



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1990

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IMPORTANT TO CONTROL SMUGGLING BETWEEN HK AND CHINA

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THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON IAN STRACHAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IT WAS IMPORTANT NOW TO LOOK TO THE FUTURE AND PARTICULARLY TO THE CONTROL OF SMUGGLING BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA, WHICH WAS AT THE ROOT OF THE MARINE INCIDENT ON MAY 3.

HE SAID THAT WE ALL REGRETTED THAT THE INCIDENT OCCURRED, WHEN SPEAKING IN THE DEBATE ON THE MOTION MOVED BY THE HON MARTIN LEE ON ALLEGED SMUGGLING OF CARS TO CHINA.

"THE INCIDENT ON THE EVENING OF JUNE 4 OFF SHUM CHUNG, WHEN THREE POLICE CONSTABLES WERE INJURED, AND ONE SERIOUSLY INJURED, WHEN A SMUGGLING BOAT RAMMED A POLICE CRAFT, ONLY SERVES TO UNDERLINE THE DETERMINATION OF THIS ADMINISTRATION TO STRIKE AT THE SMUGGLERS," MR STRACHAN SAID.

MR STRACHAN SAID HE HAD MADE A FULL STATEMENT TO COUNCIL ON THE FACTS OF THE CASE THREE WEEKS AGO AND THE ONLY POINT WHICH HE WOULD ADD, IN RESPONSE TO MR LEE'S QUESTION, WAS THAT HONG KONG POLICE VESSELS DID NOT ENTER INTO CHINESE WATERS.

REFERRING TO PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN DURING THE INCIDENT, HE SAID THIS ISSUE WAS ON ITS WAY TO SETTLEMENT AND HE SAW NO ADVANTAGE WHICH WOULD BE GAINED BY MAKING THEM PUBLIC.

CLARIFYING POINTS RAISED IN THE DEBATE, MR STRACHAN SAID THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE BORDER LIAISON MEETING ON MAY 30 WAS TO SECURE THE RELEASE OF THE FIVE HONG KONG CREWMEN, WHICH HAPPILY WAS ACHIEVED.

"THE TWO SIDES ALSO AGREED TO INCREASE CROSS-BORDER LIAISON AND CO-OPERATION TO CONTROL SMUGGLING AND TRY TO ENSURE THAT SUCH AN INCIDENT DOES NOT HAPPEN AGAIN.

"I MUST EMPHASISE, AND I DO SO MOST STRONGLY, THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF ANY SECRET DEAL TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF THE CREWMEN, MR STRACHAN SAID.

AS TO THE THREE STOLEN CARS CONFISCATED BY THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES, MR STRACHAN SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE, THROUGH THE NORMAL CHANNELS, TO SEEK THEIR RETURN TO HONG KONG.

"THEY REPRESENT IMPORTANT EVIDENCE AGAINST THOSE ALREADY ARRESTED IN CONNECTION WITH THIS INCIDENT," HE SAID.

NOTING THAT THERE HAD BEEN SUGGESTIONS THAT THE HONG KONG CREWMEN HAD BEEN IN SOME WAY PREVENTED BY THE POLICE OR THE GOVERNMENT FROM SPEAKING TO THE PRESS, MR STRACHAN SAID: "THIS IS NOT TRUE".

"ALL PEOPLE IN HONG KONG HAVE THE RIGHT OF FREE EXPRESSION, AND IT IS ENTIRELY UP TO THEM WHETHER OR NOT THEY EXERCISE THAT RIGHT.

/"THROUGHOUT THEIR

"THROUGHOUT THEIR DETENTION, WE CONSTANTLY SOUGHT THEIR IMMEDIATE RELEASE. THIS IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE WAS EVENTUALLY OBTAINED," HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT CONSULAR ACCESS WAS NOT NORMALLY GRANTED TO HONG KONG RESIDENTS REGARDED BY CHINA AS CHINESE NATIONALS.

"ACCESS BY FAMILY MEMBERS IS SOMETIMES ALLOWED. IN THIS CASE IT WAS NOT.

"DURING THEIR DETENTION, FOUR OF THE SEAMEN APPARENTLY SIGNED CONFESSIONS, BUT SUBSEQUENTLY, BEFORE THEIR RELEASE, THEY WITHDREW THEM," HE SAID.

MR STRACHAN CONFIRMED THAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO PROVIDE COMPENSATION TO THE CREWMEN.

"SINCE THEY HAD BEEN EMPLOYED BY THE POLICE, THIS IS ONLY FAIR AND PROPER.

"DETAILS OF THE COMPENSATION PACKAGE ARE NOW BEING WORKED OUT, AND IT WILL BE PAID AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE FOUR WEEK RENTAL OF THE TUG AND LIGHTER WILL BE PAID BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT," HE ADDED.

WITH REGARD TO THE QUESTIONS ON HONG KONG TERRITORIAL WATERS AFTER 1997, MR STRACHAN SAID THESE WENT FAR BEYOND THE MOTION BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

HOWEVER, HE POINTED OUT THAT FOUR ROUNDS OF DISCUSSIONS RELATING TO THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN HONG KONG AND GUANGDONG HAD BEEN HELD.

