



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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UK URGED TO ALLOW HK TO REPATRIATE CERTAIN VR'S  
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THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ASKED IN QUITE FORCEFUL TERMS TO PURSUE THE POSSIBILITY OF ALLOWING HONG KONG TO REPATRIATE CERTAIN VIETNAMESE REFUGEES, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON DAVID JEAFFRESON, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

WINDING UP THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE ISSUE, MR JEAFFRESON SAID THESE REFUGEES WOULD BE THOSE WHO COULD NOT ESTABLISH THAT THEY MET A PARTICULAR DEFINITION - SUCH AS THAT THEY HAD BEEN PERSECUTED OR WOULD FACE PERSECUTION ON RETURN.

HE EMPHASISED THAT THIS WOULD BE A LONG-TERM SOLUTION, AND THE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE REASONABLY SATISFIED THAT THOSE TO BE REPATRIATED WOULD NOT BE INHUMANELY TREATED ON THEIR RETURN.

IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR HONG KONG TO AGREE THAT IT MUST ACCEPT NON-REFUGEES, IN OTHER WORDS THOSE WHO COULD NOT ESTABLISH THAT THEY HAD REFUGEE STATUS, ECONOMIC MIGRANTS, WHEN IT HAD TO RETURN OTHER ILLEGAL ARRIVALS IN HONG KONG, SUCH AS PEOPLE FROM CHINA WHO HAD CLOSE RELATIVES HERE.

+THERE ARE TWO THINGS IN PARTICULAR THAT WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO DO TO SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS,+ HE SAID.

+THE FIRST IS THAT WE HAVE BEEN ASKING HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE TO RESETTLE MORE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES FROM HONG KONG.

EMPHASIS WAS BEING PUT ON CERTAIN CATEGORIES, INCLUDING FAMILY REUNION CASES AND SOME OF THE SO-CALLED +HARD TO RESETTLE+ CASES.

ABOUT 5 500 REFUGEES HAD BEEN HERE FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS AND AS MANY AS 1 600 FOR AS LONG AS FIVE YEARS.

THERE COULD BE NO DOUBT THAT THE EXTREMELY HELPFUL BRITISH INITIATIVE TO TAKE ABOUT 500 REFUGEES HAD STIMULATED AN EXTREMELY GOOD RESPONSE AS FAR AS RESETTLEMENT GENERALLY WAS CONCERNED LAST YEAR.

MR JEAFFRESON SAID IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SAY HOW LARGE THAT RESPONSE HAD BEEN BECAUSE IT WAS NOT THAT EASY TO DETERMINE HOW MANY WOULD HAVE BEEN RESETTLED HAD THE INITIATIVE NOT TAKEN PLACE.

+WE ARE PRETTY SURE THAT THE BRITISH INITIATIVE RESULTED IN AN EXTRA THOUSAND BEING RESETTLED AND WE WOULD PUT IT, FRANKLY, AT NEARLY 1 500.

/+I WOULD .....

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+I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT OUR THANKS FOR THIS PARTICULARLY VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION WHICH HAD THIS PARTICULARLY VALUABLE CONSEQUENCE AS FAR AS RESETTLEMENT WAS CONCERNED LAST YEAR.

+AND I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK, ON BEHALF OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, ALL THOSE RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES THAT RESPONDED SO NOBLY AND, I MIGHT ADD, THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES HERE FOR THE VERY GREAT HELP IT GAVE US ALSO IN THIS CONTEXT.+

HOWEVER, HE SAID HE MUST AGREE THAT THE PROPECTS FOR 1987 DID NOT LOOK GOOD. BUT, GIVEN THE EXPERIENCE IN 1986, THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT A GOOD EXAMPLE BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD TRIGGER OFF ANOTHER GOOD RESPONSE FROM THE OTHER RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES.

REFERRING TO THE POSSIBILITY OF REPATRIATION, WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN PURSUING, MR JEAFFRESON SAID THIS WAS SEEN AS THE ONLY VIABLE LONG-TERM SOLUTION. BUT HE STRESSED THAT REPATRIATION MUST BE VOLUNTARY.

+IN OTHER WORDS, THOSE WHO ARE ESTABLISHED AS NON-REFUGEES, MUST VOLUNTEER TO RETURN.+

MR JEAFFRESON SAID THE ADMINISTRATION APPRECIATED THE SUPPORT GIVEN BY MEMBERS, AND IT WOULD BE REPORTING ON WHAT THEY HAD SAID ON REPATRIATION TO LONDON.

+I CAN ASSURE MEMBERS THAT WE WILL BE CONSIDERING, OR IN MANY CASES RECONSIDERING, THE VARIOUS OTHER POINTS THEY HAVE RAISED,+ HE ADDED.

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PROGRESS REPORT ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SOUGHT  
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THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN REQUESTED TO PROVIDE TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WITHIN SIX MONTHS A REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF A SEARCH FOR A DEFINITE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

THE REQUEST WAS MADE BY THE HON RITA FAN TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN LEADING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN HER CAPACITY AS CONVENOR OF THE AD HOC GROUP ON THE SUBJECT.

MRS FAN SAID MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE HAD BEEN URGING FOR MORE POSITIVE MEASURES FOR SOME YEAR, AND WERE DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED AT THE LACK OF POSITIVE ACTION AND SENSE OF URGENCY ON THE PART OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

/+WE REQUEST .....

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+WE REQUEST THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT TO URGE HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT MOST VIGOROUSLY TO TAKE UP THE INITIATIVE IN RESETTLEMENT AND IN NEGOTIATING WITH THE VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES FOR REPATRIATION,+ SHE SAID.

SHE SAID SHE BELIEVED MOST STRONGLY THAT BRITAIN HAD A DUTY TO TAKE UP THIS ROLE.

+THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR IT TO SHOW THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG THAT IT IS GENUINELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE INTERESTS OF HONG KONG THROUGH POSITIVE AND DECISIVE ACTION,+ SHE SAID.

MRS FAN SAID CONTINUOUS RESTTLEMENT WAS THE SHORT-TERM SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN HONG KONG. THE LONG-TERM SOLUTION WAS TO REPATRIATE ECONOMIC MIGRANTS TO VIETNAM ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE TREATED INHUMANELY.

+THIS REQUIRES AGREEMENT BY THE VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES AND CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS.

+AS THIS IS A MATTER OF FOREIGN POLICY HONG KONG HAS NO RIGHT TO TACKLE THE MATTER DIRECTLY. WE HAVE TO RELY ON HMG TAKING UP THIS MATTER WITH THE VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES,+ MRS FAN SAID.

SHE ALSO NOTED THAT IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR BRITAIN HAD HALTED ITS INTAKE OF REFUGEES FROM HONG KONG UNDER THE FAMILY REUNION PROGRAMME.

IN MID-DECEMBER LAST YEAR, MAJOR RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES INDICATED THAT THEIR REFUGEE INTAKE FROM HONG KONG WAS TO BE REDUCED AS THEY WAITED FOR BRITAIN TO TAKE THE LEAD. THEY EXPECTED BRITAIN TO SET AN EXAMPLE IN ACCEPTING REFUGEES FROM HONG KONG.

+THIS IS NOT UNREASONABLE AS HONG KONG IS A BRITISH-ADMINISTERED TERRITORY AND THEREFORE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BRITAIN,+ SHE SAID.

THE LACK OF COMMITMENT BY BRITAIN COULD BE VIEWED AS RELUCTANCE TO SHOULDER THIS RESPONSIBILITY, RESULTING IN HONG KONG HAVING TO FACE INCREASING SOCIAL PRESSURE AND HEAVY FINANCIAL BURDEN.

BRITAIN MUST SURELY REALISE THE IMPACT AND THE EFFECT OF ITS ACTION, AND HOW IT WOULD BE INTERPRETED BY OTHER COUNTRIES AND THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG, SHE ADDED.

+UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE MOST LOGICAL AND HONOURABLE THING TO DO IS FOR HMG TO MAKE A DEFINITE COMMITMENT ON THE NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IT WILL TAKE FROM HONG KONG IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS, THEREBY SHOWING TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ITS WILLINGNESS TO FULFIL ITS RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS HONG KONG AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM,+ SHE SAID.

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HONG KONG MUST BE ALLOWED FLEXIBILITY  
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THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT MUST AT LEAST ALLOW HONG KONG TO IMPLEMENT THE FIRST ASYLUM CONCEPT IN A FLEXIBLE MANNER IF THE TERRITORY IS TO EFFECTIVELY CONTAIN OR ALLEVIATE ITS REFUGEE PROBLEM, DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEES, DR HO SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SET UP A SCREENING UNIT UNDER THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT TO DETERMINE THE STATUS OF VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE ARRIVING HERE.

+THOSE ARRIVALS, WHO CAN SATISFY THE IMMIGRATION OFFICERS OF THEIR STATUS AS GENUINE REFUGEES, WILL BE GIVEN SANCTUARY AND BE ACCOMMODATED IN CLOSED CAMPS, PENDING SUBSEQUENT PERMANENT RESETTLEMENT OVERSEAS.

+THOSE ARRIVALS WHO FAIL TO PROVE THEIR REFUGEE STATUS WILL BE DETAINED IN OUR CLOSED CAMPS TO WAIT FOR EVENTUAL REPATRIATION,+ DR HO SAID.

HE FELT THAT THIS MEASURE WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY.

DR HO NOTED THAT AFTER HAVING ACCEPTED 457 REFUGEES FROM HONG KONG LAST YEAR, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD DISCONTINUED ITS FAMILY REUNION PROGRAMME FOR THE RESETTLEMENT OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

THIS NEGATIVE POLICY DECISION WAS DETRIMENTAL TO HONG KONG'S RESETTLEMENT PLANS AND HAD MADE OTHER COUNTRIES RECONSIDER THEIR RESETTLEMENT OFFERS, HE SAID.

+IT IS DIFFICULT FOR US TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE UNITED KINGDOM CAN SUSPEND ITS OFFTAKE OF REFUGEES FROM HONG KONG AND, AT THE SAME TIME, THRUST UPON US THE OBLIGATION OF OBSERVING THE FIRST ASYLUM CONCEPT BY VIRTUE OF ITS SOVEREIGNTY AUTHORITY,+ HE SAID.

UNDER THE FIRST ASYLUM CONCEPT, THE FIRST ASYLUM COUNTRIES WOULD ACCEPT ALL REFUGEES LANDING ON THEIR SHORES AND WOULD NOT TOW THEIR BOATS BACK TO SEA. THE MAIN RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES WOULD THEN PROCESS THE REFUGEES IN AN ORDERLY FASHION AND FIND THEM PERMANENT HOMES.

DR HO SAID THAT HONG KONG HAD FAITHFULLY ABIDED BY THE AGREEMENT UNDERLYING THE FIRST ASYLUM CONCEPT AND HAD ALL THE TIME BEEN ALLOWING BOAT REFUGEES TO LAND ON ITS SHORES.

IRONICALLY, THE RESETTLEMENT RATES FOR REFUGEES FROM HONG KONG ARE MUCH LOWER THAN THOSE FROM OTHER FIRST ASYLUM COUNTRIES. IT APPEARS THEREFORE THAT WE HAVE BEEN EXPLOITED AND PENALISED FOR OUR HUMANITARIAN APPROACH TO THE BOAT REFUGEES,+ HE SAID.

/DR HO .....

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DR HO POINTED OUT THAT UNITED KINGDOM HAD A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR AND A COMMITMENT TO HONG KONG. THEREFORE, HE ASKED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO PERMIT HONG KONG TO MAKE ITS OWN DECISION WHEN THE ISSUE UNDER CONSIDERATION WAS OF VITAL INTEREST TO ITS PEOPLE.

HE ADDED THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT MUST BE URGED TO ACCEPT FROM HONG KONG A REALISTIC NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WITH THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS:

- (I) THOSE HAVING RELATIVES (IN THE ORIENTAL SENSE OF THE TERM) IN UNITED KINGDOM;
- (II) THOSE HAVING BEEN EARLIER SELECTED BY UNITED KINGDOM FOR RESETTLEMENT BUT REJECTED THE OFFERS; AND
- (III) THE +HARD-TO-RESETTLE+ REFUGEES, NOTABLY THOSE FROM NORTH VIETNAM OR ECONOMIC MIGRANTS.

DR HO ALSO SAID THAT AS A LONG-TERM SOLUTION, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT MUST BE URGED TO INITIATE DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT REGARDING REPATRIATION OF REFUGEES.

+TO BE EFFECTIVE IN THIS DIPLOMATIC ENDEAVOUR, HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT MIGHT WELL BE ADVISED TO PERSUADE OTHER COUNTRIES AND THE UNHCR TO JOIN IN THE NEGOTIATIONS,+ HE SAID.

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SCREENING SYSTEM SHOULD BE CONSIDERED  
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER SETTING UP A STRINGENT +SCREENING SYSTEM+ TO PROCESS VIETNAMESE REFUGEES COMING TO HONG KONG SO THAT ONLY +POLITICAL+ REFUGEES WOULD BE ACCEPTED IN FUTURE, THE HON HUI YIN-FAT SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE, MR HUI SAID THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD CONTINUED TO EMPLOY DELAYING TACTICS IN HANDLING THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES PROBLEM. IT HAD TIME AND AGAIN IGNORED THE FEELINGS OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND ALSO THE TWO REQUESTS REFLECTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THROUGH THE LATE GOVERNOR AND THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY.

HE SAID THIS HAD INEVITABLY CAST DOUBT UPON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S PROMISE TO +LOOK AFTER THE INTERESTS OF HONG KONG PEOPLE+.

/MR HUI .....

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MR HUI NOTED THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD, SINCE THE INFLUX OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES INTO HONG KONG IN 1975, OBLIGED THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT TO ACT AS A +PLACE OF FIRST ASYLUM+.

HE RECALLED THAT AT THE TIME THE GOVERNMENT HAD AGREED TO ACCEPT THE REFUGEES ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THEY WOULD BE RESETTLED IN OTHER COUNTRIES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD NOT ONLY FAILED TO DO ITS BEST TO ALLEVIATE HONG KONG'S BURDEN BY ACCEPTING A REALISTIC NUMBER OF REFUGEES, BUT HAD ALSO INDULGED IN PROCRASTINATION.

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD PROCRASTINATED IN MAKING KNOWN ITS STANCE ON WHETHER IT WOULD TAKE THE LEAD IN INCREASING THE REFUGEE INTAKE AND ON HOW THE REFUGEE PROBLEM COULD BE SOLVED, HE SAID.

MR HUI ALSO SAID IT WAS ANNOYING THAT WHEN THE GOVERNMENT WAS OBLIGED TO ADOPT THE +CLOSED CAMP+ POLICY IN JULY 1982, IN THE FACE OF A CONTINUING INFLUX OF REFUGEES AND DETERIORATING PROSPECTS FOR RESETTLEMENT, SOME BRITISH POLITICIANS HAD CRITICISED THE POLICY AS INHUMANE.

THIS HAD PLACED THE GOVERNMENT INTO A DILEMMA OVER ITS REFUGEE POLICY.

MR HUI NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD STATED THAT IN DEALING WITH THE ISSUE EVERYTHING DEPENDED VERY MUCH ON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE.

SINCE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD REFUSED TO MAKE A GREATER COMMITMENT AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL COULD NOT SIMPLY STAND BY WITH FOLDED ARMS, HE FELT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD INITIATE MEASURES OF ITS OWN OR COMPEL THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO TAKE SPECIFIC ACTIONS.

MR HUI STRESSED THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD RESUME TAKING THE LEAD IN ACCEPTING MORE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES FROM HONG KONG SO AS TO INDUCE THE THREE MAIN RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES, THE UNITED STATES, CANADA AND AUSTRALIA, TO CHANGE THEIR MIND AND NOT REDUCE THEIR 1987 INTAKES.

HE ALSO URGED THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE RECENT RESHUFFLE IN THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT TO NEGOTIATE A GUARANTEE THAT THOSE REFUGEES WHO MIGHT RETURN HOME OF THEIR OWN WILL OR BE REPATRIATED WOULD NOT BE ILL-TREATED.

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REPATRIATE ALL ECONOMIC MIGRANTS

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ALL ECONOMIC MIGRANTS FROM VIETNAM SHOULD BE REPATRIATED, THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEES, MR CHEONG-LEEN SAID IT WAS NOW BECOMING INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO RESETTLE NORTH VIETNAMESE REFUGEES AS MOST OF THEM WERE CONSIDERED TO BE IN THE CATEGORY OF ECONOMIC MIGRANTS AND NOT GENUINE REFUGEES FLEEING FROM PERSECUTION.

THEREFORE, THE TIME HAD COME FOR PARALLEL ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY BOTH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IN TACKLING THE PROBLEM.

+THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD MORE POSITIVELY EXPLORE ALL POSSIBLE AVENUES TO URGE THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT — WHICH INCIDENTALLY HAS RECENTLY HAD A CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP — TO ACCEPT REPATRIATION FROM HONG KONG OF ALL ECONOMIC MIGRANTS WHO COME FROM VIETNAM, NORTH AND SOUTH,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THE FOREIGN OFFICE SHOULD NOT ONLY SEEK TO PUT FORWARD ITS VIEW DIRECT TO THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT, BUT SHOULD ALSO ENLIST THE GOOD OFFICES OF OTHER COUNTRIES WHICH HAD SOME DIALOGUE WITH VIETNAM, SUCH AS AUSTRALIA, THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN, TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE VIETNAMESE.

+FURTHERMORE, THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER IS EXPECTED TO VISIT RUSSIA IN THE COMING MONTHS; COULD SHE NOT RAISE THE SUBJECT WITH THE RUSSIANS WHO HAVE STRONG TIES WITH THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT?+ HE ASKED.

