIDENTS AND REGISTERED ELECTORS TO FILE IN APPLICATIONS AND NOTICES OF CHANGES OF RESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES RESPECTIVELY BEFORE JULY 1 FOR INCLUSION IN THE 1993 FINAL REGISTER OF ELECTORS.

"WHILE POSITIVE STEPS ARE BEING TAKEN TO UPDATE THE ELECTORAL REGISTER, ELECTORS CAN MAKE THINGS EASY IF THEY TAKE THE TROUBLE AND FULFIL THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT CHANGES OF THEIR PARTICULARS," HE ADDED.

THE PROVISIONAL REGISTER OF ELECTORS WILL BE PUBLISHED TOMORROW (FRIDAY) AND WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION UP TO JULY 1 AT DISTRICT OFFICES AND THE REGISTRATION AND ELECTORAL OFFICE.

/ANY PERSON

ANY PERSON WHO HAS ANY OBJECTION ON VALID GROUNDS TO THE INCLUSION IN THE REGISTER OF ANY NAMES MAY LODGE A NOTICE OF OBJECTION ON A SPECIFIED FORM WITH THE REGISTRATION OFFICER BY JULY 6.

THE PROVISIONAL REGISTER FOR FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCIES OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WILL ALSO BE PUBLISHED TOMORROW WITH 70,175 ENTRIES.

THERE IS A GROSS ADDITION OF 558 ENTRIES AND A NET INCREASE OF 199 ELECTORS, AFTER DISCOUNTING 359 DELETIONS.

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NEW FOOD HANDLING CONCEPT INTRODUCED

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A NEW SYSTEMATIC MANAGEMENT CONCEPT ON THE CONTROL OF FOOD QUALITY AND SAFETY HAS BEEN INTRODUCED UNDER A TERRITORY-WIDE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TODAY (THURSDAY) BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

ENTITLED "APPLY HAZARD ANALYSIS AND CRITICAL CONTROL POINT (HACCP) SYSTEM IN YOUR ESTABLISHMENT", THE CAMPAIGN WAS JOINED BY REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE FOOD TRADE.

ORGANISED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE URBAN AND REGIONAL COUNCILS, IT WILL LAST UNTIL THE END OF AUGUST.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE URBAN COUNCIL'S PUBLIC HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE, PROFESSOR LEUNG PING-CHUNG, CALLED ON ALL MEMBERS OF THE FOOD TRADE TO SUPPORT THE FOOD HYGIENE CAMPAIGN.

"THE PREPARATION OF DELICIOUS FOOD IS A RATHER COMPLICATED PROCESS. ANY LACK OF CARE MAY LEAD TO CONTAMINATION, MAKING THE FOOD UNFIT FOR CONSUMPTION," HE SAID.

LAST YEAR, THERE WERE 141 CASES OF FOOD POISONING, AFFECTING 1,006 PEOPLE. OF THE CASES, 30 WERE ORIGINATED FROM FOOD PREMISES, AFFECTING 493 PEOPLE.

"IF WE ANALYSE THE CAUSES OF THE OUTBREAKS, WE FIND THAT THEY CAN BE AVOIDED," PROFESSOR LEUNG SAID.

ALSO SPEAKING AT THE CEREMONY, VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL, MR TING YIN-WAH, SAID: "OBSERVING HYGIENE RULES AND ENSURING FOOD SAFETY ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO BUILD UP CUSTOMERS' CONFIDENCE, WIN PUBLIC PRAISE AND SOLICIT CUSTOMERS."

"IN THIS ERA OF QUALITY ASSURANCE, I HOPE THAT MEMBERS OF THE FOOD TRADE, ESPECIALLY DECISION-MAKERS, CAN PAY MORE ATTENTION TO THE SELF-MONITORING SYSTEM OF FOOD PRODUCTION," MR TING SAID.

HE URGED THE FOOD BUSINESS SECTOR TO DESIGN A SELF-MONITORING SYSTEM, ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN SITUATION AND MODE OF OPERATION, IN ORDER TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF FOOD CONTAMINATION.

UNDER THE CAMPAIGN, ALL LICENSEES AND STAFF OF LICENSED FOOD PREMISES, COOKED FOOD STALLS, CANTEENS AND OTHER FOOD CATERING ESTABLISHMENTS, HAVE BEEN INVITED TO ATTEND SEMINARS TO BE HELD AT VARIOUS DISTRICTS.