"THE MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC ORDER IN THE HONG KONG SAR WILL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SAR GOVERNMENT," HE SAID.

MR STRACHAN SAID IN ADDITION TO THE AGREEMENT REACHED BETWEEN THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES AND THE ADMINISTRATION TO STEP UP CROSS-BORDER LIAISON AND CO-OPERATION IN ANTI-SMUGGLING, THE GOVERNMENT ON MAY 25 ANNOUNCED NEW CONTROLS ON THE USE OF HIGH-POWERED, MULTI-ENGINED PLEASURE CRAFT, AND ON THE EXPORTATION OF CIGARETTES TO CHINA.

"FURTHER, WITH EFFECT FROM THIS COMING FRIDAY, ALL VESSELS UNDER 250 TONNES CARRYING TELEVISIONS AND VIDEO RECORDERS FROM HONG KONG TO ANY COUNTRY, WILL REQUIRE AN EXPORT LICENCE. STIFF PENALTIES AND POWERS OF CONFISCATION WILL BE INVOKED WHERE NECESSARY," HE SAID.

AS TO WHAT PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE IN RECENT WEEKS TO STRIKE AT THE SMUGGLERS, MR STRACHAN SAID SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS WEEK, SEVEN SPEEDBOATS AND ONE OPEN SAMPAN HAD HAD THEIR LICENCES SUSPENDED BY THE MARINE POLICE UNDER POWERS DELEGATED BY THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE FOR BREACHES OF REGULATIONS OR LICENSING CONDITIONS.

"FURTHER, THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE HAS PREPARED A TARGET LIST OF SOME 60 VESSELS, SUSPECTED BY THE MARINE POLICE OF BEING INVOLVED IN SMUGGLING.

/"THE DIRECTOR

"THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE INTENDS TO IMPOSE NEW LICENSING CONDITIONS ON THESE VESSELS, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS THE FITTING OF OUTBOARD ENGINES," HE SAID.

IN ADDITION, MR STRACHAN SAID CLEAR PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE IN CONTROLLING THE EXPORT OF CIGARETTES TO CHINA.

"IN THE SEVEN DAY PERIOD BEFORE MAY 25, 307 PERMITS INVOLVING 46,000 CASES OF CIGARETTES WERE ISSUED TO VESSELS BELOW 250 TONNES. SINCE MAY 25, WHEN WE BROUGHT IN OUR NEW MEASURES AND UP UNTIL YESTERDAY, NONE HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO VESSELS BELOW 250 TONNES.

"THIS IS A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD TO CONTROL SMUGGLING," HE SAID.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES OF CIGARETTES RELEASED FROM BOND FOR EXPORT TO CHINA BY SHIP (REGARDLESS OF TONNAGE) IN THE SEVEN DAY PERIOD BEFORE MAY 25 WAS OVER 150,000 CASES. DURING THE NEXT SEVEN DAY PERIOD AFTER THE NEW MEASURES WERE BROUGHT IN, THIS DROPPED BY 52.5 PER CENT.

"THIS IS A REDUCTION, AN INCREDIBLE REDUCTION OF 807 MILLION CIGARETTES," HE SAID.

MR STRACHAN SAID IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MARINE POLICE, THE ROYAL NAVY, THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE SERVICE AND THE MARINE DEPARTMENT, THE ADMINISTRATION INTENDED TO TACKLE SMUGGLING VIGOROUSLY.

"WE ARE NOT AT ALL COMPLACENT THAT THESE MEASURES SO FAR INTRODUCED WILL NECESSARILY RESOLVE THIS SERIOUS PROBLEM. WE WILL CAREFULLY AND CLOSELY MONITOR THE RESULTS OF THESE MEASURES.

"IF ADDITIONAL MEASURES PROVE NECESSARY, THEY WILL BE INTRODUCED. OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER IN OUR WATERS," MR STRACHAN SAID.

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MOTION INTENDED TO SEEK THE TRUTH

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THE HON MARTIN LEE TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THE INTENTION OF HIS MOTION TO DEBATE AN ALLEGED SMUGGLING INCIDENT ON MAY 3 WAS TO SEEK THE TRUTH, AND NOT TO CAUSE CONFRONTATION, OR TO EMBARRASS THE HONG KONG OR CHINESE GOVERNMENTS.

HE SAID THAT TRUTH AND THE RULE OF LAW WERE TWO VALUES THAT SHOULD NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES BE SACRIFICED FOR POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

/THE MOTION

THE MOTION READ: "THIS COUNCIL NOTES WITH CONCERN THE INCIDENT INVOLVING THE ALLEGED SMUGGLING OF THREE MERCEDES BENZ MOTOR CARS ON MAY 3, 1990, THE TEMPORARY DETENTION OF TWO HONG KONG POLICEMEN AND THE FOUR-WEEK-LONG DETENTION OF FIVE HONG KONG SEAMEN IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IN RELATION TO THAT ALLEGED SMUGGLING".

