DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1992

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MONETARY AUTHORITY LAW GOES TO LEGCO IN NOVEMBER

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A BILL AMENDING THE EXCHANGE FUND ORDINANCE WILL BE PUT BEFORE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON NOVEMBER 4 TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MONETARY AUTHORITY, THE SECRETARY FOR MONETARY AFFAIRS, MR DAVID NENDICK, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

THE BILL WILL ALSO PROVIDE FOR AN EXTENSION TO THE USE OF THE EXCHANGE FUND FOR THE SECONDARY PURPOSE OF MAINTAINING THE STABILITY AND INTEGRITY OF THE MONETARY AND FINANCIAL SYSTEMS.

SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE, MR NENDICK SAID AS THE GOVERNOR ANNOUNCED IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 7, THE GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED THAT THE TIME HAD COME TO ESTABLISH A HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY (HKMA) WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EXECUTIVE-LED GOVERNMENT.

"THE OFFICE OF THE EXCHANGE FUND AND THE OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING WILL BE BROUGHT TOGETHER TO FORM A NEW HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY.

"THE NEW ORGANISATION WILL HAVE THE NECESSARY FLEXIBILITY TO DEPLOY STAFF AND OTHER RESOURCES WITHOUT BEING SUBJECT TO THE CONSTRAINTS OF RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND PERSONNEL PROCEDURES APPLICABLE TO OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS," MR NENDICK SAID.

"THIS WILL ENHANCE OUR ABILITY TO IMPLEMENT AND ACHIEVE OUR MONETARY POLICY OBJECTIVE OF MAINTAINING EXCHANGE RATE STABILITY," HE ADDED.

"THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS WILL ALSO HELP MAINTAIN THE DEGREE OF PROFESSIONALISM AND CONTINUITY NECESSARY TO COMMAND THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL COMMUNITY," HE SAID.

THE HKMA WOULD BE HEADED BY A CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND BE ACCOUNTABLE TO THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY WILL REMAIN AS CONTROLLER OF THE EXCHANGE FUND AND RETAIN HIS STATUTORY POWERS UNDER THE EXCHANGE FUND ORDINANCE.

THE POWERS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING UNDER THE BANKING AND OTHER ORDINANCES WILL BE VESTED IN THE MONETARY AUTHORITY.

INITIALLY THE HKMA WILL BE STAFFED MAINLY BY CIVIL SERVANTS ON SECONDMENT WITHOUT ANY CHANGE TO THEIR PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE.

HOWEVER, THE HKMA WOULD BE ABLE TO EMPLOY STAFF ON TERMS DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE IN ORDER TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN HIGH CALIBRE STAFF WITH THE RIGHT EXPERIENCE.

TO GIVE STATUTORY EFFECT TO THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS, THE EXCHANGE FUND (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON NOVEMBER 4.

/"THE INCLUSION .....

"THE INCLUSION OF THE SECONDARY PURPOSE OF THE FUND DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BAIL OUT INDIVIDUAL BANKS WHENEVER THEY RUN INTO FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES," MR NENDICK SAID.

"EACH CASE WILL CONTINUE TO BE LOOKED AT ON ITS OWN MERITS AND THE FUND WILL ONLY BE USED TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE STABILITY AND INTEGRITY OF THE ENTIRE SYSTEM AS A WHOLE," HE SAID.

THE SECONDARY PURPOSE WILL BE SUBORDINATE TO THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF MAINTAINING EXCHANGE RATE STABILITY. SHOULD THERE BE ANY CONFLICT, THE PRIMARY PURPOSE WOULD PREVAIL," MR NENDICK STRESSED.

TO REFLECT THE WIDER AMBIT OF THE FUND AND THE INCREASED RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXCHANGE FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE, WHICH ADVISES THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE CONTROL OF THE EXCHANGE FUND, THE GOVERNMENT WILL SUITABLY EXPAND THE COMMITTEE'S MEMBERSHIP TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE FINANCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS.

"THE EXPANDED COMMITTEE WOULD FUNCTION VERY MUCH LIKE A MANAGEMENT BOARD AND IT WOULD MEET MORE FREQUENTLY THAN IS PRESENTLY THE CASE," MR NENDICK SAID.

BANKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE WILL CONTINUE TO PLAY AN ADVISORY ROLE IN MATTERS RELATING TO THE BANKING ORDINANCE AND BANKING SUPERVISION ISSUES.

THE MONETARY AFFAIRS BRANCH, INCLUDING THE FINANCIAL SERVICES DIVISION AND THE SPECIAL UNIT DEALING WITH SECURITIES AND FUTURES MARKETS, WOULD BE RENAMED ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HKMA.