EACH SEMINAR EMBRACES A TALK BY CHIEF HEALTH INSPECTORS, A FILM SHOW AND A DISCUSSION SESSION ON THE HACCP CONCEPT AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION.

THREE SEMINARS ON FOOD HYGIENE WILL ALSO BE ORGANISED IN COLLABORATION WITH THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TO HELP THEM PASS ON THE MESSAGES TO STUDENTS.

IN ADDITION, A 24-HOUR HOTLINE - 723 0013 - WILL PROVIDE TAPED MESSAGES ON HYGIENIC PRACTICES. CALLERS HAVING QUESTIONS MAY LEAVE THEIR TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND STAFF FROM THE HEALTH EDUCATION UNIT WILL CALL BACK.

MOBILE BROADCASTING TEAMS OF THE UNIT WILL BE DEPLOYED TO DRIVE HOME THE MESSAGES ACROSS THE TERRITORY.

LEAFLETS AND POSTERS ARE AVAILABLE FREE FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICES OF THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE OFFICES OF THE URBAN SERVICES AND REGIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENTS.

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FREE VEHICLE DISPOSAL SERVICE

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VEHICLE OWNERS WISHING TO DISPOSE OF THEIR UNWANTED CARS MAY MAKE USE OF THE FREE SERVICE OFFERED BY THE TWO ABANDONED VEHICLE SURRENDER CENTRES OPERATED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT.

THE CENTRES ARE LOCATED AT CHI KIANG STREET IN TO KWA WAN AND AT WONG CHUK YEUNG STREET IN FO TAN, SHA TIN WHERE 20 AND 70 VEHICLES CAN BE ACCOMMODATED AT ANY TIME RESPECTIVELY.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID THERE WERE VARIOUS ADVANTAGES FOR SURRENDERING UNWANTED VEHICLES TO THE CENTRES.

"THE OWNER WILL BE FREE FROM FURTHER LIABILITY ARISING FROM THE USE OF HIS VEHICLE, SUCH AS IRRESPONSIBLE PRIVATE SCRAPYARDS USING IT FOR ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES AND OBTAINING FIXED PENALTY TICKETS FOR ILLEGAL PARKING."

"HE MAY USE THE VEHICLE WITHOUT VALID LICENCE IF THE VEHICLE IS PARKED ON A PUBLIC ROAD WITH AN EXPIRED LICENCE," HE ADDED.

"FURTHERMORE, THE DEPARTMENT WILL AUTOMATICALLY ARRANGE TO PAY A PRO RATA REFUND OF THE ANNUAL LICENCE FEE TO THE OWNER IF HIS LICENCE IS STILL VALID FOR 60 DAYS OR MORE ON THE DAY THE VEHICLE IS SURRENDERED," HE SAID.

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"THE DEPARTMENT WILL ALSO ARRANGE THE VEHICLE TO BE DE-REGISTERED AND, IF THE OWNER WANTS THE ORIGINAL REGISTRATION MARK TO BE RETAINED, HE IS SUBJECT TO A PAYMENT OF \$560," HE ADDED.

THE PROCEDURE TO SURRENDER THE VEHICLE IS SIMPLE.

LEAFLETS ON "HOW TO SURRENDER YOUR UNWANTED VEHICLE" ARE AVAILABLE AT ALL LICENSING OFFICES OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT AND DISTRICT OFFICES.

THE TO KWA WAN CENTRE OPERATES ON MONDAYS, TUESDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS FROM 10 AM TO 1 PM AND FROM 2 PM TO 4.30 PM.

THE SHA TIN CENTRE OPERATES ON THURSDAYS AND FRIDAYS FROM 10 AM TO 1 PM AND FROM 2 PM TO 4.30 PM, AND ON SATURDAYS FROM 10 AM TO 11.30 AM.

ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON 890 1497. OWNERS CAN TELEPHONE THE TO KWA WAN CENTRE ON 364 0074, OR THE SHA TIN CENTRE ON 604 4197 TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS.

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CONTRACT SIGNED FOR WATER TREATMENT WORKS

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THE WATER SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT TODAY (THURSDAY) AWARDED A \$52.9 MILLION CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTING THE NEW SHAM TSENG TREATMENT WORKS.