IN MOVING THE MOTION, MR LEE SAID TRUTH AND THE RULE OF LAW WERE THE TWO MOST CRITICAL INGREDIENTS OF CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG.

HE SAID: "IF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WERE TO THINK THAT THEIR PRESENT OR FUTURE GOVERNMENT IS NOT HONEST OR THAT THE RULE OF LAW WILL NOT BE UPHELD, THEN HOW CAN ONE EXPECT THEM TO HAVE FAITH IN THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG?"

"IN THE PRESENT SITUATION, HOWEVER, BOTH THE RULE OF LAW AND TRUTH HAVE SO FAR BEEN SACRIFICED FOR POLITICAL REASONS, SO AS TO GIVE 'FACE' TO ONE OR THE OTHER OF THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED.

"YET, I ASK, WHAT GOOD IS 'FACE' TO A GOVERNMENT WHICH CANNOT EVEN FACE THE TRUTH?"

MR LEE ALSO CRITICISED THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT FOR NOT MAKING PUBLIC THE PHOTOGRAPHS WHICH POLICE TOOK SHOWING UNIFORMED CHINESE PERSONNEL IN HONG KONG WATERS DURING THE INCIDENT.

HE ASKED WHY THE GOVERNMENT HAD ACCEPTED PASSIVELY THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES' WAY OF HANDLING THE CASE.

"IF THE RULE OF LAW IS SO FLAGRANTLY VIOLATED SEVEN YEARS BEFORE 1997 AND THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT DOES NOT EVEN OBJECT, WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER 1997?" HE ASKED.

MR LEE CRITICISED THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES FOR INFRINGING THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF HONG KONG AS THERE WERE DOZENS OF OCCASIONS IN WHICH CHINESE MILITARY PERSONNEL HAD ENTERED HONG KONG WATERS.

"IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT THE CHINESE SIDE HAS NEVER CONTENDED THAT THE ARMED AND UNIFORMED PERSONNEL WERE EITHER IMPOSTERS IN UNIFORM OR SOLDIERS PERFORMING UNAUTHORISED ACTIVITIES.

"THE ONLY POSSIBLE CONCLUSION, THEN, IS THAT THE CHINESE UNIFORMED PERSONNEL WERE ACTING UNDER ORDERS FROM SUPERIOR OFFICERS TO SMUGGLE THE CARS INTO CHINA. SUCH A SCENARIO IS EXTREMELY DISTURBING TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.

"IF THE CURRENT HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAS SUCH LITTLE POWER TO PREVENT SUCH INCIDENTS FROM HAPPENING OR BRING THE PERPETRATORS TO JUSTICE, OR GIVE CONSULAR PROTECTION TO THE FIVE CREWMEN WHO WERE WRONGFULLY DETAINED IN CHINA, WHAT CAN ONE EXPECT OF THE FUTURE SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION GOVERNMENT?" HE SAID.

MR LEE ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO ANSWER FULLY A SERIES OF QUESTIONS ON THE INCIDENT.

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THESE INCLUDED A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF WHAT HAD HAPPENDED AFTER 5.50 AM, THE RELEASE OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS, THE RESULTS OF THE BORDER LIAISON MEETING ON MAY 30, WHETHER THE FIVE SEAMEN HAD BEEN GIVEN CONSULAR ACCESS, THE RETURN OF THE THREE CARS AND THE FINANCIAL LOSSES ON THE RENTAL OF THE TUG AND LIGHTER.

OTHER QUESTIONS CONCERNED WHETHER THE SEAMEN WERE UNDER ANY PRESSURE OR ADVICE TO CANCEL THEIR PRESS CONFERENCE UPON THEIR RETURN, AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR HONG KONG'S TERRITORIAL WATERS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT BETWEEN THE SAR AND CHINA IN THE POST-1997 PERIOD.

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GOVT SHOULD TAKE IMMEDIATE, POSITIVE ACTION

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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE IMMEDIATE AND POSITIVE ACTION TO ADDRESS THE SITUATION CONCERNING THE RECENT DETENTION OF TWO HONG KONG POLICEMEN AND FIVE HONG KONG SEAMEN IN CHINA IN RELATION TO THE ALLEGED SMUGGLING OF CARS ON MAY 3, THE HON HUI YIN-FAT SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION MOVED BY THE HON MARTIN LEE, MR HUI SAID HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THE INCIDENT WOULD FURTHER LOWER THE CONFIDENCE OF HONG KONG PEOPLE AS TO BOTH THE HONG KONG AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENTS' ABILITY TO RUN HONG KONG PROPERLY UNTIL 1997.

HE SAID IT WAS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND HOW CHINESE SOLDIERS AND OFFICIALS COULD BE ALLOWED TO COME AND GO FREELY IN HONG KONG WATERS AND TERRITORIES WITHOUT BEING INTERCEPTED AND CHARGED ACCORDINGLY.