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HK'S POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OUTLINED

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THE SIGNING OF THE JOINT DECLARATION IN 1984 INTRODUCED THE NEED FOR SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG'S POLITICAL STRUCTURE DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD, THE ACTING CHIEF SECRETARY, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, SAID IN VANCOUVER ON WEDNESDAY (OCTOBER 21).

SPEAKING ON "HONG KONG: OUR NEXT FIVE YEARS" AT A BUSINESS LUNCH IN VANCOUVER, MR WIGGHAM TOLD AN AUDIENCE OF 500 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY THAT FOR MANY HISTORICAL REASONS THERE HAD BEEN LIMITS ON DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION IN HONG KONG IN THE PAST.

HE SAID THE JOINT DECLARATION AND THE BASIC LAW SET OUT A FUTURE FOR THE TERRITORY IN WHICH THE LEGISLATURE WOULD BE FULLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED.

"THE ISSUE IS NOT WHETHER DEMOCRACY WILL ARRIVE BUT THE PACE AT WHICH IT IS INTRODUCED," MR WIGGHAM SAID.

/HE EMPHASISED .....

HE EMPHASISED THAT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD NO DOUBT OF THE BENEFITS OF GREATER DEMOCRACY IN HONG KONG, AND THE COMMUNITY TOO WANTED MORE DEMOCRACY.

HE SAID THEY SHARED THE VIEW ADOPTED IN MOST OF THE WORLD THAT IT WAS THE BEST FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY, AND IT WAS ALSO ESSENTIAL TO PROSPERITY.

"WE ALL KNOW THAT THE RULE OF LAW SUPPORTED BY DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IS AS ESSENTIAL TO INVESTORS AS TO THE MAN IN THE STREET.

"FOR ALL THESE REASONS, WE ARE CURRENTLY PRESSING CHINA TO AGREE TO MORE DIRECTLY ELECTED SEATS IN THE LEGISLATURE," MR WIGGHAM SAID.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THE COMMUNITY ALSO UNDERSTOOD THAT CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT WAS CONSTRAINED BY THE AGREEMENTS REACHED WITH CHINA AND BY THE PUBLIC'S DESIRE FOR A SMOOTH TRANSITION ACROSS "THE 1997 WATERSHED".

"SOME PEOPLE, INCLUDING MANY OUTSIDE HONG KONG, WISH US TO BE MORE HEROIC AND JETTISON THE AGREEMENTS WITH CHINA WHICH PROTECT HONG KONG'S FUTURE.

"THOSE WHO LIVE IN HONG KONG DEMAND A MORE SOPHISTICATED APPROACH IN WHICH WE ACT IN WAYS CONSISTENT WITH THE BASIC LAW BUT NEVERTHELESS MAKE THE MOST OF THE OPPORTUNITIES IT OFFERS," HE SAID.

ON THE NEXT ELECTIONS IN 1995, MR WIGGHAM SAID THE INITIATIVES PROPOSED BY THE GOVERNOR WOULD BE DISCUSSED WITH CHINA AND WITH THE LEGISLATURE, WHICH MUST ULTIMATELY DECIDE ON WHETHER TO ACCEPT THEM.

"IF THE PROPOSALS ARE ACCEPTED, HONG KONG WILL HAVE A POLITICAL SYSTEM IN WHICH THE LEGISLATURE AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES BECOME TRULY REPRESENTATIVE," HE SAID.

LOOKING BEYOND 1997, MR WIGGHAM SAID ONE COULD SEE THE PRINCIPLE OF "ONE CHINA, TWO SYSTEMS" WORKING IN PRACTICE WITH SUCCESS, STABILITY AND PROSPERITY FOR HONG KONG AND CHINA.

IN THAT FUTURE HONG KONG AND VANCOUVER, WHICH WERE LOCATED ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE PACIFIC, WOULD SHARE SPECIAL TIES. THEY WOULD BOTH BENEFIT FROM AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE PACIFIC'S ECONOMIC REVOLUTION.

"WE IN HONG KONG ARE NOT YET AS PROSPEROUS AS YOU, BUT BY 1997 OUR PER CAPITA GDP WILL BE AS HIGH AS THAT OF ITALY OR HOLLAND TODAY," HE SAID.

EARLIER IN HIS SPEECH, MR WIGGHAM SET OUT THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF THE GOVERNOR'S POLICY ADDRESS AND EXPLAINED WHY HONG KONG HAD SUCH A BRIGHT FUTURE DESPITE THE INEVITABLE UNCERTAINTIES CREATED BY THE CHANGE IN SOVEREIGNTY IN 1997.