THE TREATMENT WORKS WILL HAVE A CAPACITY OF 23,000 CUBIC METRES PER DAY UPON COMPLETION OF THE FIRST STAGE, AND HAS BEEN DESIGNED FOR FUTURE EXPANSION TO AN ULTIMATE CAPACITY OF 75,000 CUBIC METRES A DAY TO SERVE THE POPULATION GROWTH IN THE AREA.

THE CONTRACT INCLUDES THE CONSTRUCTION OF STRUCTURES FOR THE FRESH WATER TREATMENT PROCESS, A CHEMICAL HOUSE, STAFF QUARTERS, INTERCONNECTING PIPEWORKS AND BUILDING SERVICES.

WORKS ON THIS CONTRACT WILL START NEXT MONTH AND WILL TAKE ABOUT 19 MONTHS TO COMPLETE.

THE CONTRACT IS THE LAST ONE AWARDED UNDER THE "SHAM TSENG TREATMENT WORKS -- STAGE I" PROGRAMME.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF WATER SUPPLIES, MR WU YU-NGONG, SIGNED THE CONTRACT ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF TOBISHIMA CORPORATION.

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BEACH WATER GRADES

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THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT TODAY (THURSDAY) ANNOUNCED GRADES ON THE BACTERIOLOGICAL WATER QUALITY OF ALL BATHING BEACHES IN HONG KONG.

THE PURPOSE OF THE GRADING SYSTEM IS TO INFORM SWIMMERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC ABOUT THE STATE OF BACTERIOLOGICAL POLLUTION AT VARIOUS BEACHES.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID THE GRADING WOULD BE ANNOUNCED BIWEEKLY DURING THE BATHING SEASON, TO COINCIDE WITH THE FREQUENCY AT WHICH BEACH WATER WAS USUALLY SAMPLED.

THE GRADING IS BASED ON THE MOST RECENT E.COLI DATA OBTAINED BY THE DEPARTMENT IN ITS ROUTINE MONITORING PROGRAMME.

AS WITH LAST YEAR, THE GRADING ALSO INCLUDES AN ESTIMATE OF THE RISK OF SUFFERING SOME MINOR SKIN OR GASTROINTESTINAL COMPLAINTS AS A RESULT OF SWIMMING AT A BEACH THAT HAS SOME DEGREE OF POLLUTION.

THE ESTIMATE IS BASED ON A VERY LARGE BODY OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION GATHERED IN HONG KONG IN RECENT BATHING SEASONS.

THE GRADING OF SOME BEACHES MAY VARY DURING THE SUMMER.

THIS REPRESENTS A NATURAL FLUCTUATION IN THE BACTERIOLOGICAL QUALITY OF BATHING WATERS IN MOST CASES, AS RAIN AND TIDES BRING MORE OR LESS POLLUTION TO THE BEACHES.

HOWEVER, THE GRADES GIVE A GOOD GENERAL PICTURE OF THE WATER QUALITY AT BATHING BEACHES AT THE TIME OF REPORTING AND FORM THE BEST AVAILABLE FORECAST FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

"BEACHES WITH HIGHLY DEVELOPED HINTERLANDS ARE LIKELY TO BE MORE POLLUTED THAN THE GRADES SUGGEST DURING AND AFTER HEAVY RAIN.

"BATHERS SHOULD AVOID SUCH BEACHES FOR TWO OR THREE DAYS AFTER A STORM, LONGER IF THE WEATHER REMAINS OVERCAST OR LESS IF THERE IS STRONG SUNSHINE," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE SYSTEM FOR GRADING BEACH WATER QUALITY IS:

- * GRADE "1" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS GOOD. THE E. COLI COUNT IS NO MORE THAN 24 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED RISK OF MINOR ILLNESS TO SWIMMERS IS UNDETECTABLE.
- * GRADE "2" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS FAIR. THE E. COLI COUNT IS NO MORE THAN 180 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED HEALTH RISK IS NO MORE THAN 10 CASES OF MINOR ILLNESS PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.
- * GRADE "3" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS POOR. THE E. COLI COUNT IS NO MORE THAN 610 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED HEALTH RISK IS NO MORE THAN 15 CASES OF MINOR ILLNESS PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.