AS FOR HONG KONG, MR CHEONG-LEEN SAID THE CLOSED-CAMP DETERRENT WAS BEGINNING SOMEWHAT TO RUN OUT OF STEAM, AND HONG KONG MUST NOW CONSIDER STRONGER ALTERNATIVES, SINCE BRITAIN HAD ADOPTED A DEFENSIVE AND NEGATIVE STANCE IN ACCEPTING MORE REFUGEES FROM THE TERRITORY.

+I WOULD THEREFORE URGE THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT TO MAKE THE FIRM DECISION THAT WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT — THAT IS AS SOON AS THE LOGISTIC ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE COMPLETED — ALL VIETNAMESE REFUGEES COMING TO HONG KONG WHO ARE NOT GENUINE POLITICAL REFUGEES, WILL BE REPATRIATED TO VIETNAM JUST AS SOON AS NEGOTIATIONS ARE FINALISED WITH THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT,+ HE SAID.

A PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED AND CLEAR-CUT STATEMENT OF POLICY TO THIS EFFECT SHOULD HELP TO STEM THE INCREASING TIDE OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WHO WERE PLANNING OR WANTED TO COME TO HONG KONG.

/IT MIGHT .....

IT MIGHT BE ARGUED BY THE GOVERNMENT THAT SUCH MEASURES COULD CREATE SECURITY RISKS, AND THAT SUCH MEASURES OUGHT NOT TO BE TAKEN UNTIL AFTER NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT WERE MORE OR LESS COMPLETED, HE SAID.

+BUT I CAN ARGUE WITH EQUAL FORCE THAT THE CURRENT SITUATION IS CRITICAL ENOUGH FOR THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER TAKING STRONGER ACTION IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF OUR 5.5 MILLION HONG KONG CITIZENS WHO LIVE IN ONE OF THE MOST OVERCROWDED CITIES IN THE WORLD,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEONG-LEEN ADDED THAT IT WAS BECOMING MORE AND MORE ILLOGICAL AND INCONSISTENT, POLICY-WISE, FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE WITH ITS PRESENT POLICY OF REPATRIATING ALL CHINESE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WHEREAS ALL VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WERE TAKEN IN WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

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CLOSED CAMPS FAIL TO DETER  
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THE HON POON CHI-FAI TODAY (WEDNESDAY) CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO REVIEW ITS POLICY ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEES AND TO REFUSE TO CONTINUE ACCOMMODATING ECONOMIC REFUGEES FROM VIETNAM.

SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEES, MR POON SAID:

+IF SUCH REFUSAL IS ALLEGED TO BE INHUMANE, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK WHETHER IT IS HUMANE TO USE THE EXISTING CLOSED CAMPS AND TO REPATRIATE THE BOAT BRIDES AND CHILD ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.+

MR POON SAID CLOSED CAMPS HAD FAILED TO ACHIEVE ANY DETERRENT EFFECT, AND MILLIONS OF DOLLARS AND OTHER RESOURCES WERE BEING SPENT ON HOUSING AND TAKING CARE OF THE REFUGEES.

+HENCE IT CAN BE SAID THAT WE HAVE DONE OUR VERY BEST AND ALL THAT WE CAN DO,+ HE SAID.

IN DECIDING ITS POLICY ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEES, MR POON SAID HONG KONG SHOULD ALSO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE PROBLEMS NOW FACED BY THE TERRITORY, THE CAPABILITY WHICH IT COULD AFFORD AND WHETHER SUCH A POLICY WOULD BE HARMFUL TO STABILITY AND PROSPERITY.

IT WOULD BE UNREALISTIC AND UNFAIR TO ALLEGE THAT HONG KONG WAS INHUMANE JUST BECAUSE IT WOULD NOT CONTINUE TO ACCEPT VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

/+IN FACT, .....

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+IN FACT, THE MOST INHUMANE COUNTRIES ARE THOSE WHICH CAUSED THE EXODUS OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN THE FIRST PLACE,+ HE SAID.

+SECOND ON THE LIST WOULD BE THOSE COUNTRIES WITH VAST EXPANSE OF LAND AND VAST RESOURCES, YET WHICH DECLINED TO ACCEPT MORE REFUGEES.+

MR POON SAID HE WAS DISAPPOINTED AND DISSATISFIED WITH THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH EMPHASISED HUMANITY ON THE ONE HAND WHILE REFUSING TO ACCEPT MORE REFUGEES ON THE OTHER.

VIETNAMESE REFUGEES HAD NOW BECOME A HEAVY BURDEN IN HONG KONG AND AFFECTED, TO A CERTAIN EXTENT, SOCIAL WELFARE, HOUSING, TRANSPORT, EDUCATION, MEDICAL SERVICES AND EVEN OVERALL STABILITY AND PROSPERITY.

THEREFORE, HE HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, FORMULATE A MORE APPROPRIATE POLICY CONCERNING VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

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IMMEDIATE REVIEW OF II POLICY ADVOCATED  
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THE GOVERNMENT WAS URGED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE HON HO SAI-CHU TO IMMEDIATELY REVIEW ITS POLICY TOWARDS ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM CHINA AND VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

+IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY UNFAIR TO HONG KONG IF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WERE ALLOWED TO STAY HERE FOR A LONG TIME AND SHARE OUR LIMITED RESOURCES,+ MR HO SAID DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

BY REPATRIATING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM CHINA AND ACCEPTING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM VIETNAM WITHOUT A GOOD CAUSE, HONG KONG WOULD DEFINITELY BE ACCUSED OF FAVOURING THE LATTER AND BEING PREJUDICED AGAINST THE FORMER, HE SAID.

+I WOULD CALL ON THE GOVERNMENT TO IMMEDIATELY REVIEW THE REPATRIATION POLICY TO ENSURE A FAIR AND UNIFORM STANDARD IN IMPLEMENTATION,+ HE ADDED.

HE ALSO CALLED ON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO TAKE THE LEAD IN INCREASING ITS QUOTA FOR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SO AS TO ENCOURAGE OTHER RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES TO FOLLOW SUIT.

/THE BRITISH .....

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THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD START TO TALK WITH THE VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IN ORDER TO FIND A WAY TO COMPLETELY RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FLOODING INTO HONG KONG FROM VIETNAM, HE SAID.

THE CHANCE OF OVERSEAS RESETTLEMENT IN THE NEAR FUTURE FOR MANY REFUGEES WHO HAD BEEN STRANDED HERE FOR YEARS WAS VERY REMOTE, WHILE THE NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ARRIVING AT HONG KONG HAD INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY.

MOREOVER, THERE WERE INDICATIONS THAT MOST OF THESE NEWCOMERS WERE NOT POLITICAL REFUGEES BUT RATHER ECONOMIC MIGRANTS, HE SAID.

+I MUST POINT OUT THAT WE MAY HAVE NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE BUT TO CONSIDER TAKING TOUGHER MEASURES IF THERE IS STILL NO SIGN OF IMPROVEMENT IN THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE PROBLEM,+ HE SAID.

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#### TIME TO SEEK FUNDAMENTAL SOLUTION

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HONG KONG SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO DEVISE ITS OWN SOLUTION TO THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE PROBLEM IF BRITAIN IS UNWILLING OR UNABLE TO FORMULATE A SUITABLE RESOLUTION OF THE ISSUE, THE HON JACKIE CHAN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE, MR CHAN CALLED UPON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO CLARIFY ITS POSITION AND MAKE KNOWN ITS POLICY.

MR CHAN SAID HE HAD ORIGINALLY PINNED HIS HOPES ON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TAKING THE LEAD IN RESETTLING MORE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

+HOWEVER, THIS SEEMS TO BE TOO MUCH OF WISHFUL THINKING. AS THINGS NOW LOOK, WE HAVE TO DEPEND UPON OURSELVES TO RESOLVE OUR OWN PROBLEM,+ HE SAID.

NOTING THAT HONG KONG PEOPLE HAD BEEN CONFRONTING THE PROBLEM FOR OVER 10 YEARS, HE FELT THAT THE TIME HAD COME TO SEEK A FUNDAMENTAL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM.

HOWEVER, MR CHAN STILL HOPED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD CONDUCT INFORMAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES AND SEEK A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION.

HE ALSO ASKED THE UNITED NATIONS TO RE-DEFINE THE MEANING OF +VIETNAMESE REFUGEES+.

/MR CHAN .....

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MR CHAN SAID THAT WHILE THE NEED TO EXPAND EDUCATION, PURCHASE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT, CONSTRUCT OLD PEOPLE'S HOMES AND PROVIDE CARE FOR THE HANDICAPPED HAD NOT BEEN MET DUE TO BUDGETARY DEFICITS, THE GOVERNMENT WAS OBLIGED TO SPEND OVER \$100 MILLION A YEAR IN LOOKING AFTER A MULTITUDE OF VIETNAMESE WHO MADE NO CONTRIBUTION TO HONG KONG AND HAD NO SENSE OF BELONGING.

+THIS IS GROSSLY UNFAIR TO THE NEEDY PEOPLE OF HONG KONG,+ HE ADDED.

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UK BACKING OUT FROM ITS COMMITMENT AGAIN  
\* \* \* \* \*

THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WOULD BE REGARDED AS A LAME DUCK GOVERNMENT IF IT CANNOT PERSUADE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE ITS ATTITUDE ON THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES HERE, THE HON LEE YU-TAI SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEES, MR LEE SAID SINCE HE JOINED THE COUNCIL 15 MONTHS AGO, BRITAIN HAD LET DOWN THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG ON AT LEAST TWO MAJOR ISSUES.

HE SAID THE ORDER IN COUNCIL WENT THROUGH PARLIAMENT LAST APRIL, WHICH DEPRIVED THE MINORITY PEOPLE OF HONG KONG OF THEIR ONLY HOPE FOR AN EFFECTIVE NATIONALITY.

+THIS IRRESPONSIBLE DECISION OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WAS TAKEN IN SPIE OF A UNANIMOUS DEMAND BY THIS COUNCIL AND STRONG REPRESENTATIONS BY THE INDIANS,+ HE SAID.

MR LEE NOTED THAT BRITAIN WAS AGAIN TRYING TO BACK OUT FROM A COMMITMENT, AS NO ANSWER HAD YET BEEN GIVEN TO THE REQUEST BY HONG KONG FOR THE CONTINUATION OF RESETTLEMENT FOR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

+HAVING BEEN LET DOWN ON TWO IMPORTANT ISSUES, HOW CAN THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WHICH REPRESENTED THEM IN THE NEGOTIATION OF THE FUTURE OF THE TERRITORY?+ HE ASKED.

THEREFORE, MR LEE PROPOSED THAT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT SHOULD PERSUADE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE TO TAKE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES FROM HONG KONG, AT AN ANNUAL QUOTA OF NOT LESS THAN 500.

/HE ALSO .....

HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT SHOULD ASK THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO OBTAIN AN ASSURANCE FROM VIETNAM THAT REFUGEES WOULD NOT BE TREATED INHUMANELY ON REPATRIATION TO THE COUNTRY AND, FOLLOWING THE ASSURANCE, THAT ALL FUTURE REFUGEES BE REPATRIATED TO VIETNAM.

MR LEE SAID THAT BRITAIN HAD NEVER BEEN HELPFUL IN GRANTING RESETTLEMENT, BUT VISITORS FROM BRITAIN HAD HOWEVER HARSHLY ATTACKED THE CLOSED CAMP POLICY, IN PUBLIC DOCUMENTS SUCH AS THE REFUGEE ACTION REPORT.

+IT IS EASY TO SAY KIND THINGS BY WORD OF MOUTH AND DENOUNCE OTHER PEOPLE BUT GIVE THEM NO HELP AT ALL,+ HE SAID.

MR LEE NOTED THAT VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WERE LIKELY TO BE LEFT BEHIND IN HONG KONG FOR PROLONGED PERIODS AND CONSTITUTE A HEAVY BURDEN ON RESOURCES WHICH COULD AMOUNT TO HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS PER YEAR.

HE SAID HE FELT THAT IT WAS BLATANT INJUSTICE TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG THAT VIETNAMESE HAD COME HERE WITH THE MOTIVE OF A BETTER LIFE, BUT THE ENORMOUS BURDEN THEY IMPOSED ON HONG KONG RESOURCES MIGHT LOWER OUR OWN LIVING STANDARD.

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FURTHER BIG REFUGEE EXODUS UNLIKELY  
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE A TOUGHER STAND IN URGING BRITAIN TO INCREASE ITS INTAKE OF VIETNAMESE REFUGES, THE HON LIU LIT-FOR SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE, MR LIU ALSO URGED BRITAIN TO EXPEDITE THE PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS BY VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SEAKING EMIGRATION.

HE ALSO SAID THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN VIETNAM WAS BECOMING MORE STABLE AND POLITICAL PERSECUTION WERE BEING TONED DOWN, MAKING A FURTHER BIG EXODUS OF REFUGEES UNLIKELY.

+HENCE, EVEN IF HONG KONG DECLARES THAT IT WILL NO LONGER PROVIDE ANY SHELTER FOR REFUGEES, I BELIEVE IT WILL NOT BE ACCUSED OF BEING INHUMANE BY OTHER COUNTRIES,+ HE ADDED.

MR LIU SAID THE REMAINING PROBLEM WAS HOW TO DEAL WITH THOSE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WHO WERE NOT ABLE, AND PERHAPS WOULD NEVER BE ABLE, TO LEAVE HONG KONG.

/THIS PROBLEM .....

THIS PROBLEM COULD NOT BE RESOLVED SIMPLY BY THE PASSIVE APPROACH OF ESTABLISHING CLOSED CAMPS. THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ADOPT A MORE POSITIVE APPROACH.

HE SAID THAT SETTING UP CLOSED CAMPS WAS NOT ECONOMICAL. +SINCE THE REFUGEES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO WORK, NATURALLY THEY ARE NON-PRODUCTIVE AND HAVE NO INCOME, THUS BECOMING A HEAVY BURDEN FOR THE GOVERNMENT,+ HE SAID.

HE NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD SPENT MORE THAN \$100 MILLION ON CARING FOR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES LAST YEAR.

+IF THE REFUGEES ARE ALLOWED TO SEEK EMPLOYMENT UNDER CONTROLLED CONDITIONS, THE GOVERNMENT MAY SAVE THE ABOVE EXPENSES WHILE THE REFUGEES COULD EARN THEIR LIVING,+ HE SAID.

IN VIEW OF THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND THE HIGH EMPLOYMENT RATE IN HONG KONG, HE BELIEVED SUCH A PROPOSAL WOULD NOT AFFECT THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION.

MR LIU ALSO NOTED THAT NUMEROUS REFUGEE CHILDREN WERE REACHING SCHOOL AGE.

+IF THESE CHILDREN ARE NOT ALLOWED TO ATTEND SCHOOL, THEY WILL BECOME ILLITERATES WHO WILL HAVE DIFFICULTIES IN SEEKING JOBS AND ADJUSTING TO THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT NO MATTER WHETHER THEY ARE TO EMIGRATE OVERSEAS OR STAY IN HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

THE LONGER REFUGEES LIVED IN CLOSED CAMPS, THE MORE DIFFICULT IT WOULD BE FOR THEM TO ADAPT TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

+ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS, WE CANNOT LET THEM LIVE IN THESE CLOSED CAMPS FOREVER,+ MR LIU SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED SHOULD CONDUCT STUDIES NOW WITH A VIEW TO FINDING SOME PROPER SOLUTIONS BECAUSE, EVENTUALLY, HONG KONG HAD TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM ON ITS OWN.

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CHANGES TO PUBLICATIONS ORDINANCE PROPOSED  
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TWO BILLS WHICH SEEK TO REPEAL THE PROVISIONS OF THE CONTROL OF PUBLICATIONS CONSOLIDATION ORDINANCE RELATING TO THE CONTROL OF NEWSPAPERS WERE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE CONTROL OF PUBLICATIONS CONSOLIDATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 AND THE PUBLIC ORDER (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID FORD, SAID THE TABLING OF THE BILLS FOLLOWED THE COMPLETION OF A REVIEW OF THE FORMER ORDINANCE BY THE SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND INFORMATION.

/MR FORD .....

MR FORD SUMMARISED THE PRINCIPAL CONTROL SECTIONS OF THE ORDINANCE WHICH THE ADMINISTRATION SOUGHT TO REPEAL:

- \* SECTION 3 WHICH MADE IT AN OFFENCE TO PRINT OR PUBLISH A PUBLICATION WHICH INDUCED THE COMMISSION OF A CRIME OR A PERSON TO JOIN AN UNLAWFUL SOCIETY;
- \* SECTION 4 WHICH PERMITTED A COURT TO SUPPRESS A NEWSPAPER AFTER THE CONVICTION OF ITS PRINTER, PUBLISHER OR EDITOR FOR CERTAIN SPECIFIED CRIMES SUCH AS TREASON, CRIMINAL LIBEL AND OTHER OFFENCES RELATING TO THE MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY;
- \* SECTION 5 WHICH PROVIDED POWERS TO PROHIBIT THE IMPORTATION OF PUBLICATIONS THAT WERE LIKELY TO HARM LOCAL SECURITY OR ADVERSELY AFFECT PUBLIC ORDER, SAFETY, HEALTH OR MORALS;
- \* SECTION 6 WHICH MADE IT AN OFFENCE MALICIOUSLY TO PUBLISH IN ANY LOCAL NEWSPAPER FALSE NEWS WHICH WAS LIKELY TO ALARM PUBLIC OPINION OR DISTURB PUBLIC ORDER;
- \* SECTIONS 8 AND 9 WHICH ALLOWED THE REGISTRAR OF NEWSPAPERS TO REFUSE OR TO SUSPEND THE REGISTRATION OF NEWSPAPERS OR NEWS AGENCIES THAT WERE CONNECTED WITH NEWSPAPERS WHICH HAD BEEN SUPPRESSED UNDER SECTION 4; AND
- \* SECTION 10 WHICH PROVIDED FOR THE SEIZURE AND FORFEITURE OF PRINTING PRESSES USED IN CONTRAVENTION OF REGULATIONS MADE UNDER THE ORDINANCE.