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HK'S INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT KEY TO ECONOMIC GROWTH

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THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO TAKE AN ACTIVE LEAD IN AREAS WHERE ITS INVOLVEMENT IS NECESSARY TO PROMOTE FURTHER INVESTMENT AND GROWTH, THE DIRECTOR OF THE NEW AIRPORT PROJECTS CO-ORDINATION OFFICE, MR RAFAEL HUI, SAID IN VANCOUVER, CANADA, YESTERDAY (WEDNESDAY).

"ONE OF THESE AREAS IS INFRASTRUCTURE. HERE THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS TAKEN A LEADING PART IN DEVELOPING LAND RECLAMATIONS, ROADS, RAILWAYS, PORT FACILITIES AND SO ON," HE SAID.

MR HUI WAS ADDRESSING A BUSINESS SEMINAR ORGANISED BY THE HONG KONG TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL IN VANCOUVER AS PART OF THE FESTIVAL HONG KONG '92.

IN HIS SPEECH ON "OPPORTUNITIES FOR INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS IN HONG KONG", MR HUI ALSO OUTLINED PROGRESS ON THE AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME (ACP).

"OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS, FOR EXAMPLE, THE GOVERNMENT'S EXPENDITURE ON PUBLIC WORKS HAS, ON AVERAGE, TAKEN UP ABOUT 20 PER CENT OF TOTAL ANNUAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE, OR THREE TO FOUR PER CENT OF THE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP).

"IN 1992/93, THE EXPENDITURE IS EXPECTED TO REACH HK$28.2 BILLION, REPRESENTING 23.3 PER CENT OF THE ESTIMATED GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE OR 2.9 PER CENT OF THE ESTIMATED GDP.

"IT IS ENVISAGED THAT THE INVESTMENT LEVEL WILL GROW FURTHER IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AIRPORT CORE PROJECTS," HE SAID.

MR HUI STRESSED THAT SUCH HEAVY INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT WAS ESSENTIAL TO THE LONG-TERM ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF HONG KONG.

"WITHOUT IT, ECONOMIC GROWTH WILL SLOW DOWN AND BUSINESSES WILL DECLINE OR MOVE ELSEWHERE. THAT IN TURN WILL AFFECT THE GOVERNMENT'S REVENUES AND THEREFORE ITS ABILITY TO PROVIDE SOCIAL SERVICES IN A SOCIETY WHICH EXPECTS THE GOVERNMENT TO CARE," HE SAID.

AS INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS ARE SO LARGE, IT IS OFTEN NECESSARY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE A LEAD, MR HUI SAID.

"BUT THE PRIVATE SECTOR ALSO PLAYS A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE, AS YOU WOULD EXPECT IN A PLACE WHICH THRIVES ON BUSINESS," HE SAID.

TAKING SOME OF HONG KONG'S MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS AS EXAMPLES, MR HUI SAID THESE DEMONSTRATED BOTH THE LEAD GIVEN BY THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT THIS OPENED UP FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

/THESE DEVELOPMENTS .....

THESE DEVELOPMENTS INCLUDED THE CONTAINER PORT WHICH ANNUALLY VIED WITH SINGAPORE FOR THE CROWN OF BEING THE WORLD'S LARGEST, THE ROAD TUNNELS THAT TOOK HIGHWAYS THROUGH THE MANY HILLS OF HONG KONG, THREE RAILWAY SYSTEMS OPERATED BY TWO PUBLIC CORPORATIONS WHOLLY OWNED BY THE GOVERNMENT BUT RUN ON PRUDENT COMMERCIAL PRINCIPLES, AND THE EIGHT NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WOULD UTIMATELY HOUSE 3.3 MILLION PEOPLE.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, MR HUI SAID APART FROM THE ACP, A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS WOULD ALSO BE TAKING PLACE IN THE COMING YEARS.

THESE INCLUDED THE THREE TERMINALS AT THE CONTAINER PORT, A HK$14 BILLION HIGHWAY CALLED ROUTE 3 WHICH WOULD EXTEND NORTHWARDS TO OPEN UP THE NORTHWESTERN NEW TERRITORIES THROUGH TO THE CHINESE BORDER AND A NEW MAJOR 10-YEAR SEWAGE STRATEGY COSTING HK$17.8 BILLION TO TACKLE WATER POLLUTION.

ALSO INCLUDED WAS A SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL PROGRAMME COSTING A TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT OF HK$4.8 BILLION PLUS AN ANNUAL OPERATION COST OF HK$660 MILLION.

TURNING TO THE ACP, MR HUI SAID THE PROGRAMME CONSISTED OF 10 INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECTS COSTING AN ESTIMATED HK$112 BILLION AT 1991 PRICES, ALL TO BE BUILT IN FIVE YEARS FROM 1992.

SEVEN OF THE 10 PROJECTS WOULD BE FUNDED BY THE GOVERNMENT AS PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS, WHILE THE REMAINING THREE - THE NEW AIRPORT, THE AIRPORT RAILWAY AND THE WESTERN HARBOUR CROSSING - WERE BEING OPENED TO PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT IN VARYING WAYS.