MR HUI SAID THE INCIDENT HAD ALSO REVEALED THAT SMUGGLING ACTIVITIES BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA HAD BEEN VERY FREQUENT AND EXTENSIVE, BUT THAT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WAS RELUCTANT OR UNDECIDED TO DEAL WITH THEM SQUARELY UNTIL THE ERUPTION OF THE CURRENT INCIDENT.

"THE ANTI-SMUGGLING MEASURES INTRODUCED RECENTLY BY HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAVE PROVED TO BE LESS THAN EFFECTIVE AS EVIDENCED BY THE MARINE POLICE CASUALTIES WHEN INTERCEPTING A SUSPECTED SPEEDBOAT THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY," HE SAID.

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FOCUS MORE ON RE-BUILDING CONFIDENCE

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS TAKE AN OATH TO SERVE THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG AND THEREFORE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO COMMUNICATE ON GOVERNMENT ACTION IN ORDER TO CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESSFUL GOVERNANCE, THE HON PAUL CHENG SAID IN THE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE DEBATE ON A MOTION MOVED BY THE HON MARTIN LEE, MR CHENG EXPLAINED WHY HE HAD CIRCULATED NOTICE OF HIS INTENTION TO MOVE AN AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION, WHICH EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE ALLEGED SMUGGLING INCIDENT WHICH OCCURRED ON MAY 3.

MR CHENG SAID HIS INTENTION WAS TO RE-FOCUS ATTENTION ON WHAT WAS IMPORTANT TO THE HONG KONG PEOPLE - ATTENTION TO HOW WELL THE GOVERNMENT HAD SERVED IN ITS SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS IN UPHOLDING THE INTERESTS OF HONG KONG AND EFFECTING FRUITFUL COMMUNICATION WITH THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

HE SAID MR LEE'S MOTION CARRIED A NEGATIVE CONNOTATION WITHOUT DUE REGARD FOR BALANCE FROM THE POSITIVE ACTIONS TAKEN.

"I FEEL WE MUST ALL FOCUS MORE ON RE-BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG RATHER THAN ON SEEKING EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO PUT UNDUE PRESSURE ON THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND/OR THE ADMINISTRATION DURING THESE SENSITIVE TIMES," HE SAID.

HE ADDED: "THE MOTION - AS PROPOSED - CALLS INTO QUESTION OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION FOR THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.

"IT IS THIS BROADER ISSUE THAT CONCERNS ME TODAY. WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO TAKE ACTIONS WHICH FOCUS ON RE-BUILDING CONFIDENCE. WE SHOULD NOT BE SPENDING VALUABLE TIME ON EFFORTS THAT MAY RUN THE RISK OF UNDERMINING THE CONFIDENCE OF OUR COMMUNITY."

MR CHENG SAID THAT HE SHARED CONCERN OVER THE INCIDENT ITSELF AND OVER THE COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES IN ITS AFTERMATH.

"BUT THAT DOES NOT HAVE TO TRANSLATE INTO SUPPORTING A MOTION WHICH WILL ONCE AGAIN FUEL THE WORRIES OF THE HONG KONG PEOPLE," HE NOTED.

HE SAID AS LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS, MEMBERS WERE DUTY BOUND TO EXERCISE SOUND JUDGEMENT, WISE COUNSEL, AND RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP.

"WITH THIS DUTY IN FRONT OF US, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD NOT MERELY REGISTER CONCERN, BUT WE SHOULD ALSO LET THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG KNOW THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAS OUR SUPPORT IN THE WAY THE MATTER IS BEING RESOLVED.

"THE COMMUNITY ALREADY KNOWS THE GRAVITY OF THE MATTER THROUGH VARIOUS MEDIA REPORTS. WHAT THEY MAY NOT FULLY APPRECIATE IS OUR HONG KONG GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE MATTER," MR CHENG SAID.

INCIDENT A BLOW TO CONFIDENCE IN RULE OF LAW

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THE HON RONALD CHOW SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE RECENT INCIDENT RELATED TO THE ALLEGED SMUGGLING OF CARS TO CHINA HAD DAMAGED HONG KONG PEOPLE'S CONFIDENCE IN THE SUPREMACY OF THE RULE OF LAW BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER 1997.

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION MOVED BY THE HON MARTIN LEE, MR CHOW SAID THE INCIDENT WAS A SERIOUS VIOLATION OF THE LAW BUT IT APPEARED THAT NO ONE WOULD BE PROSECUTED BY THE CHINESE OR THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENTS, NOR WOULD THE STOLEN CARS BE RETURNED.

HE SAID HE FOUND THE INCIDENT DISTURBING BECAUSE IT COULD BE SEEN AS PART OF AN ESCALATING PATTERN ON BEHALF OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO NOT FULLY UPHOLD AND ADHERE TO THE SUPREMACY OF THE RULE OF LAW AND TO INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS.

HE ALSO SAID BOTH THE CHINESE AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS HAD CHOSEN TO IGNORE AND BRUSH OVER THE BASIC LAW'S SEVERAL CLEAR BREACHES OF THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE JOINT DECLARATION.