+SINCE 1951, THE SUPPRESSION PROVISIONS HAVE BEEN USED MOST SPARINGLY AND NOT AT ALL SINCE 1967 WHEN THREE LOCAL NEWSPAPERS WERE SUSPENDED FOR SIX MONTHS FOLLOWING THE CONVICTION OF THEIR PUBLISHERS, PRINTERS AND EDITORS ON SEDITION CHARGES,+ MR FORD SAID.

+THE OTHER CONTROL PROVISIONS HAVE STOOD ON THE STATUTE BOOK BUT HAVE RARELY BEEN USED.

+INDEED, IT IS DIFFICULT TO ENVISAGE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH WOULD JUSTIFY THEIR USE, OTHER THAN IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION.

+THE EXISTING EMERGENCY REGULATIONS PROVIDE SIMILAR POWERS SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED.+

MR FORD SAID THE RECENT REVIEW HAD SHOWN THAT THE CONTROL PROVISIONS DESCRIBED ABOVE WERE, TO A LARGE EXTENT, DUPLICATED IN OTHER ORDINANCES.

/+FOR EXAMPLE, .....

+FOR EXAMPLE, THE IMPORTATION OF OBJECTIONABLE PUBLICATIONS IS CURRENTLY COVERED BY THE OBJECTIONABLE PUBLICATIONS ORDINANCE- INCITEMENT TO COMMIT AN OFFENCE BY THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE ORDINANCE AND INDUCEMENT TO JOIN AN UNLAWFUL SOCIETY BY THE SOCIETIES ORDINANCE.+

IT IS CLEAR THAT THE RETENTION OF THE CONTROL PROVISIONS OF THE CONTROL OF PUBLICATIONS CONSOLIDATION ORDINANCE IS UNDESIRABLE, MR FORD SAID.

IT WAS THEREFORE PROPOSED THAT THESE CONTROL PROVISIONS, TOGETHER WITH CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO THE RELEVANT SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION, BE REPEALED.

MR FORD POINTED OUT THAT THE MALICIOUS PUBLICATION OF FALSE NEWS WHICH WAS LIKELY TO ALARM PUBLIC OPINION OR DISTURB PUBLIC ORDER WAS A SERIOUS MATTER NOT PRESENTLY COVERED IN OTHER LEGISLATION AND SHOULD BE RETAINED ON THE STATUTE BOOK BECAUSE THE PRESS HAD A DUTY TO THE COMMUNITY NOT TO ACT IRRESPONSIBLY.

BUT SINCE THIS ASPECT OF CONTROL RELATED TO THE MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC ORDER, IT WAS APPROPRIATE THAT A COMPENSATORY PROVISION BE MADE IN THE PUBLIC ORDER ORDINANCE, HE SAID.

THIS WAS ACHIEVED IN THE PUBLIC ORDER (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE THROUGH A NEW CLAUSE.

ANOTHER AMENDMENT RELATED THE OFFENCE OF PUBLIC MISCHIEF MORE SPECIFICALLY TO BOMB HOAXES.

TURNING TO THE REGISTRATION PROVISIONS IN THE CONTROL OF PUBLICATIONS CONSOLIDATION ORDINANCE, MR FORD NOTED THAT THE REQUIREMENT FOR NEWS AGENCIES AND ALL LOCAL NEWSPAPERS TO BE REGISTERED AND FOR LOCAL DISTRIBUTORS OF NEWSPAPERS TO BE LICENSED HAD PROVED USEFUL FOR ENFORCING THE CRIMINAL LAW (BOTH STATUTE AND COMMON) AFFECTING THE PRESS.

HE CITED EXAMPLES OF CONTEMPT OF COURT UNDER THE MAGISTRATES ORDINANCE, PUBLISHING OBSCENE MATERIAL UNDER THE OBJECTIONABLE PUBLICATIONS ORDINANCE AND SEDITION UNDER THE CRIMES ORDINANCE.

THE REGISTRATION PARTICULARS WERE ALSO USEFUL FOR ORDINARY CITIZENS WHO SOUGHT TO BRING CIVIL ACTION AGAINST PUBLICATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, FOR LIBEL OR BREACH OF COPYRIGHT. IT WAS THEREFORE PROPOSED TO RETAIN THE EXISTING REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS.

WITH REGARD TO THE PAYMENT OF A DEPOSIT REQUIRED UNDER THE ORDINANCE AS A PREREQUISITE TO REGISTRATION, MR FORD SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS SATISFIED THAT THIS REQUIREMENT MIGHT BE DISPENSED WITH.

THE DEFINITION OF A 'NEWSPAPER' WAS ALSO AMENDED TO EXCLUDE CERTAIN PUBLICATIONS WHICH NEED NOT BE REGISTERED.

MR FORD SAID THE LEVEL OF FEES WHICH HAD REMAINED UNALTERED SINCE 1951, HAD NOW BEEN REVISED TO BRING THEM IN LINE WITH THE OVERALL GOVERNMENT POLICY OF RECOVERING ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS WHEREVER POSSIBLE AND EQUATE THEM TO SIMILAR FEES AND CHARGES IN OTHER LEGISLATION.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS WOULD RESULT IN THE ORDINANCE BEING CONFINED TO MATTERS RELATING TO THE REGISTRATION OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS. IT WAS THEREFORE APPROPRIATE THAT THE REVISED LEGISLATION BE RETITLED THE 'REGISTRATION OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS ORDINANCE'.

DEBATE ON THE TWO BILLS WAS ADJOURNED.

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UNIFORM TIME LIMIT FOR COMPANY ACCOUNTS SOUGHT  
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A BILL SEEKING TO SHORTEN THE TIME LIMIT ALLOWED FOR THE SUBMISSION OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS, INCREASE THE POWERS OF INSPECTORS AND CLARIFY A PROVISION IN THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE REGARDING THE PRIORITY OF DEBTS OF A COMPANY IN RECEIVERSHIP WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, NOTED THAT THE TIME LIMIT ALLOWED UNDER THE PRESENT LEGISLATION FOR THE SUBMISSION OF ACCOUNTS TO ANY GENERAL MEETING OF A COMPANY WAS NINE MONTHS OR, IN THE CASE OF A COMPANY CARRYING ON BUSINESS OR HAVING INTERESTS ABROAD, 12 MONTHS.

MR JACOBS POINTED OUT THAT IN VIEW OF RECENT ADVANCES IN ACCOUNTING PRACTICE, ESPECIALLY THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH COMPUTERISATION, THESE TIME LIMITS WERE CONSIDERED TO BE TOO GENEROUS.

+THE BILL THEREFORE PROPOSES A NEW UNIFORM TIME LIMIT OF SIX MONTHS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF ALL COMPANY ACCOUNTS. AND THESE ACCOUNTS WILL NEED TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE COMPANY'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING RATHER THAN TO ANY GENERAL MEETING.

+BUT THE COURT MAY EXTEND THE TIME LIMIT, AND APPROVE SUBMISSION TO ANY GENERAL MEETING, IF FOR ANY REASON IT THINKS IT FIT TO DO SO.

+TO ALLOW FOR A REASONABLE TRANSITION, IT IS PROPOSED THAT THESE NEW REQUIREMENTS SHOULD NOT APPLY TO ANY PERIOD PRIOR TO THE FINANCIAL YEAR BEGINNING AFTER THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE ORDINANCE IF ENACTED,+ HE SAID.

AS TO INSPECTORS' POWERS, MR JACOBS SAID THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE IMPOSED A DUTY ON OFFICERS AND AGENTS OF A COMPANY UNDER INVESTIGATION BY AN INSPECTOR TO PRODUCE THE COMPANY'S BOOKS AND DOCUMENTS TO THE INSPECTOR.

HE SAID THE INSPECTOR WAS GIVEN CERTAIN POWERS TO EXAMINE THOSE PERSONS UNDER OATH, BUT EXPERIENCE HAD REVEALED THAT THESE POWERS WERE INADEQUATE.

+FIRST, THE INSPECTOR HAS TO GO THROUGH THE TIME CONSUMING PROCESS OF APPLYING TO THE COURT IF HE WANTS TO EXAMINE ON OATH THIRD PARTIES WHO ARE NOT OFFICERS, AGENTS OR EMPLOYEES OF THE COMPANY,+ HE SAID.

+SECOND, THE COURT DOES NOT HAVE EXPRESS POWERS TO ORDER THIRD PARTIES TO HAND ANY BOOKS OR DOCUMENTS TO THE INSPECTOR,+ HE ADDED.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT, IF ENACTED, WOULD GIVE THE INSPECTOR AUTHORITY TO EXAMINE ON OATH ANY PERSON HE THOUGHT WAS, OR MIGHT BE, IN POSSESSION OF RELEVANT INFORMATION, AND TO REQUIRE SUCH PERSON TO PRODUCE BOOKS AND DOCUMENTS TO ASSIST IN THE INVESTIGATION.

THE BILL ALSO ADDED A NEW SECTION TO ENABLE THE INSPECTOR TO REQUIRE A DIRECTOR OF A COMPANY UNDER INVESTIGATION TO PRODUCE DOCUMENTS RELATING TO ACCOUNTS WHICH HE HELD IN A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION WHEN THE INSPECTOR HAD REASONABLE GROUNDS FOR BELIEVING THAT ANY UNDISCLOSED BUT RELEVANT TRANSACTIONS MIGHT HAVE TAKEN PLACE, MR JACOBS SAID.

ANOTHER PROPOSED AMENDMENT WOULD ENABLE AN INSPECTOR TO INFORM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF MATTERS TENDING TO SHOW THAT ANY CIVIL PROCEEDINGS OUGHT, IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST, TO BE BROUGHT BY ANY BODY CORPORATE.

ON PRIORITIES FOR THE PAYMENT OF DEBTS IN THE WINDING UP OF A COMPANY, MR JACOBS NOTED THAT THESE PRIORITIES WERE SET OUT IN THE EXISTING LEGISLATION AND THESE SHOULD BE FOLLOWED IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE A RECEIVER WAS APPOINTED UNDER A DEBENTURE SECURED BY A FLOATING CHARGE.

THERE WAS DOUBT, HOWEVER, AS TO WHETHER THE SAME PRIORITIES CONTINUED TO APPLY, AS THEY SHOULD, WHEN, UPON THE CESSATION OF A BUSINESS, THE FLOATING CHARGE CRYSTALLISED AND BECAME A FIXED CHARGE, HE SAID.

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THE BILL SOUGHT TO AMEND THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE TO CLARIFY THIS POINT.

MR JACOBS SAID THE AMENDMENTS CONTAINED IN THIS BILL HAD BEEN ENDORSED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMPANY LAW REFORM AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THOSE CONCERNED.

+THE STANDING COMMITTEE HAS SO FAR PUBLISHED TWO REPORTS CONTAINING A NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO AMEND THE ORDINANCE.

+THOSE THAT HAVE NOT BEEN TAKEN UP IN THE PRESENT BILL ARE BEING ACTIVELY PURSUED AND FURTHER AMENDMENTS WILL BE PUT TO THIS COUNCIL IN DUE COURSE.+

MR JACOBS THEN THANKED THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE VALUABLE AND WELL CONSIDERED ADVICE IT HAD GIVEN SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 1984.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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LAW WILL ENHANCE HK'S TRADE IMAGE  
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THE TRADE DESCRIPTIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, WHICH WILL ENHANCE HONG KONG'S IMAGE IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE, WAS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL, THE HON MARTIN LEE SAID A LEGCO AD HOC GROUP, OF WHICH HE WAS CONVENER, HAD EXAMINED THE BILL IN DETAIL AND PROPOSED SEVERAL AMENDMENTS WHICH WERE ALL ACCEPTED BY THE ADMINISTRATION.

HE SAID MEMBERS OF THE AD HOC GROUP SUPPORTED THE BILL IN PRINCIPLE, AND IN PARTICULAR WELCOME THE PROVISIONS IN THE PROPOSED NEW SECTION 16C RELATING TO DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO TRADE MARK PROPRIETORS REGARDING SUSPECTED CONTRAVENTIONS OF THE ORDINANCE.

+THIS WILL ASSIST PLAINTIFF PROPRIETORS TO TAKE CIVIL ACTION AGAINST THOSE INVOLVED WITH SPURIOUS GOODS AND ACCORDINGLY WILL ENHANCE HONG KONG'S IMAGE IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE,+ HE SAID.

ON SECTION 16A OF THE BILL, WHICH DEALS WITH THE ADMINISTRATION'S POWER TO DETAIN SUSPECT GOODS IN ANY PREMISES OR CONTAINER, MR LEE SAID THAT WHILE THE AD HOC GROUP FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE ADMINISTRATION'S NEEDS TO PROTECT THE OWNER OF THE PREMISES OR CONTAINER AGAINST UNNECESSARY LOSSES AND TO REDUCE INCONVENIENCE.

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THE AD HOC GROUP WAS ASSURED THAT CASES OF DETENTION IN SITU HAD BEEN INFREQUENT IN THE PAST, AND THAT GOODS WERE USUALLY DETAINED FOR NO MORE THAN A FEW DAYS, HE NOTED.

HE THEREFORE CALLED FOR AN ADDITIONAL PROVISION TO REQUIRE THAT THE WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE OWNER OF THE PREMISES OR CONTAINER, OR HIS AUTHORISED AGENT, BE SOUGHT IF THE DETENTION PERIOD EXCEEDED A WEEK.

THIS SHOULD BE A SUFFICIENT SAFEGUARD AND BE SATISFACTORY TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED, HE SAID.

REGARDING SECTION 16B, WHICH DEALS WITH THE POWERS OF ARREST AND ENTRY FOR AUTHORISED OFFICERS, MR LEE SAID: +THIS PROVISION WILL STREAMLINE THE ENFORCEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES INVOLVED IN IMPLEMENTING THE TRADE DESCRIPTIONS ORDINANCE.+

ANTICIPATING THE BEST POSSIBLE DEPLOYMENT OF FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT, HE SUGGESTED THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD CARRY OUT A VALUE-FOR-MONEY STUDY AS A FIRST STEP.

MR LEE ALSO NOTED THAT SECTION 30 AS DRAFTED CONTAINED NO OBLIGATION ON THE PART OF THE ADMINISTRATION TO INFORM THE OWNER OF SUSPECT GOODS OF ANY FORFEITURE PROCEEDINGS IF THE OWNER WAS NOT PROSECUTED.

+THE AD HOC GROUP CONSIDERED, HOWEVER, THAT UNLESS THE OWNER OF THE GOODS HAD INDICATED TO THE ADMINISTRATION THAT HE NEEDED NOT BE SO INFORMED, THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD PROVIDE A WRITTEN NOTIFICATION TO THE OWNER OF THE GOODS,+ HE SAID.

+IN CASES WHEN THERE MAY BE MORE THAN ONE OWNER OF THE GOODS, IT SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO INFORM ONLY ONE OF THEM,+ HE ADDED.

THE RELEVANT AMENDMENTS TO THE BILL PROPOSED BY THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP WERE MOVED BY THE HON CHUNG PUI-LAM AT COMMITTEE STAGE.

WINDING UP DEBATE ON THE BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, THE HON ERIC HO, THANKED MR LEE AND HIS COLLEAGUES FOR THE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION THAT HAD BEEN GIVEN TO THE MEASURE.

HE COMMENTED THAT THE AMENDMENTS MOVED BY MR CHUNG PUI-LAM AT COMMITTEE STAGE HAD BEEN WORKED OUT AMICABLY BY THE AD HOC GROUP AND THE ADMINISTRATION AT TWO VERY CONSTRUCTIVE MEETINGS.

/AS REGARDS .....

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AS REGARDS NOTIFICATION TO OWNERS OF GOODS SUBJECT TO FORFEITURE, MR HO GAVE AN ASSURANCE THAT IT WAS THE NORMAL PRACTICE OF THE CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES TO GIVE SUCH NOTIFICATION WHEREVER POSSIBLE.

MR HO ADDED: +THE AD HOC GROUP'S CONCERN ON THE NEED TO ENSURE THE COST-EFFECTIVE DEPLOYMENT OF RESOURCES IS SHARED BY THE ADMINISTRATION. A VALUE-FOR-MONEY STEERING GROUP WILL SHORTLY BE ESTABLISHED WITHIN THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT. THIS WILL BE CHARGED WITH THE TASK OF EXAMINING STAFFING AND OTHER PROVISIONS THROUGHOUT THE DEPARTMENT.+

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SCALE OF PROBLEM JUSTIFIES MEASURES  
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CREATION OF AN OFFENCE AGAINST INERTIA-SELLING UNDER THE POST OFFICE ORDINANCE, RATHER THAN IN SEPARATE LEGISLATION, IS CONSIDERED TO BE MORE APPROPRIATE AT THIS STAGE HAVING REGARD TO THE COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF ENFORCEMENT, THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, THE HON ERIC HO, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

WINDING UP DEBATE ON THE POST OFFICE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, MR HO ENDORSED COMMENTS MADE BY THE HON SELINA CHOW, AND AT OBSERVATIONS.

FIRST, ALTHOUGH MEANINGFUL STATISTICS ON THE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED WERE NOT AVAILABLE, MEMBERS COULD BE SURE THAT THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM WAS SUFFICIENT TO JUSTIFY THE MEASURES PROPOSED IN THE BILL, HE SAID.

+THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND MAJOR INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS HAVE BEEN CONSULTED AND THEY ARE ALSO IN SUPPORT OF THESE MEASURES.+

SECOND, EXPERIENCE WITH INERTIA-SELLING ACTIVITIES SHOWED THAT THEY TENDED TO INVOLVE INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND IT MIGHT NOT THEREFORE BE FRUITFUL TO DRAW TOO FINE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN LOCALLY BASED AND FOREIGN COMPANIES.

+INDEED, IN THE WORLD OF INTERNATIONAL FRAUD, THE PLACE WITH THE LEAST REGULATION TENDS TO ATTRACT THE ARTFUL DODGERS,+ HE ADDED.

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INERTIA-SELLING MADE ILLEGAL  
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THE POST OFFICE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, WHICH WILL SERVE BOTH TO DETER SWINDLERS WITHIN HONG KONG FROM ENGAGING IN INERTIA-SELLING AND TO PROTECT BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS FROM FALLING VICTIM TO INERTIA-SELLING SCHEMES ORIGINATING FROM OVERSEAS, WAS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL, THE HON SELINA CHOW SAID THE BILL'S MOST IMPORTANT PROVISION WAS CREATION OF A NEW OFFENCE OUTLAWING THE PRACTICE OF INERTIA-SELLING PERPETRATED THROUGH SENDING BILLS AND INVOICES FOR UNSOLICITED GOODS OR SERVICES.

MRS CHOW SAID THERE HAD BEEN NUMEROUS COMPLAINTS TO THE CONSUMER COUNCIL AND THE POLICE ABOUT BILLS BEING RECEIVED FROM OVERSEAS FOR UNSOLICITED ENTRIES IN TRADE DIRECTORIES, BUT INERTIA-SELLING SCHEMES ORIGINATING WITHIN HONG KONG HAD NOT BEEN VERY COMMON.

HOWEVER, SHE NOTED THAT THE BILL WOULD ALSO ENABLE THE POSTMASTER GENERAL TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST UNSOLICITED BILLS COMING FROM OVERSEAS BY EXERCISING HIS EXISTING POWERS UNDER THE POST OFFICE ORDINANCE TO STOP, INSPECT AND IF NECESSARY DETAIN INCOMING MAIL SUSPECTED OF CONTRAVENING THE ORDINANCE.

IN MAKING INERTIA-SELLING A CRIMINAL OFFENCE IN HONG KONG, MRS CHOW EXPLAINED THAT THE BILL WOULD ALSO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE AUTHORITIES IN A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES TO BRING CHARGES AGAINST THOSE WHO SENT THE OFFENDING BILLS TO ADDRESSES IN HONG KONG, BECAUSE OF THEIR RECIPROCAL REGISTRATION.

MRS CHOW ADDED THAT THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP WHICH STUDIED THE BILL WAS CONCERNED THAT WHILE THE NEW OFFENCE CARRIED HEAVY MAXIMUM PENALTIES NO ALLOWANCE HAD BEEN MADE FOR REASONABLE EXCUSE AND THERE WAS NO REQUIREMENT OF MENS REA.

THIS MEANT THAT IF A PERSON POSTED A BILL IN THE MISTAKEN BUT GENUINE BELIEF THAT GOODS OR SERVICES HAD BEEN ORDERED BY THE ADDRESSEE HE WOULD BE JUST AS GUILTY AS THE PERPETRATOR OF THE MOST DELIBERATE AND SYSTEMATIC INERTIA-SELLING SCHEME, EVEN THOUGH HIS REASON FOR SENDING THE BILL WAS AN INNOCENT ONE.

SIMILARLY, ANY VARIATION, HOWEVER SLIGHT, IN THE WORDING REQUIRED TO BE PRINTED ON A DOCUMENT POSTED IN RESPECT OF UNSOLICITED GOODS OR SERVICES WOULD MAKE THE SENDER OF THE DOCUMENT LIABLE TO PROSECUTION, SHE SAID.

MRS CHOW SAID THE AD HOC GROUP THEREFORE CONCLUDED THAT TWO AMENDMENTS TO THE BILL WERE NECESSARY TO CHANGE THE OFFENCE FROM AN ABSOLUTE OFFENCE TO ONE IN WHICH THE COURT HAD FULL AND CLEAR DISCRETION TO ACQUIT A PERSON WHO HAD BROKEN THE LAW THROUGH AN INNOCENT MISUNDERSTANDING OR A CARELESS MISTAKE OVER WORDING.

THE AMENDMENTS, MAKING ALLOWANCE FOR REASONABLE EXCUSE AND FOR FLEXIBILITY IN THE PRESCRIBED WORDING ON THE DOCUMENT, WERE MOVED IN COMMITTEE STAGE BY THE HON RITA FAN.

ALSO SPEAKING DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL, THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN SAID THAT TO DATE HONG KONG HAD NO LEGISLATION SIMILAR TO THE UNITED KINGDOM UNSOLICITED GOODS AND SERVICES ACT OF 1971.

HE SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO INVITE COMMENTS FROM THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE ON THE APPLICABILITY TO HONG KONG OF THE SPIRIT OF THE UK-BASED BILL.

THIS WOULD HELP DETERMINE IF ADDED PROTECTION COULD BE GIVEN TO HONG KONG COMPANIES AGAINST INERTIA-SELLING PRACTICES, WHETHER FOR GOODS OR SERVICES, ORIGINATING FROM LOCAL COMPANIES, OR FROM OVERSEAS COMPANIES WITH OR WITHOUT REPRESENTATIVES IN HONG KONG.

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CALL FOR COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME TO BOOST VOTERS  
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD DEVISE A SET OF COMPREHENSIVE AND LASTING PROGRAMMES TO ENCOURAGE CITIZENS TO PROMPTLY REGISTER AS VOTERS AND TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN ELECTIONS, THE HON MRS ROSANNA TAM SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE ELECTORAL PROVISIONS (REGISTRATION OF ELECTORS) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 1986 TABLED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MRS TAM SAID THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT WOULD ENABLE THE RELEVANT DEPARTMENT TO CONDUCT VOTERS REGISTRATION THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AND HELP TO FACILITATE ELIGIBLE PERSONS TO REGISTER AS VOTERS.

HOWEVER, SHE SAID THE AMENDMENT ALONE WOULD NOT GUARANTEE AN INCREASE IN THE REGISTRATION RATE.

SHE URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO WORK OUT PUBLICITY AND EDUCATION PROGRAMMES TO ENCOURAGE THE PUBLIC TO REGISTER AS VOTERS.

MRS TAM SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER SENDING REGISTRATION FORMS TO THOSE WHO HAD ALREADY REACHED OR WOULD SOON REACH THE STATUTORY ELECTORAL AGE OF 21 TO REMIND THEM OF THEIR RIGHT AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO REGISTER.

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IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE REGISTRATION PERIOD COVERED THE WHOLE YEAR, SHE CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO LAUNCH APPROPRIATE PUBLICITY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR SO THAT PEOPLE WERE REMINDED THAT THEY COULD REGISTER AT ANY TIME OF THE YEAR.

THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER LAUNCHING PUBLICITY ON COMPANY, ORGANISATION OR FAMILY BASIS SO AS TO INSTIL A COLLECTIVE DESIRE AMONG MEMBERS OF THE SAME COMPANY OR FAMILY TO BECOME REGISTERED.

MRS TAM STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF CIVIC EDUCATION, SAYING THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD STEP UP PUBLICITY AND EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS TO ENABLE YOUNGSTERS TO BE FULLY AWARE OF THEIR CIVIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE IMPORTANCE TO VOTE SO THAT THEY WOULD TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO REGISTER AS SOON AS THEY REACHED 21.

LASTLY, MRS TAM SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER PUTTING REGISTRATION FORMS IN PLACES FREQUENTED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, SUCH AS BANKS, TO MAKE THEM MORE READILY AVAILABLE.

ALSO SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE REGULATIONS, DR THE HON CONRAD LAM SAID THAT THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY MAKE IT VERY CONVENIENT FOR ELIGIBLE PERSONS TO REGISTER AS VOTERS ON ANY WORKING DAY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

DR LAM NOTED THAT FOLLOWING THE DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN HONG KONG, THE POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF HONG KONG PEOPLE WAS NOW REFLECTED IN THE VOTERS' REGISTRATION NUMBER, WHICH WAS ESTIMATED AT 1 441 540.

+REGRETTABLY, THE EXISTING AMENDMENT MAKES NO PROPOSAL TO LOWER THE STATUTORY ELECTORAL AGE FROM THE PRESENT AGE OF 21 TO 18, AND THIS IS A BLEMISH IN THE OTHERWISE PERFECT AMENDMENT,+ HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT HE WAS CONVINCED THAT THE LOWERING OF THE VOTING AGE WOULD FACILITATE THE PROMOTION OF CIVIC EDUCATION AND WOULD ALSO HELP FOSTER A STRONGER SENSE OF BELONGING AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE.

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**PNEUMOCONIOSIS FUND LEVY REDUCED**  
**\* \* \* \* \***

A RESOLUTION GIVING EFFECT TO THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION FUND BOARD'S RECOMMENDATION THAT THE CURRENT 0.15 PER CENT RATE OF LEVY BE REDUCED TO 0.05 PER CENT WAS MOVED BY THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR BRIDGE SAID THE LEVY -- ON THE VALUE OF QUARRY PRODUCTS AND CONSTRUCTION WORKS -- WAS BEING REVISED IN ORDER TO CORRECT THE IMBALANCE BETWEEN THE FUND'S INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND TO REDUCE ACCUMULATED RESERVES.

HE NOTED THAT A REDUCTION IN THE RATE OF LEVY, FROM 0.2 PER CENT TO 0.15 PER CENT, HAD BEEN PROPOSED IN DECEMBER 1985 AS CLAIMANTS WERE COMING FORWARD IN SMALLER NUMBERS AND AT AN EARLIER STAGE OF THE DISEASE, WITH A CONSEQUENT DECLINE IN THE AMOUNT OF COMPENSATION NEEDED TO BE PAID.

+THIS ENCOURAGING TREND HAS CONTINUED AND, AT THE END OF NOVEMBER LAST YEAR, THE ACCUMULATED SURPLUS STOOD AT \$72 MILLION,+ MR BRIDGE SAID.

REFERRING TO A SUGGESTION BY THE HON HO SAI-CHU AND THE HON CHIU HIN-KWONG THAT SOME PART OF THE FUNDS AVAILABLE BE DEVOTED TO EDUCATION, PUBLICITY AND RESEARCH IN PREVENTING THE DISEASE, MR BRIDGE SAID THE BOARD WAS CONSULTING THE BUILDING CONTRACTORS' ASSOCIATION AND THE HONG KONG CONTRACT QUARRY ASSOCIATION ON THIS POSSIBILITY.

SUBJECT TO THE FAVOURABLE OUTCOME OF THESE CONSULTATIONS, PROPOSALS TO AMEND THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS (COMPENSATION) ORDINANCE TO ENABLE THE BOARD TO UNDERTAKE THESE ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES WOULD BE INTRODUCED, HE SAID.

+THE TREND OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND THE LEVEL OF RESERVES WILL, OF COURSE, CONTINUE TO BE KEPT UNDER REVIEW AND FURTHER ADJUSTMENTS TO THE RATE OF LEVY WILL BE PROPOSED AS APPROPRIATE,+ MR BRIDGE ADDED.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 36(3) OF THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS (COMPENSATION) ORDINANCE, HE SAID THE REVISED RATE OF LEVY WOULD COME INTO EFFECT ON FEBRUARY 9, 30 DAYS AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF THE RESOLUTION IN THE GAZETTE.

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POSITIVE STEP IN REDUCING DISEASE  
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REINFORCING EDUCATION, PUBLICITY AND RESEARCH ON PREVENTING PNEUMOCONIOSIS REPRESENTS A POSITIVE APPROACH IN REDUCING THE INCIDENCE OF THE DISEASE, THE HON HO SAI-CHU TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR HO WAS SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS (COMPENSATION) ORDINANCE, REDUCING THE RATE OF LEVY FOR THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION FUND FROM 0.15 PER CENT TO 0.05 PER CENT OF THE VALUE OF QUARRY PRODUCTS AND CONSTRUCTION WORKS.

HE NOTED THAT THE ORIGINAL PURPOSE OF THE FUND WAS TO PROVIDE CASH COMPENSATION TO THOSE WHO HAD BECOME DISABLED BY PNEUMOCONIOSIS AND TO THE DEPENDANTS OF VICTIMS WHO HAD DIED.

HOWEVER, COMPENSATION SERVED A SPECIAL NEED, AND WITH A SIZEABLE SURPLUS IN THE FUND THE WIDER ISSUE OF PREVENTION COULD BE TACKLED.

IN THIS REGARD, HE WAS PLEASED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEGUN CONSULTATIONS ON A POSSIBLE WIDENING OF THE SCOPE OF THE FUND TO COVER EDUCATION, PUBLICITY AND RESEARCH.

TURNING TO THE RATE OF LEVY, MR HO NOTED THAT UP TO NOVEMBER LAST YEAR THE FUND HAD A SURPLUS OF \$72 MILLION.

+IT IS THEREFORE MOST REASONABLE AND REALISTIC TO REDUCE THE RATE OF LEVY FROM 0.15 PER CENT TO 0.05 PER CENT AND I AM SURE THIS REDUCTION WILL BE EXTENSIVELY SUPPORTED,+ HE SAID.

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MINOR AMENDMENTS MADE TO PUBLIC HEALTH BILL  
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TWO MINOR AMENDMENTS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES (AMENDMENT)(NO. 3) BILL 1986 WERE REQUIRED TO REFLECT ITS ENACTMENT THIS YEAR RATHER THAN LAST YEAR AS INTENDED, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE COMMITTEE STAGE OF THE BILL, MR CHAMBERS SAID IT WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE COUNCIL IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR TO MAKE MINOR TEXTUAL ALTERATIONS TO SECTION 2 OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1986, WHICH CONCERNED THE DEFINITION OF +FOOD+.

+AT THAT TIME IT WAS EXPECTED THAT THE PRESENT BILL WOULD BE ENACTED BEFORE JANUARY 1 1987, THE DATE ON WHICH THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1986 CAME INTO OPERATION,+ HE EXPLAINED.

/+HOWEVER, CIRCUMSTANCES .....

+HOWEVER, CIRCUMSTANCES AROSE WHICH PREVENTED THE BILL FROM BEING ENACTED BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR AND CONSEQUENTLY I SHALL NOW NEED TO MOVE TWO MINOR AMENDMENTS AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE TO REFLECT ITS ENACTMENT THIS YEAR RATHER THAN LAST YEAR.+

THE AMENDMENTS ALTER THE TITLE OF THE BILL AND DEEM IT TO HAVE COME INTO OPERATION ON DECEMBER 31, 1986, SO THAT THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT ON JANUARY 1 1987 SECTION 2 OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1986 AMENDED THE DEFINITION OF +FOOD+ IN SECTION 2 OF THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE AS WAS INTENDED.

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DISCRETION PROPOSED IN INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS  
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A BILL SEEKING TO GIVE THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY DISCRETION TO AUTHORISE OVERSEAS INSURERS, ON APPLICATION, TO MAINTAIN ACCOUNTS IDENTIFYING ASSETS AND LIABILITIES ATTRIBUTABLE TO THEIR LONG-TERM BUSINESS IN HONG KONG ONLY, INSTEAD OF GLOBALLY, WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE INSURANCE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THESE DISCRETIONARY POWERS WERE BEING INTRODUCED, EXISTING LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS SHOULD STILL BE MAINTAINED AS A GENERAL PRACTICE.

UNDER THE INSURANCE COMPANIES ORDINANCE, INSURERS OPERATING IN HONG KONG WERE REQUIRED TO ESTABLISH A SEPARATE FUND FOR THEIR LONG TERM BUSINESS, AND MAINTAIN ACCOUNTS FOR IDENTIFYING THE ASSETS AND LIABILITIES OF THAT FUND. THESE REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO AN INSURER'S LONG TERM INSURANCE ON A WORLDWIDE BASIS.

MR JACOBS SAID THAT A FUND THUS CREATED WOULD SERVE TO PROTECT THE LONG TERM POLICY-HOLDERS IN HONG KONG ON THE WINDING UP OF THE INSURER IN SO FAR AS THE ASSETS REPRESENTING THAT FUND FELL UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE COURT IN HONG KONG.

BUT SINCE THE ENACTMENT OF THE ORDINANCE IN 1983, IT HAD BEEN FOUND THAT THESE ACCOUNTING REQUIREMENTS POSED DIFFICULT PROBLEMS FOR A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF AUTHORISED OVERSEAS INSURERS.

/+THESE INSURERS .....

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+THESE INSURERS ARE NOT REQUIRED BY LEGISLATION IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES OF INCORPORATION TO IDENTIFY SEPARATELY THEIR LONG-TERM ASSETS TO MATCH THEIR LONG-TERM LIABILITIES,+ MR JACOBS SAID.

+COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS WOULD THEREFORE REQUIRE EXTENSIVE CHANGES IN THEIR WORLDWIDE ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS, OR EVEN A TOTAL OF RESTRUCTURING THEIR BUSINESS. THIS COULD BE SO EXPENSIVE THAT SOME COMPANIES MIGHT FEEL OBLIGED INSTEAD TO WITHDRAW FROM HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

+THE INSURERS CONCERNED ARE WELL ESTABLISHED AND OF HIGH INTERNATIONAL STANDING. THEIR WITHDRAWAL WOULD CERTAINLY NOT BE IN THE INTERESTS OF HONG KONG AS A FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE CENTRE,+

MR JACOBS SAID THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT WOULD ENABLE THESE REPUTABLE OVERSEAS COMPANIES TO STAY ON IN HONG KONG AND AT THE SAME TIME SAFEGUARD THE HONG KONG POLICY-HOLDERS' INTERESTS.