MR HUI SAID OF THE 61 GOVERNMENT-FUNDED CONTRACTS IN THE ACP, 18 COSTING MORE THAN HK$19 BILLION HAD BEEN LET, ALL AT PRICES BELOW PROJECT ESTIMATES.

"ONE MORE GOVERNMENT WORKS CONTRACT IS EXPECTED TO BE LET BY THE END OF 1992 AND, JUDGING BY THE TENDERS RECEIVED, THE CONTRACT PRICE IS AGAIN EXPECTED TO BE WITHIN PROJECT ESTIMATES.

"THESE 19 CONTRACTS REPRESENT ABOUT 50 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL VALUE OF GOVERNMENT-FUNDED WORKS CONTRACTS IN THE ACP, OR ABOUT 32 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL COST OF GOVERNMENT-FUNDED PROJECTS IN THE ACP," HE SAID.

MR HUI STRESSED THAT THERE WOULD BE PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANADIAN COMPANIES TO BE INVOLVED IN HONG KONG'S INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE YEARS TO COME.

"I DO ENCOURAGE YOU TO CONTINUE TO COMPETE BECAUSE WE WELCOME ALL THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERTISE WE CAN GET AND WE OPERATE ON AN OPEN AND LEVEL-PLAYING FIELD," HE SAID.

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HK FESTIVAL IN CANADA A GREAT SUCCESS
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THE MONTH-LONG FESTIVAL HONG KONG '92 IN CANADA, THE LARGEST OVERSEAS PROMOTION EVER LAUNCHED BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, HAS BEEN WELL RECEIVED THROUGHOUT THE CANADIAN COMMUNITY.

IN PARTICULAR, VANCOUVER CITY MAYOR GORDON CAMPBELL HAS DECLARED OCTOBER "HONG KONG MONTH" IN VANCOUVER.

AT A SPECIAL DINNER TO THANK THE WORKERS, SUPPORTERS AND SPONSORS, SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE AND CHAIRMAN OF FESTIVAL HONG KONG '92, MR JAMES SO, SAID HE WAS OVERWHELMED BY THE WARM AND ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES AT ALL LEVELS TO THE FESTIVAL.

"THE FESTIVAL HAS BEEN A GREAT SUCCESS IN BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN OUR TWO COMMUNITIES AND IN STRENGTHENING TIES AND IMPROVING UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CANADA," HE SAID.

HE HOPED THAT PEOPLE IN HONG KONG AND CANADA WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK ON THESE TIES AND RELATIONSHIPS TO ENSURE THAT THE BENEFITS OF THE FESTIVAL WOULD BE LASTING.

AMONG SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS PRESENT AT THE DINNER WERE CANADA'S SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, MS BARBARA MCDOUGALL, AND HONG KONG'S ACTING CHIEF SECRETARY, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM.

ON WEDNESDAY, FESTIVAL ACTIVITIES CONTINUED. ON THE BUSINESS FRONT, MORE THAN 450 MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN THE MORNING JOINED A PANEL OF DISTINGUISHED HONG KONG AND CANADIAN BUSINESS LEADERS TO EXPLORE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN HONG KONG.

IN THE AFTERNOON, REPRESENTATIVES FROM CANADIAN COMPANIES WHICH WERE LOOKING TO ENTER THE COMPETITIVE ASIAN MARKET ATTENDED A WORKSHOP ON HONG KONG'S NEW AIRPORT AND RELATED PROJECTS WHICH DEMANDED ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, CONSTRUCTION, MATERIALS SUPPLY, ELECTRONICS, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, CONSULTING AND MANAGEMENT EXPERTISE.

ON THE CULTURAL FRONT, AN URBAN COUNCIL DELEGATION LED BY CHAIRMAN DR RONALD LEUNG HELD A MEETING WITH VANCOUVER CITY COUNCILLORS TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST SUCH AS CITY PLANNING, HERITAGE PRESERVATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT.

BEFORE THE MEETING, DR LEUNG PRESENTED TO THE VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL A LARGE REPRODUCTION OF AN HISTORICAL PAINTING ON HONG KONG HARBOUR, WHICH WAS RECEIVED BY VANCOUVER CITY MAYOR GORDON CAMPBELL.

EARLIER, A REGIONAL COUNCIL DELEGATION LED BY CHAIRMAN MR CHEUNG YAN-LUNG TOURED AN EXHIBITION OF "THE ART OF CHINESE THEATRE" BEING HELD AT VANCOUVER MUSEUM.

THE EXHIBITION FEATURED DISPLAYS OF PHOTOGRAPH, HISTORICAL PICTURES, MANUSCRIPTS, COSTUMES AND MODELS.