HE SAID THE DECISION TO PLACATE CHINA AND PROSECUTE FIVE PRO-DEMOCRACY ADVOCATES - IN A "KOWTOW" TO PRESSURE FROM CHINA - REPRESENTED A DANGEROUS DISREGARD FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S SELF-ACKNOWLEDGED OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS AND COMMITMENTS TO THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE CONTAINED IN THE OCTOBER 1989 THIRD PERIODIC REPORT.

MR CHOW URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO BE MORE VIGILANT IN UPHOLDING THE ABSOLUTE SUPREMACY OF THE RULE OF LAW.

"THERE ARE NO POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS THAT CAN JUSTIFY DISREGARDING THE LAW AND INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS.

"IF WE PLACE 'FACE' AND 'GOOD RELATIONS' ABOVE THE RULE OF LAW, THEN HONG KONG WILL FACE A GRAVE FUTURE INDEED," HE SAID.

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CALL FOR JOINT FORCE TO TACKLE SMUGGLING

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A JOINT SECURITY TASK FORCE COMPRISING HONG KONG AND CHINESE SECURITY OFFICIALS SHOULD BE FORMED TO CRACK DOWN ON CROSS-BORDER SMUGGLING ACTIVITIES, DR THE HON LEONG CHE-HUNG TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SUPPORTING THE HON MARTIN LEE'S MOTION ON ALLEGED SMUGGLING OF CARS TO CHINA, DR LEONG SAID SUCH INCIDENTS HAD ACCENTUATED THE LACK OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS BETWEEN THE HONG KONG AND GUANGDONG AUTHORITIES.

/HE SAID

HE SAID WHILE THE ORDEAL OF THE FIVE HONG KONG SEAMEN DETAINED IN SHEKOU HAD ENDED WITH THEIR RELEASE, THE CASE ON MAY 3 WAS FAR FROM BEING RESOLVED.

HE WAS CONCERNED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE ISSUE HAD AFFECTED THE CONFIDENCE OF HONG KONG PEOPLE.

DR LEONG ASKED WHO THE GUILTY PARTIES WERE, AND WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN ANY CRAVEN CONCESSION MADE ON THE PART OF THE ADMINISTRATION SO AS TO SECURE THE SEAMEN'S FREEDOM.

HE WAS ALSO CONCERNED WHAT MEASURES THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE TO PREVENT SIMILAR UNSETTLING PROBLEMS IN THE FUTURE.

ACCORDING TO DR LEONG, THE CRUX OF THE PROBLEM WAS HOW THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WOULD HALT UNAUTHORISED INCURSIONS INTO HONG KONG WATERS BY CHINESE SECURITY VESSELS IN CONNECTION WITH SMUGGLING ACTIVITIES AND TO RETAIN CREDIBILITY OF HONG KONG'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY UP TO AND BEYOND 1997.

HE CALLED ON THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED TO JOIN HANDS AND LAUNCH A FULL-SCALE ENQUIRY ON THE HIGHLY CONTROVERSIAL INCIDENT.

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PURPOSE OF INSURANCE COMPANIES AMENDMENT BILL EXPLAINED
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THE PURPOSE OF THE INSURANCE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1990 IS TO AMEND THE INSURANCE COMPANIES ORDINANCE IN ORDER TO REMOVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE ENFORCEABILITY OF UNAUTHORISED INSURANCE CONTRACTS AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF CONTROLLERS OF AUTHORISED INSURERS.

THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID NENDICK, SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL.

ON ENFORCEABILITY OF UNAUTHORISED CONTRACTS, MR NENDICK EXPLAINED THAT THE ORDINANCE RESTRICTED THE CARRYING ON OF ANY CLASS OF INSURANCE BUSINESS IN OR FROM HONG KONG TO INSURERS AUTHORISED FOR THAT PURPOSE BY THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY.

"HOWEVER, AS THE LAW STANDS, IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER INSURANCE CONTRACTS ENTERED INTO BY UNAUTHORISED INSURERS ARE VALID AND ENFORCEABLE.

"WE BELIEVE THIS DOUBT SHOULD BE REMOVED," HE SAID.

HE SAID THE OBJECT WAS TO PROTECT THE ORDINARY POLICY HOLDER FROM BEING ADVERSELY AFFECTED, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, BY ANY BREACH OF THE ORDINANCE BY AN INSURER.

/"WE PROPOSE

"WE PROPOSE THEREFORE THAT A DIRECT INSURANCE CONTRACT ISSUED BY AN UNAUTHORISED INSURER SHOULD BE ENFORCEABLE AT THE OPTION OF THE POLICY HOLDER.

"THUS THE POLICY HOLDER MAY CHOOSE EITHER TO ENFORCE OR TO VOID THE CONTRACT AND, IN THE LATTER CASE, TO RECOVER ANY CONSIDERATION PAID UNDER THE CONTRACT," HE SAID.

AS TO A REINSURANCE CONTRACT ENTERED INTO BY AN UNAUTHORISED INSURER, MR NENDICK SAID THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSED THAT IT SHOULD ALWAYS BE ENFORCEABLE.