/* GRADE "4"

* GRADE "4" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS VERY POOR. THE E. COLI COUNT IS MORE THAN 610 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED HEALTH RISK IS MORE THAN 15 CASES OF MINOR ILLNESS PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.

THE DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO CLOSE A BEACH TO SWIMMERS IS BASED ON A JUDGEMENT OF WHAT DEGREE OF POLLUTION IS ACCEPTABLE.

NORMALLY, THE CLOSURE OF A BEACH WOULD ONLY BE CONSIDERED BY THE URBAN COUNCIL OR REGIONAL COUNCIL IF A GRADE "4" OCCURRED REPEATEDLY, SO THAT THE AVERAGE HEALTH RISK OVER THE BATHING SEASON EXCEEDED 15 CASES PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.

AT PRESENT, TWO BATHING BEACHES, CASTLE PEAK AND OLD CAFETERIA, HAVE BEEN DECLARED UNSUITABLE FOR SWIMMING, BASED ON THE WATER QUALITY DURING PAST SEASONS.

THEY ARE POLLUTED BY FAECAL WASTE. THE PUBLIC ARE ADVISED NOT TO SWIM AT THE TWO BEACHES.

IN ADDITION, ROCKY BAY BEACH HAS BEEN CLOSED FOR SWIMMING BY THE URBAN COUNCIL. THESE THREE BEACHES ARE IDENTIFIED BY AN "X" IN THE FOLLOWING LIST.

THE GRADES ON THE BACTERIOLOGICAL WATER QUALITY OF VARIOUS BEACHES IN HONG KONG TODAY ARE:

BEACH -----	PREVIOUS GRADING ----- (AS AT 3.6.93)	PRESENT GRADING ----- (AS AT 17.6.93)
HONG KONG SOUTH -----		
BIG WAVE BAY	2	3
CHUNG HOM KOK	2	3
DEEP WATER BAY	1	2
HAIRPIN	2	3
MIDDLE BAY	1	2
REPULSE BAY	1	2
SHEK O	2	3
SOUTH BAY	1	1
ST. STEPHEN'S	2	3
TURTLE COVE	1	2
STANLEY MAIN	3	3
ROCKY BAY	X	X
TO TEI WAN*	1	2
TUEN MUN DISTRICT -----		
OLD CAFETERIA	X	X
NEW CAFETERIA	2	3
CASTLE PEAK	X	X
KADOORIE	3	3
BUTTERFLY	2	2

SAI KUNG DISTRICT

CAMPERS	1	1
CLEAR WATER BAY 1ST BEACH	1	2
CLEAR WATER BAY 2ND BEACH	2	2
HAP MUN BAY	1	1
KIU TSUI	1	1
PAK SHA CHAU	1	1
SILVERSTRAND	2	2
TRIO (HEBE HAVEN)	1	2

ISLANDS DISTRICT

CHEUNG SHA UPPER	1	1
CHEUNG SHA LOWER	2	2
DISCOVERY BAY*	2	2
HUNG SHING YEH	2	2
KWUN YAM WAN	2	2
TONG FUK	1	1
LO SO SHING	1	1
PUI O	2	2
SILVERMINE BAY	3	3
TUNG WAN, CHEUNG CHAU	2	2
TUNG O*	2	2

TSUEN WAN DISTRICT

ANGLERS'	3	4
APPROACH	4	4
CASAM	3	4
GEMINI	3	3
HOI MEI WAN	4	4
LIDO	3	3
TING KAU	4	4
TUNG WAN, MA WAN	2	3

NOTE : "X" THE BEACH HAS BEEN CLOSED FOR SWIMMING
* NON-GAZETTED BEACH

THE FOLLOWING BEACHES HAVE CHANGED GRADING ON THIS OCCASION:

DEEP WATER BAY, MIDDLE BAY, REPULSE BAY, TURTLE COVE, TO TEI WAN, CLEAR WATER BAY 1ST BEACH AND TRIO (HEBE HAVEN) FROM "1" TO "2"; BIG WAVE BAY, CHUNG HOM KOK, HAIRPIN, SHEK O, ST STEPHEN'S, TUNG WAN (MA WAN) AND NEW CAFETERIA FROM "2" TO "3"; ANGLERS' AND CASAM FROM "3" TO "4".