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BARRIE WIGGHAM SPENDS A BUSY DAY IN VANCOUVER

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THE ACTING CHIEF SECRETARY, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, HAD A BUSY DAY ON WEDNESDAY IN VANCOUVER, ATTENDING VARIOUS FESTIVAL HONG KONG '92 ACTIVITIES.

IN THE MORNING, MR WIGGHAM, ACCOMPANIED BY SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR JAMES SO, VISITED GRAY BEVERAGE INC, WHICH IS CANADA'S LARGEST PRIVATELY OWNED SOFT-DRINK MANUFACTURER AND DISTRIBUTOR.

HE TOURED THE FACILITIES AND WAS BRIEFED ON THE OPERATION OF THE MANUFACTURING PLANT BY THE OWNER, MR DAVID HO, WHO IS A FORMER HONG KONG RESIDENT.

MR WIGGHAM GAVE A KEYNOTE ADDRESS ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN HONG KONG AND THE OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS AT A LUNCHEON MEETING WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY MORE THAN 450 MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

IN THE AFTERNOON, HE VISITED A "HAKKA ARCHITECTURE" EXHIBITION BEING HELD AT THE MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

HE LATER OFFICIATED AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF HANG SENG BANK'S CHINESE COINS AND CURRENCIES EXHIBITION AT THE ASIAN CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSITY.

HE THEN ATTENDED A "THANK-YOU" DINNER FOR FESTIVAL ORGANISERS, SPONSORS AND VOLUNTEERS, DURING WHICH HE PRESENTED RECOGNITION SOUVENIR TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FEDERAL AND CITY GOVERNMENTS, ORGANISING COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND CO-ORGANISERS.

MR WIGGHAM IS DUE TO LEAVE VANCOUVER ON THURSDAY AFTERNOON FOR HONG KONG.

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TRAVEL AGENT LICENSING FEES TO BE REVISED

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THE TRAVEL AGENTS' LICENSING AND RELATED FEES WILL BE REVISED WITH EFFECT FROM JANUARY 1 NEXT YEAR, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

THE REVISED FEES ARE SUMMARISED AS FOLLOWS:

	NEW RATE	LAST REVISED ON	EXISTING
* APPLICATION FOR A LICENCE	$520	1.2.91	$400

/* A LICENCE .....

*	A LICENCE OR THE RENEWAL OF A LICENCE (FOR EACH MONTH OF THE TERM)	$400	1.2.91	$310
*	AMENDING A LICENCE			
	- FOR AN ADDITIONAL ADDRESS, FOR EACH NEW PREMISES	$550	1.1.90	$400
	- OTHERWISE	$130	1.1.90	$90
*	ISSUING A DUPLICATE OF A LICENCE	$760	1.1.90	$560
*	INSPECTING THE REGISTER OR ANY PART THEREOF	$30	1.1.90	$20
*	ISSUING OR SUPPLYING A COPY OF OR EXTRACT FROM ANY ENTRY IN THE REGISTER	$30	1.1.90	$20
*	CERTIFYING A COPY OF OR EXTRACT FROM ANY ENTRY IN THE REGISTER	$70	1.1.90	$50

"MOST OF THESE FEES HAVE NOT BEEN ADJUSTED FOR MORE THAN TWO YEARS IN VIEW OF THE MORATORIUM ON FEE INCREASES, WHICH EXPIRED EARLIER THIS YEAR," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"THEY ARE SUBJECT TO REGULAR REVIEW AND THE REVISED RATES ARE SET TO RECOVER INCREASED COSTS IN PROVIDING THE SERVICE," HE ADDED.

REVENUE FROM THE REVISED FEES WILL RECOVER ABOUT 70 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL OPERATING COSTS OF THE REGISTRY OF TRAVEL AGENTS.

THE REMAINING 30 PER CENT ARE INCURRED FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF OTHER NON-LICENSING FUNCTIONS WHICH ARE ALSO FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC.

ON THE ADVICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRAVEL AGENTS, THE COMMENCEMENT DATE HAS BEEN DEFERRED FROM OCTOBER 1 TO JANUARY 1, 1993 TO ALLOW SUFFICIENT ADVANCE NOTICE FOR THE TRAVEL AGENTS TO ADJUST.

THE REVISED FEES ARE SET OUT IN THE TRAVEL AGENTS (AMENDMENT) REGULATION 1992 TO BE GAZETTED ON NEXT FRIDAY (OCTOBER 30).

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51 LEGCO MEMBERS DEBATE POLICY ADDRESS

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A TOTAL OF 51 MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SPOKE IN A DEBATE ON THE GOVERNOR'S POLICY ADDRESS AT A TWO-DAY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WHICH ENDED TODAY (THURSDAY).