THE BILL ALSO CONTAINED ANCILLARY PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE MODIFICATION OR VARIATION OF THE ACCOUNTING REQUIREMENTS IN THE ORDINANCE WHERE NECESSARY.

MR JACOBS SAID: +IN EXERCISING HIS DISCRETION, THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY WILL ADOPT A SET OF GUIDELINES WHICH TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THE INSURER, THE EXTENT OF ITS LONG-TERM BUSINESS IN HONG KONG, THE QUALITY OF SUPERVISION BY THE RESPECTIVE AUTHORITY OF EACH INSURER'S COUNTRY OF INCORPORATION AND OTHER RELEVANT CIRCUMSTANCES. THE GUIDELINES WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO POTENTIAL APPLICANTS.+

HE EMPHASISED THAT WHILE THE AMENDMENTS, IF ENACTED, WOULD NOT PROVIDE IMPROVED PROTECTION FOR HONG KONG POLICY-HOLDERS OF THE OVERSEAS INSURERS CONCERNED NEITHER WOULD THEY ERODE THE EXISTING DEGREE OF PROTECTION AVAILABLE.

+THE ACCOUNTS KEPT WOULD EQUALLY FACILITATE THE SECURING OF THE NECESSARY ASSETS BY THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY TO MEET THESE INSURERS' HONG KONG LIABILITIES SHOULD THIS PROVE NECESSARY+, HE SAID.

+PROTECTION FOR POLICY-HOLDERS HAS BEEN, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, GENERALLY ENHANCED THROUGH DIALOGUE WITH SUPERVISORY AUTHORITIES OF THE RESPECTIVE COMPANIES' COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN.+

THE BILL ALSO SOUGHT TO ADD A NEW PROVISION TO INDEMNIFY THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY AGAINST CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES IN CONNECTION WITH THE BONA FIDE EXERCISE OF THE AUTHORITY'S FUNCTIONS UNDER THE ORDINANCE.

MR JACOBS SAID THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS HAD THE SUPPORT OF THE INSURANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND THE LIFE INSURANCE COUNCIL OF HONG KONG.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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TRUST FUND PROPOSED FOR SPORTS CENTRE  
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THE GOVERNMENT WILL ESTABLISH A STATUTORY TRUST FUND TO MEET THE RECURRENT AND NON-RECURRENT EXPENSES OF THE JUBILEE SPORTS CENTRE, THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DONALD LIAO, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

INTRODUCING THE JUBILEE SPORTS CENTRE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, MR LIAO SAID THE BASIC OBJECTIVE WAS TO PROVIDE FOR THE DISENGAGEMENT OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB FROM THE CENTRE.

+IT HAS BEEN PROPOSED BY THE JOCKEY CLUB THAT THE CENTRE SHOULD BE GIVEN AN ENDOWMENT OF \$350 MILLION,+ HE SAID.

+THIS WOULD BE USED TO ESTABLISH A TRUST FUND AND WOULD MEET THE CLUB'S PRESENT OBLIGATION TO COVER THE RECURRENT OPERATING COSTS AND EXPENSES OF THE CENTRE, AND WOULD ALSO CATER FOR AN ELEMENT OF CAPITAL REPLACEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS.

+THE BILL AMENDS THE JSC ORDINANCE BY REMOVING THE NEED FOR CONSULTATION WITH THE JOCKEY CLUB IN RESPECT OF THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE JUBILEE SPORTS CENTRE BOARD BY THE GOVERNOR AND REMOVES THE MAXIMUM LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS WHO CAN BE APPOINTED TO THE BOARD.+

+IT EXPRESSLY PROVIDES FOR THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD, IN VIEW OF THE BOARD'S INCREASED RESPONSIBILITIES ARISING FROM THE CREATION OF A TRUST FUND AND THE REQUIREMENT FOR ADDITIONAL EXPERTISE ON FINANCE AND INVESTMENT MATTERS,+ HE ADDED.

THE TRUST FUND ESTABLISHED BY THE BILL WOULD BE VESTED IN A COMMITTEE OF TRUSTEES TO BE APPOINTED BY THE BOARD.

+THE COMMITTEE OF TRUSTEES WILL BE EMPOWERED TO MAKE INVESTMENTS AS PROVIDED FOR IN THE TRUSTEE ORDINANCE, BUT THE JSC TRUST FUND, WHICH IS A CHARITABLE TRUST, MAY NOT BE PLEDGED AS A SECURITY FOR ANY LOAN WHICH THE COMMITTEE OR BOARD MAY SEEK TO RAISE,+ MR LIAO SAID.

HE SAID IT WAS INTENDED THAT THE AMENDMENTS WOULD TAKE EFFECT WHEN THE TRUST FUND WAS BROUGHT INTO OPERATION BY THE FORMAL HANDOVER OF THE JOCKEY CLUB DONATION OF \$350 MILLION.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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MODEST GROWTH DESPITE DIFFICULT TRADE CLIMATE  
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HONG KONG'S TOTAL TRADE ATTAINED A MODEST GROWTH OF TWO PER CENT DURING THE 1985-86 FINANCIAL YEAR DESPITE AN UNUSUALLY DIFFICULT CLIMATE FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE, THE HON LYDIA DUNN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

TABLING THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HONG KONG TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (TDC) IN HER CAPACITY AS THE COUNCIL'S CHAIRMAN, MISS DUNN SAID ALTHOUGH THERE WERE INCREASES FOR HONG KONG'S IMPORTS AND RE-EXPORTS, DOMESTIC EXPORTS DECLINED BY SIX PER CENT.

THEREFORE, THERE WAS A GREATER DEMAND BY THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR FOR TDC'S PROMOTIONAL ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES, SHE SAID.

MISS DUNN NOTED THAT TDC ADOPTED A TWO-PRONGED STRATEGY OF INTENSIFYING ITS EFFORTS TO BOOST THE SALE OF HONG KONG PRODUCTS IN THE ESTABLISHED MARKETS OF NORTH AMERICA AND EUROPE, AND EXPLORING AND DEVELOPING NEW FRONTIERS SUCH AS JAPAN AND CHINA.

SHE SAID JAPAN, WHICH ANNOUNCED MEASURES TO OPEN ITS MARKETS TO MORE IMPORTS IN MID-1985, BECAME AN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT TARGET, AND FOUR SELLING MISSIONS TO JAPAN WERE ORGANISED COVERING PRODUCTS RANGING FROM JEWELLERY TO CAMERAS AND BINOCULARS.

IN CHINA, TDC OPENED ITS FIRST OFFICE IN PEKING AND A SECOND OFFICE WOULD BE OPENED IN SHANGHAI LATER THIS YEAR, SHE ADDED.

SHE SAID TDC'S 20 OVERSEAS OFFICES PROCESSED 146 000 TRADE ENQUIRIES DURING THE YEAR, AND SOME 1 700 HONG KONG COMPANIES PARTICIPATED IN MORE THAN 80 OVERSEAS TRADE PROMOTIONS WHERE SOME HK\$3 BILLION WORTH OF BUSINESS WERE NEGOTIATED OR CONCLUDED ON THE SPOT.

TURNING TO LOCAL ACTIVITIES, MISS DUNN SAID THAT IN ADDITION TO THE HIGHLY PUBLICISED EVENTS, TDC RECEIVED 206 INWARD MISSIONS FROM 40 COUNTRIES, INCLUDING 43 FROM CHINA.

THE TDC'S PUBLICITY DEPARTMENT ALSO DISTRIBUTED MORE THAN 1.5 MILLION COPIES OF ALL TYPES OF TRADE PUBLICATIONS ABOUT HONG KONG PRODUCTS TO BUYERS IN 175 COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD, SHE NOTED.

+TO ENABLE US TO BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF HONG KONG'S TRADE AND INDUSTRY, ADVISORY COMMITTEES FOR EACH OF HONG KONG'S MAJOR EXPORT SECTORS WERE FORMED TO ADVISE THE COUNCIL,+ MISS DUNN SAID.

/+AND WITH .....

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+AND WITH THE FUTURE IN MIND, PLANS WERE DRAWN UP FOR AN EXPANDED PROGRAMME OF LOCAL TRADE FAIRS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OUTSTANDING FACILITIES THE HONG KONG CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE WILL OFFER FOR TRADE PROMOTION WHEN IT OPENS IN 1988,+ SHE ADDED.

FINALLY, MISS DUNN TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS AGAIN TDC'S DEEP APPRECIATION OF THE PERSONAL ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT GIVEN TO THEM BY THE LATE GOVERNOR, SIR EDWARD YOUDE, DURING HIS GOVERNORSHIP.

+WHEN WE NEEDED HIS GUIDANCE OR PRESENCE SIR EDWARD NEVER FAILED US,+ SHE SAID.

SHE NOTED THAT SIR EDWARD FERVENTLY BELIEVED IN THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF TRADE TO HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC AS WELL AS POLITICAL SECURITY.

+THE HONG KONG TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL ARE FULLY COMMITTED TO DO ITS PART TO FULFIL SIR EDWARD'S VISION FOR HONG KONG,+ SHE SAID.

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RULES TO AVOID LEGAL DEFENCE DUPLICATION APPROVED  
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THE PURPOSE OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (REPRESENTATION) RULES 1986 WAS TO REQUIRE A SOLICITOR WHO HAD ACCEPTED INSTRUCTIONS TO ACT FOR DEFENDANTS IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS IN THE HIGH COURT OR IN THE COURT OF APPEAL TO GIVE FORMAL NOTICE OF THAT FACT TO THE REGISTRAR, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE RULES, MR THOMAS SAID AT PRESENT THERE WAS NO SUCH REQUIREMENT AND ON OCCASIONS MORE THAN TWO DEFENCE TEAMS HAD TURNED UP AT COURT TO APPEAR FOR THE SAME DEFENDANT.

+OFTEN THIS INVOLVES A WASTE OF PUBLIC MONEY IF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AID HAS UNDERTAKEN THE DEFENCE AND LATER, WITHOUT HIS KNOWLEDGE, A PRIVATE SOLICITOR HAS BEEN SEPARATELY INSTRUCTED.+

MR THOMAS NOTED THAT THE BAR, THE LAW SOCIETY, THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AID, THE REGISTRAR OF THE SUPREME COURT AND THE CROWN ALL CONSIDERED THAT THESE RULES WOULD HELP TO AVOID SUCH DUPLICATION OF EFFORT, AND HAD WELCOMED THEM.

THE RULES HAVE BEEN MADE BY THE CHIEF JUSTICE UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE ORDINANCE.

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THREE BILLS PASSED

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THE POST OFFICE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE TRADE DESCRIPTIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 1986 WERE PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

FIVE OTHER BILLS - THE CONTROL OF PUBLICATIONS CONSOLIDATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE PUBLIC ORDER (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE INSURANCE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, AND THE JUBILEE SPORTS CENTRE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 WERE READ A SECOND TIME AND DEBATE ON THEM WAS ADJOURNED.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED TO JANUARY 14.

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LONG-TERM SOLUTION REACHED ON BOAT WIVES

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THE PROBLEM OF BOAT WIVES WOULD BE SETTLED WITHIN A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS UNDER A LONG-TERM SOLUTION REACHED DURING RECENT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND THE GUANGDONG AUTHORITIES, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON DAVID JEAFFRESON, EXPLAINED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MARIA TAM, MR JEAFFRESON SAID THE SOLUTION TO BE PUT INTO EFFECT NOW WOULD NOT UNDERMINE THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF IMMIGRATION CONTROL.

HE SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE GUANGDONG AUTHORITIES FOR THEIR HELP ON THIS ISSUE.

UNDER THE NEW ARRANGEMENT, +THE GUANGDONG AUTHORITIES HAVE STOPPED ISSUING 'LANDING AND BOARDING PERMITS' TO CHINESE WOMEN WHO MARRIED HONG KONG FISHERMEN AFTER AUGUST 10, 1986,+ HE SAID.

+THOSE BOAT WIVES WHO ALREADY HAVE 'LANDING AND BOARDING PERMITS' WILL BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE CHINA, IF THEY APPLY FOR EXIT PERMITS, TO JOIN THEIR HUSBANDS FOR RESETTLEMENT IN HONG KONG,+ HE ADDED.

ELABORATING ON THE SCHEME, MR JEAFFRESON SAID THE GUANGDONG AUTHORITIES WOULD, WITHIN A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS, MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE APPLICANTS TO BE ISSUED WITH EXIT PERMITS IN BATCHES ACCORDING TO THE DATE OF THEIR MARRIAGES.

/+APPLICANTS WILL .....

+APPLICANTS WILL NEED TO APPLY IN PERSON TO THE PUBLIC SECURITY AUTHORITIES OF THE COUNTY OR CITY IN GUANGDONG WHERE THEIR HOUSEHOLDS ARE REGISTERED.

+THEY CAN DO THIS THROUGH THEIR RELATIVES IN CHINA OR WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF FISHERMEN ASSOCIATIONS IN HONG KONG OR IN CHINA,+ HE SAID.

+ONCE THE GUANGDONG PUBLIC SECURITY AUTHORITIES HAVE APPROVED THE EXIT PERMITS, THE APPLICANTS SHOULD RETURN TO CHINA, BY WAY OF THE FISHING PORT WHERE THEIR HOUSEHOLDS ARE REGISTERED, TO COLLECT THEIR PERMITS,+ HE CONTINUED.

+THEY WILL THEN, WITHIN A PERIOD OF TIME PRESCRIBED BY THE GUANGDONG AUTHORITIES, HAVE TO ENTER HONG KONG VIA LO WU,+ HE SAID.

MEANWHILE, THE STATUS OF THE BOAT BRIDES IN HONG KONG WOULD REMAIN UNCHANGED UNTIL THEIR PRESENCE HERE HAD BEEN REGULARISED.

+THIS ARRANGEMENT WILL ENABLE THEM TO STAY IN HONG KONG WATERS WITH THEIR FAMILIES UNTIL THEIR EXIT PERMITS ARE READY FOR THEM IN CHINA,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, +OTHER NON-HONG KONG BOAT WIVES FOUND IN HONG KONG WATERS WITHOUT 'LANDING AND BOARDING PERMITS' WILL BE REPATRIATED,+ HE STRESSED.

AT PRESENT THERE WERE MORE THAN 1 000 BOAT WIVES IN HONG KONG WATERS ISSUED WITH 'LANDING AND BOARDING PERMITS'.

+THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT'S PRACTICE HAS BEEN TO TOLERATE THE PRESENCE OF THESE BOAT WIVES ON FISHING VESSELS IN HONG KONG WATERS BUT NOT TO ALLOW THEM TO LAND EXCEPT IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES,+ HE SAID.

REFERRING TO THE 14 BOAT WIVES WHO WERE REPATRIATED TO CHINA IN AUGUST 1985, MR JEAFFRESON SAID THEY HAD ALL RETURNED TO HONG KONG AFTER BEING ISSUED WITH EXIT PERMITS BY THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES.

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COMMITTEE TO ASSESS FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGES  
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A STEERING COMMITTEE HAS ALREADY BEEN SET UP TO IMPLEMENT A RECOMMENDATION IN THE EDUCATION COMMISSION'S REPORT NO. 2 TO DEVELOP FINANCIAL MODELS WHICH WOULD HELP TO QUANTIFY THE IMPLICATIONS OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGES.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON CONRAD LAM ABOUT THE PROPOSAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG TO ADOPT A FOUR-YEAR DEGREE COURSE.

/MR BRIDGE .....

MR BRIDGE SAID THAT BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODELS, THE COMMITTEE WOULD BE EXAMINING WAYS IN WHICH TO REFINE THE PREDICTION OF THE COST OF CHANGES IN THE TERTIARY SYSTEM.

+THUS, BY THE TIME WE RECEIVE A FORMAL PROPOSAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY, WE SHOULD BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO ASSESS THE LIKELY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS,+ HE ADDED.

MR BRIDGE NOTED THAT A WORKING PARTY UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR TO ASSESS THE DETAILED IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED CHANGE TO A FOUR-YEAR DEGREE COURSE HAD BEEN SET UP.

THE WORKING PARTY IS PLANNING TO TAKE ABOUT A YEAR OVER ITS TASK BEFORE IT PUT THE UNIVERSITY'S PROPOSALS TO THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE (UPGC).

MR BRIDGE SAID THE UPGC WOULD EXAMINE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR FUNDING AND STUDENT NUMBER TARGETS IN THE TERTIARY SYSTEM, BEARING IN MIND COMPETING DEMANDS FOR LIMITED RESOURCES AND THE GOVERNMENT'S FIRM COMMITMENT TO DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF FIRST DEGREE PLACES, FROM THE PRESENT FIGURE OF 4 200 TO 8 300 BY THE MID 1990'S.

HE SAID THE UPGC WOULD ADVISE THE ADMINISTRATION ON THE ACCEPTABILITY OR OTHERWISE OF THE PROPOSAL, WHILE THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD THEN CONSIDER THE COMMITTEE'S ADVICE, BEARING IN MIND THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE WHOLE EDUCATION SYSTEM, BEFORE REACHING ITS FINAL CONCLUSIONS.

ON FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS, MR BRIDGE SAID A VERY CRUDE ASSESSMENT COULD BE MADE ON THE BASIS OF EXISTING COSTS AND ASSUMING MINIMAL CHANGES TO THE EXISTING EDUCATION SYSTEM.

THE TOTAL RECURRENT EXPENDITURE FOR HKU IN 1985-86 WAS \$609 MILLION.

BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION, IT SUGGESTED THAT ABOUT \$500 MILLION OF THIS EXPENDITURE RELATED TO FIRST DEGREE COURSES.