"IF A REINSURANCE CONTRACT WERE NOT TO BE ENFORCEABLE BECAUSE OF A CONTRAVENTION BY EITHER CONTRACTING PARTY, INSURER OR REINSURER, THIS COULD MATERIALLY AFFECT THE ABILITY OF THE INSURER TO MEET CLAIMS OF DIRECT POLICY HOLDERS," HE ADDED.

ON PRIOR APPROVAL OF A CONTROLLER, MR NENDICK EXPLAINED THAT THE ORDINANCE REQUIRED AN AUTHORISED INSURER TO NOTIFY THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY, IN ARREARS, OF ANY APPOINTMENT AS OR CHANGE IN THE CONTROLLER OF THE COMPANY.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE ORDINANCE, A CONTROLLER WAS DEFINED AS A MANAGING DIRECTOR OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF AN INSURER OR ITS PARENT COMPANY, A PERSON WHOSE INSTRUCTIONS THE DIRECTORS OF THE INSURER OR ITS PARENT COMPANY WERE ACCUSTOMED TO FOLLOW, OR A "CONTROLLING SHAREHOLDER" - A PERSON WHO, ALONE OR WITH AN ASSOCIATE OR NOMINEE, CONTROLLED 15 PER CENT OR MORE OF THE VOTING POWER OF THE INSURER OR ITS PARENT COMPANY.

MR NENDICK SAID THAT UPON NOTIFICATION, THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY MIGHT OBJECT TO ANY PARTICULAR CONTROLLER IF IT APPEARED TO HIM THAT THAT CONTROLLER WAS NOT A FIT AND PROPER PERSON TO HOLD SUCH A POSITION.

"WE CONSIDER THIS ARRANGEMENT TO BE UNSATISFACTORY.

"WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY TO BE INFORMED BEFORE THE EVENT, RATHER THAN AFTER IT.

"IN THE INTERESTS OF POLICY HOLDERS, A PERSON WHO IS NOT FIT AND PROPER SHOULD NOT BE IN CONTROL OF AN INSURER FOR EVEN A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME," HE ADDED.

MR NENDICK SAID THE GOVERNMENT THEREFORE PROPOSED THAT PRIOR APPROVAL BE OBTAINED FROM THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY BEFORE ANY APPOINTMENT AS OR CHANGE IN CONTROLLER OF AN AUTHORISED INSURER TOOK PLACE.

"TO PREVENT AN UNFIT CONTROLLING SHAREHOLDER FROM CONTINUING TO EXERCISE ANY INFLUENCE OVER AN INSURER, WE ALSO PROPOSE THAT THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY SHOULD BE ABLE TO IMPOSE CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS ON THE SHARES HELD BY ANY PERSON WHO HAS BECOME A CONTROLLING SHAREHOLDER WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY AND, WHERE NECESSARY, TO APPLY TO THE HIGH COURT FOR THE SALE OF SUCH SHARES.

"A RESTRICTION ORDER IMPOSED BY THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY WILL EFFECTIVELY PROHIBIT THE TRANSFER OF THE SHARES, THE EXERCISE OF VOTING RIGHTS, THE ISSUE OF BONUS SHARES AND THE PAYMENT OF DIVIDENDS," MR NENDICK SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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CASE FOR PHASING IN LIABILITIES ACCEPTED

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THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON K.Y. YEUNG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) HE WAS PERSUADED THERE WAS A CASE FOR PHASING IN CERTAIN LIABILITIES UNDER THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989.

"IN REACHING THIS DECISION I HAVE HAD REGARD TO THE PRECEDENT THAT WE HAVE SET WHEN IN 1986 WE PHASED IN EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY TOWARDS LONG SERVICE PAYMENTS," MR YEUNG SAID IN WINDING UP THE DEBATE ON THE BILL.

MR YEUNG NOTED THAT WHEN HE INTRODUCED THE BILL LAST JANUARY, HE HAD SAID THAT ONE OF ITS MAIN PURPOSES HAD BEEN TO REMOVE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN MANUAL AND NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES, SO THAT ALL EMPLOYEES WOULD BE PROTECTED.

HE AGREED WITH THE HON PAUL CHENG THAT THE REMOVAL OF THIS DISTINCTION WOULD IMMEDIATELY CREATE SUBSTANTIAL LONG SERVICE PAYMENT AND SEVERANCE PAYMENT LIABILITIES FOR EMPLOYERS TOWARDS THEIR MORE HIGHLY PAID NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES.

"TO SOFTEN THE IMPACT, THE BILL PROVIDES THAT WAGES IN EXCESS OF THE NEW CEILING OF \$15,000 PER MONTH SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE CALCULATION OF AN EMPLOYEE'S ENTITLEMENTS," MR YEUNG SAID.

HE SAID THAT THE AD HOC GROUP, OF WHICH MR CHENG WAS CONVENER, HAD MANAGED TO ARGUE FORCEFULLY AND CONVINCINGLY THAT, EVEN WITH THIS QUALIFICATION TO THE WAGE CEILING OF \$15,000, AN EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY TOWARDS HIS NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES WHO WERE PAID ABOVE THIS WAGE CEILING COULD BECOME UNACCEPTABLY HIGH.