TWENTY-THREE OF THEM SPOKE YESTERDAY AND 28 TODAY ON A MOTION MOVED BY THE HON MRS ELSIE TU. THE MOTION READ: "THAT THIS COUNCIL THANKS THE GOVERNOR FOR HIS ADDRESS."

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WILL REPLY TO THE POINTS RAISED WHEN THE DEBATE RESUMES NEXT WEDNESDAY (OCTOBER 28).

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SEMINAR ON COURT REPORTING FOR JOURNALISTS

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NEWS REPORTERS, EDITORS AND JOURNALISM STUDENTS ARE WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE IN A TWO-HOUR SEMINAR ON COURT REPORTING THIS SATURDAY (OCTOBER 24) MORNING AT THE CONFERENCE ROOM, NEW ANNEXE, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE COMMITTEE ON THE PROMOTION OF CIVIC EDUCATION (CPCE), ORGANISER OF THE EVENT, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY): "THE SEMINAR AIMS TO PROVIDE BOTH PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL GUIDELINES TO JOURNALISTS IN REPORTING COURT CASES."

"BECAUSE OF THE IMMENSE INFLUENCE THE MASS MEDIA HAS ON THE PUBLIC, FAIR AND ACCURATE COURT CASE REPORTS WILL HELP AROUSE PEOPLE'S AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RULE OF LAW.

"IT IS ALSO HOPED THAT THE REPORTERS COULD BE ENCOURAGED TO GIVE MORE COVERAGE OF COURT CASES IN THE TERRITORY," HE ADDED.

THREE CPCE MEMBERS, ALL WITH LEGAL BACKGROUND, WILL SPEAK ON TOPICS SUCH AS CONTEMPT OF COURT, DEFAMATION AND COURT PROCEEDINGS.

THEY ARE CONVENOR OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION OF THE RULE OF LAW, MR WALTER CHAN; A HONG KONG UNIVERSITY LECTURER IN LAW, MR JOHANNES CHAN; AND A CO-OPTED MEMBER OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE, MR LUDWIG NG.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR MR SIMON IP WILL OFFICIATE AT THE OPENING CEREMONY AT 10 AM. DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION SERVICES, MRS IRENE YAU, WILL PRESENT SOUVENIRS TO MR IP AND HONG KONG JOURNALIST ASSOCIATION.

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THE CPCE HAS SET THE PROMOTION OF THE RULE OF LAW AS ONE OF ITS WORK THEMES FOR THE CURRENT YEAR. THE OTHER WILL BE ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

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ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE SEMINAR WHICH BEGINS AT 10 AM AT THE CONFERENCE ROOM, FIRST FLOOR, NEW ANNEXE, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, LOWER ALBERT ROAD, HONG KONG.

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SUSTAINED EFFORTS TO PROTECT COUNTRYSIDE

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE ITS EFFORT IN PLANTING AND MANAGING TREES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF RESIDENTS AND FUTURE GENERATION.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT'S SENIOR CONSERVATION OFFICER, MR MARTIN LEUNG, WHEN HE ADDRESSED A LUNCHEON OF THE Y'S MEN'S CLUB OF HONG KONG TODAY (THURSDAY).

NOTING THAT TREE MANAGEMENT WAS AN IMPORTANT PART IN COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION, MR LEUNG CALLED ON COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO CONTINUE THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S TREE PLANTING AND CARING ACTIVITIES.

OVER THE PAST 35 YEARS, VARIOUS ANNUAL ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN ORGANISED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO INVOLVE THE GENERAL PUBLIC IN TREE PLANTING WORK. LAST YEAR, MORE THAN 22,000 RESIDENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE ACTIVITIES.

"LET US JOIN HANDS TO MAKE OUR COUNTRYSIDE GREEN, BEAUTIFUL AND PRODUCTIVE SO AS TO MEET THE OBJECTIVES OF THE WORLD CONSERVATION STRATEGY," HE SAID.

ON GOVERNMENT'S EFFORT IN AFFORESTATION, MR LEUNG POINTED OUT THAT IT STARTED IN THE NEW TERRITORIES ABOUT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY TO PROTECT THE HILLSIDES, AND TO PROVIDE FUEL AND SMALL TIMBER FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS.

THIS RESULTED IN A GOOD TREE COVER BY 1940. HOWEVER, THE FORESTRY WORK WAS WASTED DURING A WAR BETWEEN 1940 AND 1945, WHEN THE DEMAND FOR FIREWOOD LED TO WIDESPREAD CUTTING OF TREES AND STRIPPING OF HILLS.

"SHORTLY AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR, REAFFORESTATION BY BROADCASTING OF PINE SEEDS WAS CARRIED OUT TO REVEGETATE THE BARREN HILLS.