THE CHANGES ARE WITHIN THE NORMAL RANGE OF FLUCTUATION OF THE BACTERIOLOGICAL WATER QUALITY OF THESE BEACHES.

THE GENERAL DETERIORATION AT A NUMBER OF BEACHES IS PROBABLY DUE TO THE RECENT HEAVY RAINFALL WHICH HAVE CAUSED THE POLLUTANTS IN THE BEACH HINTERLAND TO BE FLUSHED INTO THE SEA WATER.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT DR MALCOLM BROOM, PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT ON 835 1234.

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CALL TO JOIN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

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THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S "BE MY TEACHER" CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION WHICH WILL BE RECRUITING 1,100 STUDENT-TEACHERS THIS YEAR.

THE COLLEGES COMPRISE THE GRANTHAM COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, NORTHCOTE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, THE SIR ROBERT BLACK COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND THE HONG KONG TECHNICAL TEACHERS' COLLEGE.

A SERIES OF EXHIBITIONS WILL BE LAUNCHED TOMORROW (FRIDAY) AT THE LANDMARK TO PROMOTE THE RECRUITMENT DRIVE.

THE TWO-DAY EXHIBITION WILL MOVE TO KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES LATER THIS MONTH.

ON DISPLAY ARE PANELS DEPICTING THE TRAINING, FACILITIES AND COLLEGE LIFE AND ACTIVITIES.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR AND CHAIRMAN OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNING COUNCIL FOR THE NEW INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, MR SIMON IP SIK-ON; THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, MR ROBERT LO; AND THE SENIOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (SERVICES AND INSTITUTIONS), MR KWAN TING-FAI, WILL OFFICIATE AT THE OPENING CEREMONY.

ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE OPENING CEREMONY WHICH WILL BE HELD AT THE FOOTBRIDGE LINKING THE LANDMARK AND ALEXANDRA HOUSE AT 10.30 AM TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

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LOCAL ARTS GROUPS OBTAIN GRANTS

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THE COUNCIL FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS HAS APPROVED 34 PROJECT GRANTS TOTTALLING \$2,181,687 TO 29 PERFORMING ARTS ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS SINCE APRIL THIS YEAR.

IN THE DRAMA FIELD, THEY ARE THE SHATIN THEATRE COMPANY, PAROUSIA, ARTS MANIAC, SIR ROBERT BLACK COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDENTS' UNION, ZUNI ICOSAHEDRON, KWUN TONG THEATRE, THE NONSENSEMAKERS, NORTHCOTE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDENT UNION, HORIZONTE DRAMA SOCIETY, ANONYMITY DRAMATIC CLUB, ARTISTE CLUB, HONG KONG STUDENT DRAMA ASSOCIATION, HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF THE BLIND, CARLSBERG WANCHAI THEATRE AND THEATRE ENSEMBLE.

IN THE MUSIC FIELD, THEY ARE THE HONG KONG SINFONIETTA, HONG KONG FESTIVAL FRINGE LTD, THE CECILIAN SINGERS, ALLEGRO SINGERS, THE LEARNERS CHORUS AND KING'S HARMONICA QUINTET.

IN THE DANCE FIELD, GRANTS HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO ZUNI ICOSAHEDRON, WONG TING-LAM, HONG KONG CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES, BABY BULL DANCERS' GROUP AND THE COMPANY AND YUEN HAI ARTISTE TROUPE.

IN THE CHINESE OPERA FIELD, GRANTS HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO WAH FAI CANTONESE OPERA ASSOCIATION, NGAI YIN CANTONESE OPERA AND THE ARTLAND.

IN THE ARTS SERVICES FIELD, A GRANT HAS BEEN AWARDED TO HONG KONG ARTS ADMINISTRATORS' ASSOCIATION LTD.

THE COUNCIL HAS ALSO APPROVED ONE MATCHING GRANT AWARD OF \$100,000 TO THE HONG KONG PIANO AND MUSIC ASSOCIATION IN THE MUSIC FIELD, SPONSORED BY PARSONS MUSIC CENTRE, EDDY PIANO COMPANY AND MUSICAL INSTITUTE, EDDIE'S PIANO COMPANY AND MIKROKOSMOS MUSIC CENTRE.