+IF THE UNIVERSITY WERE TO INTRODUCE A FOUR-YEAR COURSE SYSTEM WHILE MAINTAINING THE PRESENT ANNUAL STUDENT INTAKE, THE NUMBER OF FIRST DEGREE STUDENTS WOULD ULTIMATELY BE INCREASED BY ONE THIRD,+ MR BRIDGE SAID.

+IF COSTS PER STUDENT WERE TO REMAIN UNCHANGED, RECURRENT EXPENDITURE WOULD RISE BY ABOUT \$165 MILLION PER ANNUM AT 1985-86 PRICES.+

HE SAID THAT THERE WOULD ALSO BE ADDITIONAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE THE LARGER STUDENT POPULATION.

IN ADDITION, SINCE THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALREADY COMMITTED TO DOUBLING THE NUMBER OF FIRST YEAR FIRST DEGREE PLACES BY THE MID 1990'S, MR BRIDGE POINTED OUT THAT OTHER TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS WERE OFFERING AN INCREASING NUMBER OF THREE-YEAR DEGREE COURSES.

/+THERE WOULD .....

+THERE WOULD BE FURTHER ADDITIONAL COSTS IF THESE INSTITUTIONS WERE TO ADOPT A FOUR-YEAR DEGREE SYSTEM,+ HE SAID.

+ANY CHANGES NOW COULD ALSO AFFECT THE COST OF THE THIRD UNIVERSITY.+

MR BRIDGE SAID TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED CHANGE ON THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AS A WHOLE WAS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT.

FIRST, THAT IMPACT WOULD LARGELY DEPEND ON THE DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL ITSELF AND WHETHER, AS WAS LIKELY, OTHER INSTITUTIONS WERE TO FOLLOW HKU'S EXAMPLE. SECOND, IT WOULD ALSO DEPEND ON WHETHER AND HOW WE PROPOSE TO RESTRUCTURE SECONDARY-LEVEL EDUCATION.

+IT DOES, HOWEVER, APPEAR LIKELY THAT THE PROPOSAL, IF ACCEPTED, WOULD INVOLVE THE ABOLITION OF FORM 7 AND THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE REMAINING SECONDARY FORMS,+ MR BRIDGE SAID.

HE SAID THAT THIS IN TURN WOULD LIKELY HAVE TWO MAJOR CONSEQUENCES: THE ABOLITION OF THE ADVANCED LEVEL EXAMINATION AND RESTRUCTURING OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL SYSTEM.

THE ABOLITION OF THE ADVANCED LEVEL EXAMINATION WOULD HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR ADMISSION TO SUB-DEGREE COURSES AT THE POLYTECHNICS, THE HONG KONG BAPTIST COLLEGE AND OTHER POST-SECONDARY COLLEGES.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS OF COURSES NOW BASED ON ADVANCED LEVEL RESULTS WOULD HAVE TO BE CHANGED AND IT WOULD AFFECT THE RECOGNITION OF EXIT QUALIFICATIONS BY PROFESSIONAL BODIES, PARTICULARLY THOSE IN THE UK.

MR BRIDGE SAID THE ABOLITION OF ADVANCED LEVEL WOULD ALSO MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR HONG KONG'S STUDENTS TO STUDY IN UNIVERSITIES ABROAD WHICH HAVE THREE-YEAR DEGREE PROGRAMMES.

ON OTHER CONSEQUENCES OF A MOVE TO A FOUR-YEAR SYSTEM, HE SAID THAT TO RETAIN THE PRESENT SIXTH FORM STRUCTURE UNCHANGED WOULD PROBABLY BE PROHIBITIVELY EXPENSIVE, SO THAT IT SEEMS LIKELY ONE OF THE OTHER OPTIONS, +5+1+, +4+2+ OR +3+3+ WOULD BE ADOPTED.

BUT EACH OPTION HAD ITS OWN DISADVANTAGES, SOME OF WHICH WERE IDENTIFIED BY THE EDUCATION COMMISSION IN ITS SECOND REPORT.

THEREFORE, ANY DECISION TO MOVE TOWARDS A FOUR-YEAR DEGREE SYSTEM WOULD NEED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE EFFECT ON THE SECONDARY SCHOOL SYSTEM AND THE DISADVANTAGES OF ALL THESE VARIOUS POSSIBLE OPTIONS, MR BRIDGE ADDED.

SALE OF PUBLIC RENTAL FLATS TO TENANTS IMPRACTICAL

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THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED IT IMPRACTICAL TO SELL PUBLIC RENTAL FLATS TO SITTING TENANTS AT THE PRESENT TIME, THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DONALD LIAO, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON RICHARD LAI, MR LIAO EXPLAINED THAT THE SOLUTION TO RESOLVE HONG KONG'S HOUSING PROBLEMS REMAINED IN INCREASING THE HOUSING STOCK TO PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION FOR THOSE WHO WERE INADEQUATELY HOUSED.

+IN 1986, THIS FIGURE IS ESTIMATED TO BE OVER 380 000 HOUSEHOLDS FOR ALL HOUSING CATEGORIES. AMONG THESE ARE 112 000 SQUATTER HOUSEHOLDS AND 170 000 APPLICANTS ON THE GENERAL WAITING LIST,+ HE SAID.

ON THE BASIS OF PRODUCING 30 000 RENTAL PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS A YEAR, MR LIAO SAID THE DEMAND FOR PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS WOULD BE SATISFIED ONLY IN THE MID-1990'S.

HE SAID THE PROPOSAL TO SELL EXISTING PUBLIC RENTAL UNITS TO SITTING TENANTS DID NOT HAVE THE EFFECT OF INCREASING THE HOUSING STOCK AND WOULD NOT THEREFORE ASSIST IN SOLVING HONG KONG'S HOUSING PROBLEM.

+IN FACT, THE PROPOSAL WILL RESULT IN A REDUCTION OF THE STOCK OF RENTAL HOUSING AT A TIME WHEN THERE IS STILL A SIZEABLE OUTSTANDING DEMAND AND IT WILL HAVE THE NET EFFECT OF DELAYING REHOUSING FOR THOSE WHO ARE MOST IN NEED OF ADEQUATE HOUSING,+ MR LIAO SAID.

HE ALSO SAID A MIXED POPULATION OF OWNERS AND TENANTS WOULD BRING MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS TO PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES.

+IT MAKES MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS MORE DIFFICULT AND THE EVENTUAL REDEVELOPMENT OF SUCH ESTATES WILL BECOME EXCEEDINGLY COMPLICATED.

+ON THE OTHER, IF ONLY THE NEW AND MODERN FLATS ARE TO BE SOLD TO TENANTS, A SITUATION MAY ARISE IN FUTURE IN WHICH OLD RENTAL PUBLIC HOUSING WILL REPRESENT THE MOST SOCIALLY UNDESIRABLE ACCOMMODATION IN THE TERRITORY.

+THIS WILL HAVE GREAT SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS,+ HE SAID.

MR LIAO ALSO SAID THERE WAS REALLY LITTLE INCENTIVE FOR THE TENANTS TO BUY THE UNITS THEY WERE CURRENTLY OCCUPYING.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID HOUSING AUTHORITY TENANCIES WERE IN FACT IN ALMOST AS SECURE A POSITION AS FLAT OWNERS AND THEY ENJOYED RELATIVELY CHEAP RENTS.

+PURCHASING THE FLATS IN WHICH THEY RESIDE WILL ONLY MEAN THAT THEY INCREASE THEIR FINANCIAL BURDEN WITHOUT MUCH ADDED ADVANTAGE OVER THEIR NEIGHBOURS WHO WILL CONTINUE TO PAY LOW RENTS AND ENJOY THE SAME LEVEL OF AMENITIES AND IDENTICAL STANDARD OF ACCOMMODATION,+ HE ADDED.

MR LIAO SAID THE PROPOSAL TO SELL PUBLIC RENTAL FLATS TO SITTING TENANTS WOULD THEREFORE BE BETTER CONSIDERED IN THE MID-1990'S WHEN THE BULK OF THOSE AWAITING PUBLIC RENTAL ACCOMMODATION WOULD HAVE BEEN SUITABLY HOUSED.

IN THE MEANTIME, HE SAID THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WOULD CONTINUE TO INCREASE THE PROPORTION OF NEW HOME OWNERSHIP FLATS TO BE ALLOCATED TO GREEN FORM APPLICANTS WHEN NECESSARY IN ORDER TO MEET THE RECENT INCREASE IN DEMAND FOR SUCH FLATS.  
APPLICANTS.

MR LIAO ALSO SAID THE LONG-TERM HOUSING STRATEGY REVIEW CURRENTLY UNDER WAY WOULD CONSIDER HOW BEST THE DEMAND FOR HOME PURCHASE COULD BE MET.

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44.2 PER CENT OF ELECTORS REGISTERED  
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THE 1986 FINAL REGISTER OF ELECTORS TO BE PUBLISHED SHORTLY SHOWS AN OVERALL REGISTRATION RATE OF 44.2 PER CENT, BUT A BREAKDOWN OF THE RATE BY AGE GROUP HAD NOT YET BEEN ANALYSED, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID FORD, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ROSANNA TAM ON THE REGISTRATION RATE OF YOUNG PEOPLE AGED BETWEEN 21 AND 25 IN THE ELECTORAL ROLL, MR FORD SAID IN 1985 THE RATE WAS 26.1 PER CENT.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT AIMED TO PROMOTE THE AWARENESS OF YOUNG PEOPLE OF THEIR RIGHT TO REGISTER THROUGH CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN SCHOOLS AND SOUGHT ADVICE FROM THE COMMITTEE ON THE PROMOTION OF CIVIC EDUCATION.

/+IN THE .....

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+IN THE PAST, YOUTH ORGANISATIONS AND STUDENT BODIES SUCH AS THE FEDERATION OF YOUTH GROUPS AND STUDENT UNIONS HAVE HELPED IN DISTRIBUTING REGISTRATION FORMS AND ENCOURAGING THEIR MEMBERS TO REGISTER DURING THE VOTER REGISTRATION PERIODS,+ HE SAID.

+THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO RELY ON THEIR ASSISTANCE IN FUTURE REGISTRATION DRIVES,+ HE ADDED.

REFERRING TO THE RECENT AMENDMENT IN THE ELECTORAL LAWS, MR FORD SAID THIS ALLOWED APPLICATIONS FOR VOTER REGISTRATION TO BE ACCEPTED ON A YEAR-ROUND BASIS.

+VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS ARE NOW AVAILABLE AT OVER 400 PERMANENT DISTRIBUTION OUTLETS, SOME OF WHICH ARE SPECIFICALLY TARGETTED AT YOUNG PEOPLE E.G. PUBLIC LIBRARIES, COMMUNITY CENTRES, POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND COLLEGES OF EDUCATION,+ HE SAID.

DURING THE IDENTITY CARD RE-ISSUE EXERCISE BEGINNING IN 1987, VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE AT ALL THE REGISTRATION OF PERSONS OFFICES TO GIVE EVERY CITIZEN A FRESH OPPORTUNITY TO REGISTER, HE ADDED.

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NO PLANS TO PROMOTE HOSPICE CARE SERVICE IN HK  
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ALTHOUGH A SIMPLIFIED FORM OF HOSPICE CARE EXISTED AT A HONG KONG HOSPITAL, THERE WERE NO IMMEDIATE PLANS TO PROMOTE SUCH A SERVICE ON A TERRITORY-WIDE BASIS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON CONRAD LAM, MR CHAMBERS SAID THAT THE SERVICE EXISTED AT THE OUR LADY OF MARYKNOLL HOSPITAL AND THAT IT WAS ALSO BEING CONSIDERED BY THE NAM LONG AND UNITED CHRISTIAN HOSPITALS.

EXPLAINING THAT HOSPICE CARE WAS PIONEERED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, HE SAID THAT IT REQUIRED THE TOTAL INVOLVEMENT, PHYSICAL, MORAL AND SPIRITUAL, OF THE PATIENT'S FAMILY, RELATIVES, FRIENDS, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, WITH THE AIM OF KEEPING THE PATIENT IN HIS HOME ENVIRONMENT AND OUT OF HOSPITAL FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE.

MR CHAMBERS SAID THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES CONSIDERED THAT THE SOCIO-MEDICAL NEEDS OF TERMINALLY-ILL PATIENTS IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS WERE AT PRESENT ADEQUATELY ATTENDED TO.

+TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES DO HAVE ACCESS TO EXPERT ADVICE AND COUNSELLING FROM DOCTORS, NURSES AND MEDICAL SOCIAL WORKERS.+

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PLANS TO EXPAND ENGLISH TEACHING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMMES  
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A PILOT SCHEME TO IMPROVE ENGLISH TEACHING IN PUBLIC SECTOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS CONSISTS OF RECRUITING 90 EXPATRIATE TEACHERS AND PROVIDING OVERSEAS TRAINING FOR 100 LOCAL TEACHERS WHO HAVE COMPLETED RETRAINING AT THE INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON DANIEL TSE, MR BRIDGE SAID BOTH PROGRAMMES WOULD BE EVALUATED AFTER A YEAR TO SEE WHETHER THEY WERE ACHIEVING THE DESIRED OBJECTIVES AND WHETHER THEY COULD BE MODIFIED AND IMPROVED.

+IF ALL GOES WELL,+ HE SAID, +BOTH PROGRAMMES WILL BE EXPANDED.+

HOWEVER, MR BRIDGE EMPHASISED THAT THE PROGRAMMES WERE ADDITIONS TO A PACKAGE OF MEASURES DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF ENGLISH TEACHING WHICH WERE ORIGINALLY INTRODUCED IN 1981 AND FURTHER AUGMENTED IN THE LIGHT OF RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE EDUCATION COMMISSION'S FIRST REPORT IN 1984.

ELABORATING ON THE MEASURES, HE SAID THE PACKAGE INCLUDED REVISION OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL SYLLABUSES, PROVISION OF AN ADDITIONAL TEACHER FOR REMEDIAL TEACHING IN FORMS 1 TO 3, PROVISION OF WIRE-FREE LOOP INDUCTION SYSTEMS FOR LISTENING DRILLS AND STRENGTHENING OF IN-SERVICE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING FOR TEACHERS THROUGH THE PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION.

+IN ADDITION, THOSE SCHOOLS ADOPTING CHINESE AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION WILL BE PROVIDED WITH TWO ADDITIONAL TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, A SECOND LOOP-INDUCTION SYSTEM AND GRANTS FOR ADDITIONAL READING MATERIALS AND TEACHING AIDS,+ HE SAID.

MR BRIDGE SAID THE PACKAGE WAS ALSO BEING MONITORED AND EVALUATED AND THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL MEASURES, OR IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING ONES, WOULD BE KEPT VERY MUCH IN MIND.

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SEX EDUCATION OFFERED IN MOST SCHOOLS  
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VIRTUALLY ALL PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND MOST SECONDARY SCHOOLS OFFER SEX EDUCATION IN SOME FORM, AND MANY SCHOOLS PROVIDE SEX EDUCATION THROUGH FORMAL AND INFORMAL CURRICULUM, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PAULINE NG, MR BRIDGE SAID BASED ON THE ADVICE OF THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE PRESENT POLICY WAS TO ENCOURAGE SCHOOLS TO INTRODUCE SEX EDUCATION. THIS APPROACH HAD BEEN ENDORSED BY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AT A SEMINAR HELD IN 1985.

AT PRIMARY LEVEL, HE SAID, SEX EDUCATION WAS INTRODUCED THROUGH THE SUBJECT OF HEALTH EDUCATION; AND, AT SECONDARY LEVEL, THROUGH VARIOUS RELEVANT SUBJECTS IN THE CURRICULUM SUCH AS BIOLOGY, HUMAN BIOLOGY, HOME ECONOMICS, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND SOCIAL STUDIES; AND THROUGH TALKS, SEMINARS OR SIMILAR EVENTS OUTSIDE THE FORMAL CURRICULUM.

+IN SUPPORT OF THE POLICY, THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HAS PREPARED A COMPREHENSIVE SET OF GUIDELINES ON SEX EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND COPIES WERE DISTRIBUTED TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAY LAST YEAR,+ HE ADDED.

AS TO THE PROGRESS MADE, MR BRIDGE SAID THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WOULD BE CARRYING OUT A SURVEY OF SCHOOLS LATER THIS YEAR TO FIND OUT HOW IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GUIDELINES WAS PROCEEDING.

+VARIOUS SUPPORTING SERVICES ARE PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT, INCLUDING A PROGRAMME OF SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS FOR TEACHERS.

+IN ADDITION, MORE THAN 300 TEACHERS HAVE ATTENDED COURSES ORGANISED BY THE FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION WHILE OTHERS HAVE ATTENDED THE CERTIFICATE COURSE ON SEX EDUCATION ORGANISED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG'S DEPARTMENT OF EXTRA-MURAL STUDIES.

+FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES ARE ALSO NOW BEING PRODUCED BY THE EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION SERVICE.+

MR BRIDGE ADDED THAT THE DEPARTMENT'S SEX EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRE AT NORTH POINT WAS OPENED LAST MONTH.

+THIS IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE ADVISORY SERVICES, AND A CENTRAL LIBRARY OF REFERENCE MATERIALS FOR TEACHERS,+ HE SAID.

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SUFFICIENT STAFF TO DEAL WITH BORDER CROSSING TRAFFIC  
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THE IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENTS HAD SUFFICIENT STAFF TO DEAL WITH PRESENT TRAFFIC VOLUME AT MAN KAM TO, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON DAVID LAN, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON SELINA CHOW, MR LAN SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS, HOWEVER, AWARE THAT AN UNEXPECTEDLY RAPID INCREASE IN TRAFFIC COULD CAUSE PROBLEMS.