/"STRICT PROTECTION .....

"STRICT PROTECTION WAS INSTITUTED TO STOP ILLEGAL WOODCUTTING SO THAT TREES COULD REGENERATE NATURALLY," HE SAID.

THE YEAR 1953 SAW THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL APPROVE A NEW FORESTRY POLICY ENABLING AFFORESTATION AND AMENITY PLANTING TO BE STEPPED UP TO PROTECT WATER CATCHMENT AREAS AND IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY.

IN THE FOLLOWING YEARS, FOREST PLANTATIONS EXPANDED RAPIDLY. MOST OF THE WATER CATCHMENT AREAS AND HILL SLOPES OF THE TERRITORY WERE AFFORESTED. THE MAJOR TREE SPECIES PLANTED WERE ACACIA, BRISBANE BOX AND SLASH PINE.

MR LEUNG SAID THE RAPID INCREASE IN POPULATION IN THE EARLY 1950'S HAD PROMPTED THE GOVERNMENT TO INTRODUCE THE POLICY OF DEVELOPING AND MANAGING THE COUNTRYSIDE FOR CONSERVATION AND RECREATION ABOUT 10 YEARS LATER.

SINCE THE 1970'S, GREATER EMPHASIS HAD BEEN PLACED ON PLANTING FOR NATURE CONSERVATION AND AMENITY PURPOSES.

"MORE INDIGENOUS TREE SPECIES, INCLUDING SCHIMA, MACHILAS AND OAK, WERE USED IN MASSIVE PLANTING.

"RARE TREES, SUCH AS KOTELEERIA, NATIVE CAMELLIAS AND BALD CYPRESS WERE ALSO PLANTED TO REPLENISH THEIR LIMITED STOCK IN THE WILD, THEREBY HELPING TO IMPROVE THE NATURALNESS AND SPECIES DIVERSITY OF THE PLANTATIONS," HE SAID.

SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNTRY PARKS IN 1976, THE WOODLANDS AND SCENIC HILLS HAVE ASSUMED A NEW AND IMPORTANT ROLE AS A PRIME RECREATIONAL AND RESTING PLACE FOR THE URBAN POPULATION.

"PLANTATION IN COUNTRY PARKS ARE NOW MANAGED FOR THE PURPOSES OF MAINTAINING THE WATER CATCHMENTS IN GOOD PHYSICAL CONDITION, PROVIDING RECREATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES FOR URBAN DWELLERS AND OFFERING NATURAL HABITATS FOR NUMEROUS WILD PLANTS AND ANIMALS," HE ADDED.

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PROMISING FUTURE FOR LEATHER GOODS TRADE

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THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF TRADE, MR JOHN TSANG, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY) THAT HONG KONG'S LEATHER GOODS TRADE HAD AN EXTREMELY GOOD POTENTIAL TO EXPAND FURTHER IN FUTURE YEARS.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL FOOTWEAR AND LEATHER GOODS FAIR 1992, HE TOLD AN AUDIENCE OF INTERNATIONAL TRADERS THAT HONG KONG'S LEATHER PRODUCTS, IN PARTICULAR LEATHER GARMENTS, HAD SUCCESSFULLY PENETRATED A NUMBER OF NEW AND TRADITIONALLY DIFFICULT MARKETS, INCLUDING JAPAN.

/"AS YOU .....

"AS YOU KNOW, HONG KONG IS WELL KNOWN FOR ITS ABILITY TO ADAPT TO THE CHANGING FASHION TRENDS.

"WE HAVE IN RECENT YEARS ACQUIRED A FINE REPUTATION FOR DESIGNING AND PRODUCING QUALITY FINISHED LEATHER PRODUCTS.

"OUR TOTAL EXPORT OF SOME $20 BILLION IN 1991 IS THE MOST FITTING TESTIMONY OF OUR SUCCESS," HE SAID.

TURNING TO FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG, MR TSANG SAID A LARGE NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS HAD SHIFTED THEIR PRODUCTION BASE ACROSS THE BORDER TO THE NORTH, AND AT THE SAME TIME, INCREASED THEIR PRODUCTION CAPABILITY SIGNIFICANTLY.

"AS A RESULT, HONG KONG HAS EMERGED AS AN IMPORTANT ENTREPOT FOR FOOTWEAR WITH A TOTAL EXPORT VALUE OF SOME $24 BILLION," HE SAID.

HE REMINDED VISITORS TO THE TRADE FAIR THAT HONG KONG, WITH ITS POPULATION OF SIX MILLION AND ANOTHER SIX MILLION OF TOURISTS VISITING THE TERRITORY EACH YEAR, WAS INDEED A POTENT MARKET FOR QUALITY AND WELL-DESIGNED SHOES OF THE WORLD.