"UNDER EXISTING LEGISLATION THEIR IMMEDIATE MAXIMUM EXPOSURE COULD BE AS HIGH AS \$180,000 PER EMPLOYEE," HE ADDED.

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WHEN THIS BURDEN WAS CONSIDERED AGAINST THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF UNINCORPORATED PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIPS, MR YEUNG SAID, THE BILL WOULD REQUIRE CURRENT PARTNERS TO INJECT VERY SUBSTANTIAL FUNDS INTO THEIR BUSINESSES TO COVER LIABILITIES THAT HAD IN MANY CASES BEEN INCURRED BY THEIR PREDECESSORS.

HE REALISED THAT THE CONCESSION ARISING FROM PHASING IN LIABILITIES WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF DEFERRING THE FULL BENEFIT OF THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT AND SEVERANCE PAYMENT PROVISIONS FOR NON-MANUAL WORKERS PAID ABOVE \$15,000 A MONTH, AND HE COULD THEREFORE UNDERSTAND THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG.

MR YEUNG SAID HE HAD CAREFULLY CONSIDERED THE POSSIBILITY OF RESTRICTING THE SCOPE OF THIS CONCESSION TO THE ACCOUNTING AND LEGAL PROFESSIONS, BUT HAD COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THIS WOULD CONFLICT WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE, WHICH DID NOT ALLOW INDIVIDUAL INDUSTRIES AND PROFESSIONS TO CONTRACT OUT OF ITS AMBIT.

MR YEUNG SAID THAT PERFECTION, NOT UNLIKE BEAUTY, WAS IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER.

"IN THIS SENSE, EMPLOYMENT LEGISLATION CAN NEVER BE PERFECT, BECAUSE IT IS INVARIABLY THE OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND COMPROMISE.

"IN COMMENDING THIS BILL AND THE COMMITTEE STAGE AMENDMENTS FOR ACCEPTANCE, MAY I REMIND HONOURABLE MEMBERS THAT THE PERFECT IS VERY OFTEN THE ENEMY OF THE GOOD," HE SAID.

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BILL WILL GIVE BETTER PROTECTION TO EMPLOYEES

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THE MOST SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENT OF THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989 WAS TO REMOVE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN MANUAL AND NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES ENABLING ALL EMPLOYEES TO COME UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE STANDARDS SET IN THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE REGARDLESS OF THEIR WAGE LEVELS, THE HON PAUL CHENG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL, MR CHENG SAID THE MEASURE ALSO SOUGHT TO STRENGTHEN THE PROVISIONS IN THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE TO IMPROVE THE PROTECTION FOR EMPLOYEES GENERALLY.

ANOTHER MAJOR AMENDMENT TO THE ORDINANCE WAS THE REVISION OF THE DEFINITION ON "CONTINUOUS CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT" SO THAT AN EMPLOYEE WHO HAD WORKED A TOTAL OF 18 HOURS A WEEK WITHIN A PERIOD OF FOUR CONSECUTIVE WEEKS WOULD BE PROTECTED.

THE BILL ALSO REDEFINED "LAY-OFF" SO THAT EMPLOYEES DEEMED TO BE LAID OFF AFTER BEING EMPLOYED FOR A CERTAIN PERIOD OF TIME WOULD BE ENTITLED TO SEVERANCE PAYMENTS.

FINALLY, THE BILL PROVIDED A QUALIFYING PERIOD OF 12 WEEKS OF CONTINUOUS EMPLOYMENT BEFORE A PREGNANT EMPLOYEE WAS PROTECTED FROM BEING DISMISSED.

IN CONSIDERING THAT THE AMENDMENTS MIGHT INCUR HUGE FINANCIAL LIABILITIES TO EMPLOYERS, THE AD HOC GROUP AGREED THAT A PHASED IMPLEMENTATION FOR SEVERANCE AND LONG SERVICE PAYMENTS SHOULD BE ADOPTED FOR EMPLOYEES EARNING MORE THAN \$15,000 A MONTH.

MR CHENG SAID THE PHASING BEGAN BY CALCULATING ENTITLEMENT ON THE BASIS OF THREE YEARS' PAST SERVICE FROM THE FIRST YEAR OF THE ENACTMENT OF THE BILL.

THEREAFTER, TWO MORE YEARS OF PAST SERVICE WERE ADDED ON A YEARLY BASIS UNTIL THE MAXIMUM ENTITLEMENT OF 18 YEARS' PAST SERVICE WAS REACHED IN THE EIGHTH YEAR FROM 1990, HE ADDED.

HE STRESSED THAT THE ARRANGEMENT WOULD NOT AFFECT MANUAL EMPLOYEES WHOSE ENTITLEMENT WOULD BE CALCULATED AS ORIGINALLY PROPOSED.