+THE SITUATION IS THEREFORE BEING WATCHED CAREFULLY SO THAT STEPS CAN BE TAKEN TO INCREASE STAFF AND OTHER RESOURCES IN GOOD TIME WHEN REQUIRED,+ HE SAID.

DESCRIBING HOW TRAFFIC VOLUME HAD INCREASED RAPIDLY, HE SAID IN 1980 AN AVERAGE OF 849 VEHICLES PASSED THROUGH THE CROSSING EACH DAY. SINCE THEN IT HAD INCREASED BY OVER 5-1/2 TIMES SO THAT THE DAILY AVERAGE WAS NOW SOMETHING OVER 5 600. THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF CROSSINGS IN ONE DAY SO FAR WAS 8 118 ON DECEMBER 30 LAST YEAR.

+THE PRESENT LEVEL OF TRAFFIC IS HIGHER THAN PREVIOUSLY FORECAST. IN 1985 WE PREDICTED A DAILY AVERAGE OF 4 800 FOR 1986, AN UNDERESTIMATE OF AROUND 17 PER CENT.+

MR LAN SAID IT WAS NOT EASY TO ASSESS ACCURATELY WHAT THE CROSS BORDER TRAFFIC PRECISELY WOULD LOOK LIKE IN THE YEARS AHEAD, ALTHOUGH HE WAS QUITE CONFIDENT THAT IT WOULD CONTINUE TO GROW AT A RAPID RATE.

+HOWEVER, OUR WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE AUTHORITIES IN SHENZHEN IS DEVELOPING ALL THE TIME, AND WE BELIEVE THAT THE FREQUENT AND CONTINUOUS EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN THE TWO PLACES WOULD BE OF GREAT HELP TOWARDS MAKING MORE ACCURATE FORECASTS INTO THE FUTURE,+ HE SAID.

WITH REGARD TO CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION FACILITIES, MR LAN SAID THE PRESENT CONTROL POINT AT MAN KAM TO CAME INTO OPERATION IN JULY 1980, WITH FOUR VEHICLE EXAMINATION KIOSKS AND 14 PASSENGER EXAMINATION COUNTERS.

THE NUMBER OF VEHICLE KIOSKS WAS INCREASED TO 12 IN SEPTEMBER 1985, AND THE NUMBER OF PASSENGER COUNTERS WAS INCREASED TO 28 IN FEBRUARY 1986.

+THESE ARE SUFFICIENT AT PRESENT AND WE ARE ALSO TAKING STEPS TO PROVIDE TWO MORE PROCESSING LANES ON THE HONG KONG SIDE TO ENSURE A SMOOTH AND BALANCED FLOW OF TRAFFIC IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE,+ HE ADDED.

PROBLEMS ARISE IN GRANTING NEW HOLIDAYS  
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DIFFICULTIES LIE IN THE WAY OF GRANTING NEW HOLIDAYS OR DESIGNATING NEW ONES, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HUI YIN-FAT, MR BRIDGE NOTED THAT THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG HAD LAST YEAR PROPOSED THAT MAY DAY BE CELEBRATED AS A HOLIDAY IN RECOGNITION OF LABOUR'S CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY.

MORE RECENTLY, THE ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE PROFESSORS HAD PROPOSED A HOLIDAY ON THE BIRTHDAY OF CONFUCIUS IN HONOUR OF TEACHERS.

MR HUI ASKED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONSIDER DESIGNATING A MONDAY IN NOVEMBER, FOLLOWING THE ANNUAL FESTIVAL FOR THE ELDERLY, A PUBLIC HOLIDAY IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY AND TO PROMOTE RESPECT FOR THEM. THE HOLIDAY WOULD UTILISE ONE OF THE UNDESIGNATED STATUTORY HOLIDAYS.

MR BRIDGE SAID HE WAS SYMPATHETIC TO ANY SUGGESTION TO PROMOTE RESPECT FOR THE ELDERLY. HOWEVER, HAVING LOOKED VERY CAREFULLY AT THIS PARTICULAR PROPOSAL, HE WAS AFRAID THAT IT DID GIVE RISE TO PROBLEMS.

+AT THE PRACTICAL LEVEL, IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHICH OF THE EXISTING HOLIDAYS PROVIDED FOR UNDER THE HOLIDAYS ORDINANCE OR THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE COULD IN FACT BE CHANGED TO THE MONDAY FOLLOWING THE THIRD SUNDAY IN NOVEMBER,+ HE SAID.

MOST OF THESE EXISTING HOLIDAYS CELEBRATED EITHER ESTABLISHED WESTERN HOLIDAYS, TRADITIONAL CHINESE FESTIVALS OR SPECIFIC EVENTS.

+ONE MIGHT PERHAPS ARGUE FOR DROPPING THE MONDAY FOLLOWING THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY, OR THE SATURDAY BEFORE LIBERATION DAY, BUT THE PURPOSE OF THESE ADDITIONAL DAYS IS TO PROVIDE TWO LONG HOLIDAY WEEKENDS DURING THE HOT WEATHER,+ MR BRIDGE EXPLAINED.

HE SAID THAT IN PRACTICE, THEREFORE, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO INTRODUCE AN ADDITIONAL HOLIDAY AND HONG KONG ALREADY HAD MORE STATUTORY HOLIDAYS THAN MOST OF ITS ASIAN NEIGHBOURS, WITH WHOM IT HAD TO COMPETE ECONOMICALLY.

+EACH ADDITIONAL HOLIDAY OF COURSE HAS A SIGNIFICANT COST IN TERMS OF LOST PRODUCTION,+ HE POINTED OUT.

+THE MAJOR PROBLEM, HOWEVER, IS THE NUMBER OF GROUPS WHICH, IT CAN BE ARGUED, DESERVE RECOGNITION OF THIS KIND,+ MR BRIDGE ADDED.

NO FULL RECORD KEPT ON EMIGRATION  
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THERE ARE NO COMPREHENSIVE STATISTICS GIVING THE NUMBER AND DETAILS OF PEOPLE EMIGRATING FROM HONG KONG, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON DAVID JEAFFRESON, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON SELINA CHOW ON INFORMATION ABOUT THE OUTFLOW OF EMIGRANTS FROM HONG KONG OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, MR JEAFFRESON SAID THE ONLY STATISTICS THAT GAVE AN INDICATION OF THE NUMBERS INVOLVED WERE THE NUMBERS OF PERSONS LEAVING HONG KONG EACH YEAR ON HONG KONG TRAVEL DOCUMENTS AND THE NUMBERS RETURNING.

HE NOTED THAT THESE STATISTICS HAD BEEN KEPT SINCE 1964.

+THE AVERAGE NET ANNUAL OUTFLOW UP TO THE END OF 1985 HAS BEEN 19 385.

+BY CONTRAST, THE AVERAGE FOR THE FIVE YEARS 1981 TO 1985 WAS SLIGHTLY LOWER AT 18 848 WHICH IN TURN WAS APPRECIABLY LOWER THAN THE AVERAGE OF 23 295 FOR THE FIVE YEARS 1976 TO 1980 AND OF 27 741 FOR THE FIVE YEARS 1971 TO 1975,+ MR JEAFFRESON SAID.

HE OBSERVED THAT THERE WAS AN OBVIOUS DANGER IN COMPARING ANNUAL FIGURES BUT FOR WHAT IT WAS WORTH THE FIGURES FOR 1985 AT 11 175 WAS THE LOWEST SINCE 1971 SINCE WHEN THE POPULATION HAD INCREASED BY ABOUT 1.5 MILLION, AND WAS ABOUT A QUARTER OF THE ANNUAL FIGURES FOR 1975 AND 1976.

IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, MR JEAFFRESON SAID, THERE WAS NO ACCURATE PROFILE OF THE SORT OF PEOPLE EMIGRATING, BUT IT COULD BE SAID THEY COVERED A WIDE CROSS-SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY.

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ADVANTAGES IN TRADE WITH UK HAVE FADED  
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THE COMMONWEALTH PREFERENCE SCHEME WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE UNLIMITED ENTRY OF HONG KONG PRODUCTS INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM COVERED LESS THAN 0.008 PER CENT OF HONG KONG'S DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN 1985 AND IT CANNOT BE SEEN HOW HONG KONG CAN QUALIFY FOR EVEN THESE LIMITED BENEFITS AFTER 1997.

THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, THE HON ERIC HO, SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON LEE YU-TAI.

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MR HO SAID COMMONWEALTH PREFERENCE FOR THE UNLIMITED ENTRY OF HONG KONG PRODUCTS INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM MATERIALLY ASSISTED HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIALISATION FROM THE LATE 1940'S TO THE EARLY 1970'S.

+HOWEVER, THESE MAJOR ADVANTAGES HAVE LARGELY FADED AWAY IN CONSEQUENCE OF BRITISH ACCESSION TO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ON JANUARY 1, 1973,+ HE ADDED.

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**ABATTOIR ANCILLIARY FACILITIES MAY BE MOVED**

**\* \* \* \* \***

WHILE THERE IS NO PLAN AT PRESENT TO RELOCATE THE KENNEDY TOWN ABATTOIR, ANCILLIARY FACILITIES TO THE ABATTOIR COULD BE RELOCATED, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LIU LIT-FOR, MR CHAMBERS SAID THIS COULD DEPEND ON WHETHER A SUITABLE SITE WITH GOOD ROAD ACCESS COULD BE FOUND AND WHETHER FUNDS FOR THE RELOCATION WAS AVAILABLE.

HE SAID THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT WAS ACTIVELY LOOKING FOR A SUITABLE SITE.

MR CHAMBERS POINTED OUT THAT THE FLUE GAS WHICH CAUSED THE MAIN ODOUR NUISANCE AT THE ABATTOIR CAME FROM THE BY-PRODUCTS PLANT AND THE ANIMAL CREMATOR WITHIN THE ABATTOIR COMPLEX.

+IN THE MEANTIME, AN AFTER-BURNER SYSTEM IS BEING INSTALLED TO REDUCE THE OFFENSIVE ODOUR AND IS SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION IN APRIL THIS YEAR.

+IN ADDITION, TWO INEFFICIENT BLOOD COOKERS HAVE RECENTLY BEEN REPLACED,+ HE SAID.

MR CHAMBERS SAID STAFF OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT WERE MONITORING THE SITUATION CLOSELY AND WOULD SUGGEST FURTHER MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION IF NECESSARY.

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REASONS FOR ROAD RESTRICTED ZONES EXPLAINED  
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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT IS ALWAYS PREPARED TO CONSIDER SUGGESTIONS FOR A RELAXATION OF 24-HOUR STOPPING RESTRICTIONS IN PARTICULAR CASES IF REPRESENTATIONS ARE MADE TO IT. THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON DAVID LAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON NGAI SHIU-KIT ABOUT DESIGNATED 24-HOUR RESTRICTED ZONES, MR LAN SAID THE RESTRICTIONS WERE IMPOSED ON ALL EXPRESSWAYS, SUCH AS TUEN TUN HIGHWAY, AND CERTAIN TRUNK ROADS, SUCH AS WATERLOO ROAD AND GLOUCESTER ROAD.

+TRAFFIC ON EXPRESSWAYS IS GENERALLY FASTER THAN ON OTHER ROADS, AND ANY VEHICLE STOPPING ON THESE ROADS AT WHATEVER TIME IS A POTENTIAL DANGER TO OTHER ROAD USERS,+ MR LAN SAID.

+FOR SIMILAR REASONS, THERE ARE 24-HOUR STOPPING RESTRICTIONS IN AND ON THE APPROACHES TO ALL TUNNELS.+

MR LAN SAID THAT 24-HOUR RESTRICTIONS WERE KEPT TO A MINIMUM IN RESPECT OF ROADS OTHER THAN EXPRESSWAYS.

HOWEVER, IT WAS NECESSARY TO IMPOSE STOPPING RESTRICTIONS UP TO AND BEYOND MIDNIGHT IN AREAS WHICH HAD TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND SAFETY PROBLEMS, SUCH AS PORTIONS OF CERTAIN MAIN OR EVEN SIDE STREETS WHERE TRAFFIC WAS HEAVY THROUGHOUT THE DAY.

+TO ENSURE THAT THE RESTRICTIONS ARE EASILY UNDERSTOOD BY THE PUBLIC AND TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF CONFUSION THROUGH HAVING TOO MANY DIFFERENT RESTRICTION PERIODS, A 24-HOUR STOPPING RESTRICTION IS OCCASIONALLY IMPOSED WHEN TECHNICALLY A SHORTER PERIOD MIGHT SUFFICE,+ MR LAN SAID.

HE NOTED THAT SOME ROAD USERS MIGHT BE INCONVENIENCED IN THESE INSTANCES, BUT IT WAS CONSIDERED THAT IT WAS BETTER TO ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION AS SAFETY WAS ALWAYS PARAMOUNT.

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PRICE, VOLUME MOVEMENTS OF OCTOBER EXTERNAL TRADE  
\* \* \* \* \*

STATISTICS RELEASED TODAY BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT INDICATED THAT THE VOLUME OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS GREW BY 15 PERCENT IN THE FIRST TEN MONTHS OF 1986 AS COMPARED WITH THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR. THE VOLUME OF RE-EXPORTS INCREASED BY 10 PER CENT. HENCE, THERE WAS AN OVERALL INCREASE OF 13 PER CENT IN THE VOLUME OF TOTAL EXPORTS.

IMPORTS INCREASED BY 12 PER CENT IN VOLUME. ON THE SAME BASIS OF COMPARISON, THE PRICES OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS AND RE-EXPORTS ROSE BY 1 PER CENT AND 2 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY, SO THAT FOR TOTAL EXPORTS PRICES INCREASED BY 2 PER CENT.

PRICES OF IMPORTS ROSE BY 5 PER CENT. AS A RESULT, THE TERMS OF TRADE INDEX (EXPRESSED AS A RATIO OF THE TOTAL EXPORT PRICE INDEX TO THE IMPORT PRICE INDEX) DROPPED BY 3 PER CENT.

COMPARING OCTOBER 1986 WITH OCTOBER 1985, THE VOLUME OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS AND RE-EXPORTS INCREASED BY 32 PER CENT AND 41 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY. HENCE, TOTAL EXPORTS GREW BY 36 PER CENT IN VOLUME. IMPORT VOLUME INCREASED BY 32 PER CENT. OVER THE SAME PERIOD, THE PRICES OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS ROSE BY 5 PER CENT WHILE THOSE OF RE-EXPORTS ROSE BY 3 PER CENT. IMPORT PRICES ROSE BY 6 PER CENT.

PRICES ARE BASED ON UNIT VALUES WHICH DO NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT CHANGES IN THE COMPOSITION OR QUALITY OF GOODS TRADED, EXCEPT FOR SOME SELECTED COMMODITIES FOR WHICH SPECIFICATION PRICE INDEXES ARE COMPILED. THE VOLUME OF TRADE IS DERIVED FROM TRADE VALUES BY DISCOUNTING THE EFFECT OF PRICE CHANGES.

EXTENDING THE PERIOD OF COMPARISON TO THE 12 MONTHS ENDING OCTOBER 1986 WITH THE 12 MONTHS ENDING OCTOBER 1985, THE VOLUME OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS INCREASED BY 13 PER CENT WHILE THAT OF RE-EXPORTS INCREASED BY 10 PER CENT, THUS GIVING AN INCREASE OF 12 PER CENT IN THE VOLUME OF TOTAL EXPORTS. THE VOLUME OF IMPORTS INCREASED BY 11 PER CENT. OVER THE SAME PERIOD, THE PRICES OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS REMAINED UNCHANGED WHILE THOSE OF RE-EXPORTS ROSE BY 1 PER CENT. IMPORT PRICES ROSE BY 4 PER CENT.

THE CHANGES IN THE VALUE, UNIT VALUE AND VOLUME OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS BY COMMODITY GROUP FOR OCTOBER 1986 AS COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1985 ARE SHOWN IN TABLE 1.

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AS CAN BE SEEN FROM TABLE 1, DOMESTIC EXPORT PRICES OF MOST COMMODITY GROUPS SHOWN THEREIN INCREASED IN OCTOBER 1986 COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1985. THESE INCLUDED WATCHES AND CLOCKS (+10 PER CENT); TEXTILE MADE-UPS AND RELATED ARTICLES (+9 PER CENT); TRAVEL GOODS, HANDBAGS AND SIMILAR ARTICLES (+6 PER CENT); CLOTHING (+6 PER CENT); TEXTILE FABRICS (+1 PER CENT); FOOTWEAR (+1 PER CENT) AS WELL AS METAL MANUFACTURES (+1 PER CENT).

DECREASES IN DOMESTIC EXPORT PRICES WERE, HOWEVER, RECORDED IN METAL ORES AND SCRAP (-8 PER CENT); RADIOS OF ALL KINDS (-4 PER CENT) AS WELL AS ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS (-3 PER CENT). PRICES OF TEXTILE YARN AND THREAD AS WELL AS DOMESTIC ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES REMAINED UNCHANGED.

THE DOMESTIC EXPORT VOLUME OF MOST COMMODITY GROUPS INCREASED IN OCTOBER 1986 COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1985, INCLUDING TEXTILE FABRICS (+65 PER CENT); RADIOS OF ALL KINDS (+59 PER CENT); DOMESTIC ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES (+57 PER CENT); METAL MANUFACTURES (+38 PER CENT); TEXTILE YARN AND THREAD (+34 PER CENT); FOOTWEAR (+30 PER CENT); TEXTILE MADE-UPS AND RELATED ARTICLES (+27 PER CENT); WATCHES AND CLOCKS (+21 PER CENT); CLOTHING (+14 PER CENT); TRAVEL GOODS, HANDBAGS AND SIMILAR ARTICLES (+11 PER CENT) AS WELL AS METAL ORES AND SCRAP (+5 PER CENT). HOWEVER, A DECREASE IN DOMESTIC EXPORT VOLUME WAS RECORDED IN ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS (-9 PER CENT).