THE FOUR-DAY TRADE FAIR, HELD AT THE HONG KONG CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE, HAS ATTRACTED 350 EXHIBITORS FROM SOME 21 COUNTRIES TO PARTICIPATE.

MORE THAN 12,000 VISITORS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD ARE EXPECTED TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CONSOLIDATE OLD BUSINESS CONTACTS AND EXPLORING NEW ONES.

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MORE IMPORTANT ROLE FOR KAIFONG ASSOCIATIONS

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KAIFONG ASSOCIATIONS WILL PLAY A MORE IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE PROMOTION OF DISTRICT AFFAIRS IN THE DAYS AHEAD, THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR HONG KONG AND KOWLOON, MR PAUL WONG, SAID THIS EVENING (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT A DINNER RECEPTION TO CELEBRATE THE 43RD KAIFONG ASSOCIATION FESTIVAL, MR WONG SAID NOWADAYS KAIFONG ASSOCIATIONS NOT ONLY PROMOTED THE WELL-BEING OF THE PEOPLE, BUT ALSO HELPED IN COMMUNITY BUILDING, FOSTERING A SENSE OF BELONGING AMONG RESIDENTS AND REFLECTING THE VIEWS OF THE RESIDENTS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNOR HAD PROPOSED IN HIS POLICY ADDRESS AN INCREASE IN THE POWER AND THE BUDGETS OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS.

THIS ALSO MEANT A MORE "DECISIVE ROLE" FOR KAIFONG ASSOCIATIONS IN DISTRICT MATTERS BECAUSE OF THEIR CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ADVISORY BODIES, HE SAID.

/ADDITIONALLY, THE .....

ADDITIONALLY, THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCY SEATS WOULD RESULT IN A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF VOTERS. THIS WOULD FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE STATUS OF KAIFONG ASSOCIATIONS BECAUSE OF THEIR CLOSE CONTACTS WITH THE PUBLIC, HE ADDED.

MR WONG ALSO EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT KAIFONG ASSOCIATIONS WOULD CONTINUE THEIR CLOSE CO-OPERATION WITH THE DISTRICT BOARDS IN REFLECTING PUBLIC VIEWS AND ENCOURAGING MORE VOTERS TO CAST THEIR BALLOTS.

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CAUSEWAY BAY ARTS CARNIVAL

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A MIX OF WESTERN AND ORIENTAL CULTURAL PERFORMANCES WILL BE LINED UP AT AN ARTS CARNIVAL IN CAUSEWAY BAY CENTRAL AREA ON SUNDAY (OCTOBER 25).

ORGANISED BY THE WAN CHAI FESTIVAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE OF THE DISTRICT BOARD, THE CARNIVAL WILL BE HELD FROM NOON TO 5.30 PM.

AT THE SECTION OF PATERSON STREET BETWEEN KINGSTON STREET AND GREAT GEORGE STREET, FRINGE CLUB ARTISTS WILL PERFORM STILTS-WALKING, A CLOWN MIME SHOW AND A "MASK THEATRE".

SEVERAL PERFORMING GROUPS WILL PRESENT GOLDEN OLDIES MUSIC, CHINESE MUSIC AND WESTERN FOLK DANCES. POP SINGERS WILL ALSO GIVE RENDITIONS OF POP-CHART HITS.

BOTH RESIDENTS AND HOLIDAY SHOPPERS ARE WELCOME TO JOIN THE CARNIVAL, ADMISSION TO WHICH IS FREE.

SPONSORED BY THE DISTRICT BOARD, THE CARNIVAL IS CO-ORGANISED BY THE CAUSEWAY BAY CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE WITH HELP FROM THE WAN CHAI DISTRICT OFFICE.

ENQUIRIES ON THE CARNIVAL CAN BE MADE ON 835 2003.

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ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE CAUSEWAY BAY CENTRAL ARTS CARNIVAL TO BE HELD FROM 12.15 PM TO 5.30 PM ON SUNDAY (OCTOBER 25) AT PATERSON STREET (BETWEEN KINGSTON STREET AND GREAT GEORGE STREET), CAUSEWAY BAY.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS
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	$ MILLION
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	2,700
REVERSAL OF LAF	-1,200
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	1,500
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	+280
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,780

LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER TWI 111.5 *+0.0* 22.10.92

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS		HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS				
TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.81 PCT	13 MONTHS	2311	6.25	102.34	4.04
1 MONTH	3.19 PCT	16 MONTHS	2402	5.50	101.53	4.34
3 MONTHS	3.30 PCT	19 MONTHS	2405	5.502	101.57	4.50
6 MONTHS	3.50 PCT	22 MONTHS	2408	4.375	99.67	4.61
12 MONTHS	3.94 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 14,466 MN

CLOSED 22 OCTOBER 1992

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