FUNDS FOR PROJECT AND MATCHING GRANTS ARE PROVIDED FROM THE GOVERNMENT BLOCK VOTE FOR SUBVENTION OF PERFORMING ARTS ACTIVITIES AND FROM THE ARTS DEVELOPMENT FUND WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED IN MAY THIS YEAR UNDER THE SIR DAVID TRENCH FUND FOR RECREATION TO ENHANCE ARTS DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULARLY NEW PERFORMING ARTS GROUPS IN HONG KONG.

THE GRANTS ARE AWARDED BY THE SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE ON THE ADVICE OF THE COUNCIL.

APPLICATIONS FOR PROJECT AND MATCHING GRANTS CAN BE MADE ANY TIME IN THE YEAR.

THE APPLICANT MUST BE AN APPROVED CHARITABLE INSTITUTION OR A NON-PROFIT-MAKING ORGANISATION.

APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE SENT IN AT LEAST THREE MONTHS BEFORE THE PLANNED PERFORMANCE DATES TO ALLOW TIME FOR ASSESSMENT.

APPLICATION FORMS FOR PROJECT AND MATCHING GRANTS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE COUNCIL'S SECRETARIAT ON 40TH FLOOR, REVENUE TOWER, 5 GLOUCESTER ROAD, WAN CHAI, HONG KONG. ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON TEL 594 5600.

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YOUNG VIOLINIST TO ATTEND USA MUSIC CAMP

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VIOLINIST LUI HO-YIN HAS BEEN SELECTED BY THE MUSIC OFFICE TO ATTEND THE NATIONAL MUSIC CAMP AT INTERLOCHEN IN MICHIGAN, USA THIS SUMMER FOR AN EIGHT-WEEK INTENSIVE TRAINING.

THE ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL EVENT IS AIMED AT PROMOTING FRIENDSHIP THROUGH MUSIC. IT WILL BE HELD FROM JUNE 27 TO AUGUST 23.

IT TAKES IN HIGHLY QUALIFIED YOUNG MUSICIANS AGED BETWEEN 14 AND 18. THE HIGHEST HONOUR FOR A PARTICIPANT IS TO BE SELECTED AS MEMBER OF THE CAMP'S WORLD YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

TRAINING WILL INCLUDE MASTER CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS WITH THE WORLD'S RENOWNED MUSICIANS.

IN ADDITION, RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS SING-A-SONG ROUND CAMP FIRES, CANOEING AND SWIMMING WILL BE ARRANGED.

MR LUI, AGED 17, WAS SELECTED IN AN OPEN AUDITION IN MID-MARCH.

HE IS A DIPLOMA ONE STUDENT OF THE ACADEMY FOR PERFORMING ARTS (MUSIC).

HE ACTIVELY PARTICIPATES IN MANY MUSIC ACTIVITIES AND WAS A MEMBER OF THE HONG KONG YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA SINGAPORE TOUR IN 1991.

"I AM VERY HAPPY AND EXCITED THAT I CAN HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO BROADEN MY MUSICAL KNOWLEDGE AND TO MEET SO MANY YOUNG MUSICIANS FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES," HE SAID, ADDING THAT HE WOULD DO HIS BEST TO INTRODUCE HONG KONG TO OTHER CAMPERS.

HE WILL LEAVE HONG KONG ON JUNE 25 AND IS EXPECTED TO RETURN IN LATE AUGUST.

THE CAMP FEE WILL BE MET BY ORGANISERS WHILE THE ROUND-TRIP AIR PASSAGE WILL BE JOINTLY SPONSORED BY CATHAY PACIFIC AIRWAYS AND THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB MUSIC FUND.

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THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 1993

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION -----
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,980
REVERSAL OF LAF	+820
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	2,800
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-840
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,960
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	TWI 112.2 **0.3* 17.6.93

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS

TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	3.04 PCT	14 MONTHS	2408	4.375	100.66	3.82
1 MONTH	2.97 PCT	17 MONTHS	2411	4.625	100.89	4.01
3 MONTHS	3.06 PCT	20 MONTHS	2502	4.75	100.90	4.22
6 MONTHS	3.36 PCT	23 MONTHS	2505	3.75	98.88	4.41
12 MONTHS	3.65 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 8,982 MN

CLOSED 17 JUNE 1993

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