THE CHANGES IN THE VALUE, UNIT VALUE AND VOLUME OF IMPORTS BY END-USE CATEGORY FOR OCTOBER 1986 AS COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1985 ARE SHOWN IN TABLE 2.

AS PRESENTED IN TABLE 2, IMPORT PRICES OF MOST END-USE CATEGORIES ROSE IN OCTOBER 1986 AS COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1985, RANGING FROM 3 PER CENT FOR FOODSTUFFS TO 17 PER CENT FOR CAPITAL GOODS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE IMPORT PRICES OF FUELS DROPPED BY 39 PER CENT.

MANY OF THE MAJOR IMPORTED FOODSTUFFS INCREASED IN VOLUME IN OCTOBER 1986 COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1985. SIGNIFICANT GROWTH WAS RECORDED IN FISH AND FISH PREPARATIONS; SUGAR AS WELL AS VEGETABLES. HOWEVER, NOTABLE DECREASES IN IMPORT VOLUME WERE REGISTERED FOR TEA AND COFFEE; MEAT AND MEAT PREPARATIONS AS WELL AS ANIMALS OF THE BOVINE SPECIES.

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OVER THE SAME PERIOD, THE IMPORT VOLUME OF MOST CONSUMER GOODS INCREASED, THE MORE SUBSTANTIAL ONES BEING RADIOS, TELEVISION SETS, GRAMOPHONES, RECORDS, TAPE RECORDERS AND AMPLIFIERS; HOUSEHOLD TYPE ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES; WATCHES AS WELL AS CLOTHING.

THE IMPORT VOLUME OF MOST RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-MANUFACTURES INCREASED IN OCTOBER 1986 COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1985. THE MAJOR INCREASES WERE RECORDED IN WOOL AND OTHER ANIMAL HAIR; PLASTIC, MOULDING MATERIALS; SILK FABRICS AS WELL AS MAN-MADE FIBRES. HOWEVER, A DECREASE WAS RECORDED IN THE IMPORT VOLUME OF FABRICS OF WOOL AND MIXTURES.

IMPORTS OF FUELS INCREASED BY 48 PER CENT IN VOLUME IN OCTOBER 1986 AS COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1985.

THE IMPORT VOLUME OF MOST COMMODITIES IN THE CAPITAL GOODS CATEGORY INCREASED IN OCTOBER 1986 WHEN COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1985, THE SUBSTANTIAL ONES BEING OFFICE MACHINES; TEXTILE MACHINERY AS WELL AS INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY OTHER THAN TEXTILE AND ELECTRICAL MACHINERY. ON THE OTHER HAND, A NOTABLE DECREASE IN THE IMPORT VOLUME OF CONSTRUCTION MACHINERY WAS RECORDED.

THE CHANGES IN THE VALUE, UNIT VALUE AND VOLUME OF RE-EXPORTS BY END-USE CATEGORY FOR OCTOBER 1986 AS COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1985 ARE SHOWN IN TABLE 3.

AS DEPICTED IN TABLE 3, THE RE-EXPORT VOLUME OF ALL END-USE CATEGORIES INCREASED IN OCTOBER 1986 WHEN COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1985, RANGING FROM 18 PER CENT FOR CAPITAL GOODS TO 310 PER CENT FOR FUELS.

FURTHER DETAILS ARE CONTAINED IN THE OCTOBER 1986 ISSUE OF THE +HONG KONG TRADE INDEX NUMBERS+ ON SALE AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE AROUND JANUARY 10 AT \$2.50 PER COPY.

ENQUIRIES REGARDING REGULAR SUBSCRIPTION TO THIS REPORT MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT AT BASKERVILLE HOUSE, HONG KONG, ON 5-214375 AND ENQUIRIES ON TRADE INDEXES TO THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ON 5-444584.

/Table 1: .....

Table 1: Increases in domestic exports by commodity group

Commodity group	Comparing Jan-Oct 1986 with Jan-Oct 1985			Comparing October 1986 with October 1985		
	Value %	Unit Value %	Volume %	Value %	Unit Value %	Volume %
Clothing	16	1	15	21	6	14
Textile fabrics	43	-2	46	67	1	65
Textile yarn and thread	22	-1	23	34	*	34
Textile made-ups and related articles	10	3	7	39	9	27
Radios of all kinds	10	-9	22	52	-4	59
Electronic components	-3	2	-4	-12	-3	-9
Footwear	17	1	16	31	1	30
Metal manufactures	13	-1	14	39	1	38
Metal ores and scrap	-33	-7	-28	-3	-8	5
Watches and clocks	25	7	17	32	10	21
Travel goods, handbags and similar articles	-1	7	-7	18	6	11
Domestic electrical appliances	2	-5	8	56	*	57
ALL COMMODITIES	17	1	15	38	5	32

Notes: \* Insignificant, i.e. less than 0.5%

Percentage changes are calculated from trade indexes taken to more decimal places than those to be published in the "Hong Kong Trade Index Numbers". They may therefore differ from the percentage changes to be computed from the published figures.

Table 2: Increases in imports by end-use category

End-use category	Comparing Jan-Oct 1986 with Jan-Oct 1985			Comparing October 1986 with October 1985		
	Value %	Unit Value %	Volume %	Value %	Unit Value %	Volume %
Foodstuffs	14	-1	15	19	3	16
Consumer goods	27	10	16	49	9	36
Raw materials and semi-manufactures	21	3	18	43	5	36
Fuels	-20	-32	17	-10	-39	46
Capital goods	5	17	-10	43	17	22
ALL COMMODITIES	18	5	12	40	6	32

Table 3: Increases in re-exports by end-use category

End-use category	Comparing Jan-Oct 1986 with Jan-Oct 1985			Comparing October 1986 with October 1985		
	Value %	Unit Value %	Volume %	Value %	Unit Value %	Volume %
Foodstuffs	36	2	34	65	4	58
Consumer goods	24	4	19	54	4	47
Raw materials and semi-manufactures	11	-3	14	41	-1	42
Fuels	84	-32	170	168	-35	310
Capital goods	-17	10	-24	30	9	18
ALL COMMODITIES	12	2	10	46	3	41

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**EASTERN HOSPITAL PROGRESS TO BE REVIEWED**

**\* \* \* \* \***

MEMBERS OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT BOARD WILL DISCUSS THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT HOSPITAL PROJECT AT THEIR REGULAR MEETING TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

CAISSON WORKS FOR THE HOSPITAL, WHICH WILL PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF ACUTE ANCILLARY FACILITIES AND A SCHOOL OF PSYCHIATRIC NURSING, WILL BEGIN THIS MONTH.

BOARD MEMBERS WILL ALSO COMMENT ON A PROPOSAL TO CLOSE THE MATERNITY HOME AT THE SHAU KEI WAN JOCKEY CLUB POLYCLINIC, BECAUSE OF POOR UTILISATION RATE AND ADEQUATE OBSTETRICAL FACILITIES ELSEWHERE IN HONG KONG.

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA INCLUDE THE URBAN COUNCIL CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME FOR 1987-1991 AND A FINAL REVIEW OF DISTRICT BOARD FUNDS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT WORKS.

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**NOTE TO EDITORS:**

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE MEETING AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT OFFICE ON THE FIRST FLOOR OF 880-886 KING'S ROAD.

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**DB COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS SPECIAL TRAFFIC PLANS**

**\* \* \* \* \***

MEMBERS OF THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD'S TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE WILL MEET TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO DISCUSS A PACKAGE OF PROPOSED TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW HOUSING AUTHORITY HEADQUARTERS IN FAT KWONG STREET.

WORK ON THE BUILDING WILL BEGIN IN MARCH AND NOT BE COMPLETED UNTIL LATE 1989.

THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT CARRIED OUT A STUDY TO ASSESS THE TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS. AS A RESULT, A FOOTBRIDGE, A SIGNAL CONTROL SYSTEM AND ROAD WIDENING WORK IN THE VICINITY HAVE BEEN PROPOSED.

/OTHER ITEMS .....

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OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA INCLUDE A SUGGESTION TO BUILD A ROAD SAFETY TOWN IN THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT, RELOCATING THE TAXI STAND AT THE KCR KOWLOON TONG STATION AND COMPLAINTS ABOUT TAXIS WAITING OUTSIDE ST TERESA'S HOSPITAL IN PRINCE EDWARD ROAD.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE MEETING AT 2.15 PM TOMORROW IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE DISTRICT OFFICE AT 141 KAU PUI LUNG ROAD. THE MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED IN CHINESE AND SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION SERVICE WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE.

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SEMINAR ON CRIME PREVENTION ORGANISED  
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WONG TAI SIN RESIDENTS WILL HAVE THE CHANCE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CRIME PREVENTION TECHNIQUES AND WAYS TO ENSURE FAMILY SAFETY TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AT A SEMINAR ORGANISED BY THE WONG TAI SIN DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE.

SENIOR POLICE OFFICERS WILL BE PRESENT TO TALK ABOUT THE RECENT TRENDS OF CRIMES COMMITTED IN THE DISTRICT AND THE EFFECTS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME.

MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE WILL JOIN POLICE OFFICERS IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS RAISED BY PARTICIPANTS.

VIDEO TAPES AND SLIDES WILL ALSO BE SHOWN TO ENHANCE RESIDENTS' AWARENESS ON CRIME PREVENTION.

THE PUBLIC IS WELCOME TO THE SEMINAR AND ADMISSION IS FREE.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE SEMINAR AT 8.30 PM TOMORROW AT WONG TAI SIN COMMUNITY CENTRE AT 104, CHING TAK STREET, LOWER WONG TAI SIN ESTATE.

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CONTAINER STORAGE SITE TO LET  
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A SITE AT WING KEI ROAD IN KWAI CHUNG IS TO BE OFFERED ON SHORT-TERM TENANCY BY THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT.

IT IS FOR STORING EMPTY CONTAINERS AND REPAIRING CONTAINER TRACTORS AND TRAILERS. IT MEASURES 1 536 SQUARE METRES.

THE TENANCY IS FOR THREE YEARS, RENEWABLE MONTHLY AFTERWARDS.

TENDERS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY NOON ON JANUARY 23.

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SOUTHERN STUDENTS ATTEND LEGCO MEETING  
\* \* \* \* \*

ABOUT 20 STUDENTS FROM EIGHT SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTHERN DISTRICT OBSERVED A LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY (WEDNESDAY) TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN HONG KONG.

THE VISIT TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BUILDING WAS SPONSORED BY THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT BOARD AND JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THREE AREA COMMITTEES AS PART OF THE DISTRICT'S CIVIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN TO ENCOURAGE RESIDENTS TO FORWARD CONSTRUCTIVE IDEAS ON THE REVIEW OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT THIS YEAR.

THE STUDENTS WERE FIRST BRIEFED BY OMELCO STAFF ON THE OFFICE'S FUNCTION AND OPERATION. THEY WERE THEN GIVEN BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON TODAY'S COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS.

AFTER ATTENDING THE MEETING, THEY RETURNED TO THE ABERDEEN KAIFONG ASSOCIATION COMMUNITY CENTRE WHERE STUDENTS HELD A DISCUSSION.

A SIMILAR PROGRAMME ORGANISED LAST OCTOBER FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS TO ATTEND A SOUTHERN DISTRICT BOARD MEETING HAD ATTRACTED MORE THAN 100 PARTICIPANTS.

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BUILDING MANAGEMENT SEMINAR ORGANISED FOR RESIDENTS  
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A SEMINAR ON BUILDING MANAGEMENT FOR RESIDENTS OF CENTRAL AND WESTERN WILL BE HELD TOMORROW (THURSDAY) EVENING AT THE CHIU CHOW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

THE SEMINAR, AIMED AT ENHANCING RESIDENTS' KNOWLEDGE ON BUILDING MANAGEMENT AND STRENGTHENING TIES BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND DISTRICT RESIDENTS, IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, AND THE MULTI-STOREY BUILDING OWNERS ASSOCIATIONS OF BOTH CENTRAL AND WESTERN.

GUEST SPEAKERS WILL BE THE HOUSING MANAGER IN THE BUILDING MANAGEMENT TEAM OF EASTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, MR K.T. LIN, AND A LAWYER, MR MOSES CHENG.

THEY WILL SPEAK ON +BUILDING RENOVATION AND THE COLLECTION OF MANAGEMENT FEES+ AND THE +GENERAL LEGAL ISSUES IN MULTI-STOREY BUILDING MANAGEMENT+, RESPECTIVELY.

MORE THAN 200 RESIDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND THE SEMINAR WHICH WILL START AT 8 PM.

MEMBERS OF OWNERS' CORPORATIONS, MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES AND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS IN PARTICULAR ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND AND TO RAISE QUESTIONS. ADMISSION IS FREE.

AMONG THOSE OFFICIATING AT THE OPENING WILL BE ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER, CENTRAL AND WESTERN, MISS ELIZABETH TSE; CHAIRMAN OF THE MULTI-STOREY BUILDING OWNERS ASSOCIATION OF WESTERN DISTRICT, MR YAU YUK-TAK; AND CHAIRMAN OF THE MULTI-STOREY BUILDING OWNERS ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL DISTRICT, MRS CHAN MOK WING-CHUN.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE SEMINAR TO BE HELD TOMORROW IN THE ASSEMBLY HALL OF THE CHIU CHOW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 81-85 DES VOEUX ROAD WEST, 10TH FLOOR, WESTERN DISTRICT. IT WILL BEGIN AT 8 PM.

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GRANVILLE ROAD ILLEGAL STRUCTURES TO GO  
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THE GOVERNMENT IS TO DEMOLISH ILLEGAL STRUCTURES ATTACHED TO THE REAR EXTERNAL WALL OF THE FIRST FLOOR OF 65 GRANVILLE ROAD, KOWLOON.

THE OWNERS WERE INSTRUCTED TO DEMOLISH THE STRUCTURES THEMSELVES TWO YEARS AGO UNDER THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE BUT HAD FAILED TO DO SO.

THE BUILDING AUTHORITY IS TO APPLY TO KOWLOON DISTRICT COURT ON MARCH 10 FOR A CLOSURE ORDER SO THAT THE STRUCTURES CAN BE DEMOLISHED WITHOUT ENDANGERING THE OCCUPANTS OR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

NOTICES INFORMING THE OCCUPANTS OF THE AUTHORITY'S INTENTION TO GO TO COURT WERE PINNED ON CONSPICUOUS PARTS OF THE STRUCTURES TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

DEMOLITION WILL TAKE PLACE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE COURT GRANTS THE CLOSURE ORDER.

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FLUTE MASTER CLASS TO BE HELD TOMORROW  
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A MASTER CLASS CONDUCTED BY TALENTED FLAUTIST CATHERINA YUNG WILL BE HELD AT THE YAU MA TEI MUSIC CENTRE OF THE MUSIC OFFICE TOMORROW (THURSDAY) FROM 6 PM TO 8 PM.

SHE WON FIRST PRIZE IN THE HONG KONG SCHOOL MUSIC FESTIVAL COMMERCIAL RADIO SCHOLARSHIP IN 1973 AND IS NOW STUDYING MUSIC IN WEST GERMANY.

MISS YUNG HAS BEEN INVITED BY THE URBAN COUNCIL TO PERFORM IN HONG KONG AND THE MASTER CLASS IS MADE POSSIBLE BY COURTESY OF THE COUNCIL.

SHE WILL NOT ONLY SPEAK ON THE VARIOUS TECHNIQUES IN FLUTE PLAYING BUT ALSO COACH TRAINEES OF THE MUSIC OFFICE.

ADMISSION TO THE MASTER CLASS IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. FURTHER INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED ON 3-7226240 OR 5-283257.

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TRAFFIC CHANGES IN CONNAUGHT ROAD  
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AS PART OF THE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEME IN CONNECTION WITH CONSTRUCTION OF PEDDER STREET UNDERPASS, A NUMBER OF TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN CENTRAL FROM 10 AM ON SATURDAY (JANUARY 10). DETAILS ARE:

- \* THE EXISTING PEAK-HOUR (7-10 AM AND 4-7 PM) DAILY BUS-ONLY LANE RESTRICTION ON THE EASTBOUND KERBSIDE LANE OF CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL FROM A POINT ABOUT 46 METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH HARBOUR VIEW STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 188 METRES EAST OF THE SAME JUNCTION WILL BE LIFTED.
- \* A CONNECTION ACROSS THE WORKS AREA SEPARATING THE OUTER AND INNER LANES OF THE WESTBOUND CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL BETWEEN PEDDER AND POTTINGER STREETS WILL BE MADE A TEMPORARY 24-HOUR DAILY BUS-ONLY LANE.

THE MEASURE WILL BE IN FORCE DAILY FOR ABOUT SIX MONTHS DURING WHICH NO VEHICLE OTHER THAN FRANCHISED BUSES WILL BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE ROAD SECTION.

- \* THE EXISTING PEAK-HOUR GOODS VEHICLE RESTRICTED ZONE ON THE WESTBOUND CARRIAGEWAY OF CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL FROM A POINT ABOUT 10 METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH DOUGLAS STREET TO ITS JUNCTION WITH POTTINGER STREET WILL BE CONVERTED TO A 7 AM TO 7 PM DAILY URBAN CLEARWAY FOR ALL VEHICLES.

THE MEASURE WILL AGAIN LAST FOR ABOUT SIX MONTHS. NO VEHICLE OTHER THAN FRANCHISED BUSES WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP WITHIN THE URBAN CLEARWAY FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS.

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