AS CONVENER OF THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP FORMED TO STUDY THE BILL, MR CHENG SAID: "WHILST IT DOES HAVE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS, I AM PERSONALLY SATISFIED THAT IT WILL BE WELL-RECEIVED BY EMPLOYERS WHO HAVE THE WELFARE OF THEIR EMPLOYEES AT HEART.

"AFTER ALL, MANPOWER IS A MAJOR ASSET FOR ANY ENTERPRISE. IN HONG KONG, AS WE CONTINUE TO STRIVE FOR OUR PROSPERITY AND STABILITY FOR THE YEARS AHEAD, WE CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE SIGHT OF THE WELFARE OUR WORKFORCE TRULY DESERVES."

THE AD HOC GROUP HAD MET 12 TIMES AND RECEIVED 10 REPRESENTATIONS FROM VARIOUS CONCERNED GROUPS.

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REMOVAL OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MANUAL AND NON-MANUAL WORKERS WELCOMED
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THE HON RONALD ARCULLI TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) HE WAS HAPPY THAT A COMPROMISE HAD BEEN REACHED ON THE REMOVAL OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MANUAL AND NON-MANUAL WORKERS WHICH PARTLY ALLEVIATED THE TREMENDOUS, AND INDEED, FINANCIAL BURDEN THAT ACCOUNTANTS AND SOLICITORS AND OTHERS WOULD FACE AND YET MET ESTABLISHED POLICIES OF THE GOVERNMENT.

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989, MR ARCULLI SAID THE REMOVAL OF THE DIFFERENCE WAS ACHIEVED BY THE REMOVAL OF THE WAGE CEILING APPLICABLE TO NON-MANUAL WORKERS AT PRESENT AND THE DATE ON WHICH SUCH RIGHTS WOULD ACCURE TO EMPLOYEES.

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HOLDING THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE WAS TO SAFEGUARD THE INTERESTS OF THOSE WHO WERE LEAST CAPABLE OF PROTECTING THEMSELVES, MR ARCULLI SAID IT SEEMED TO BE STRAINING A POINT TO SUGGEST, FOR INSTANCE, THAT A QUALIFIED LAWYER OR BUSINESS PEOPLE IN TOP MANAGEMENT POSITIONS REQUIRED THIS SORT OF PROTECTION.

HE NOTED THAT ACCOUNTANTS AND SOLICITORS WERE NOT ALLOWED TO PRACTISE THEIR PROFESSIONS IN THE FORM OF A LIMITED COMPANY WHICH MEANT THAT THEY WERE LIABLE PERSONALLY FOR ANY DEBT OF THEIR FIRM.

"IN ESSENCE THIS MEANS THAT THESE, AND PERHAPS OTHERS, PROFESSIONALS ARE EXPOSED TO THE RISK OF INSOLVENCY SHOULD THEY OR THE FIRM IN WHICH THEY ARE PARTNERS BE UNABLE TO MEET LONG TERM SERVICE PAYMENTS OR SEVERANCE PAY SHOULD THE OCCASION ARISE," HE SAID.

"SECONDLY," MR ARCULLI SAID, "THE PARTNERS WITHIN THESE FIRMS ALWAYS CHANGE AND THERE IS LITTLE FAIRNESS IF WE ASK THE PARTNERS TO ASSUME TODAY THE BURDEN OF LONG TERM SERVICE PAYMENTS OR SEVERANCE PAY TO EMPLOYEES IN RESPECT OF THE PERIOD STARTING FROM THE DATE OF EMPLOYMENT OF EACH EMPLOYEE."

"THIRDLY, PROFESSIONAL FIRMS TEND TO REMUNERATE THEIR STAFF ON THE BASIS OF ANNUAL PERFORMANCE WHICH IS RELATED TO ANNUAL PROFITABILITY," HE ADDED.

MR ARCULLI SAID BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF PARTNERSHIPS, ONE COULD HARDLY ASK A RETIRED PARTNER TO DISGORGE ANY PROFITS HE ENJOYED BY MAKING A CONTRIBUTION TODAY FROM PAST PROFITS SIMPLY BECAUSE A LAW ENACTED TODAY REQUIRED SUCH PARTNERSHIPS TO BEAR A NEW FINANCIAL BURDEN.

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AD HOC GROUP COMMENDED

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THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON IAN STRACHAN, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) HE WAS GRATEFUL TO THE HON NGAI SHIU-KIT AND MEMBERS OF MR NGAI'S AD HOC GROUP FOR THE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION THEY HAD GIVEN TO THE GAMBLING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989.

WINDING UP THE SECOND READING DEBATE ON THE BILL, MR STRACHAN SAID HE AGREED TO THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS WHICH MR NGAI WOULD BE MOVING IN THE COMMITTEE STAGE.

THE TITLE OF THE BILL WAS ALSO CHANGED TO GAMBLING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1990 IN THE COMMITTEE STAGE.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1990

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TIGHTENED GAMBLING BILL WELCOMED

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MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AD HOC GROUP FORMED TO STUDY THE GAMBLING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989 TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WELCOMED THE BILL WHICH WOULD IMPOSE MORE STRINGENT ENFORCEMENT MEASURES AND TOUGHER PENALTIES AGAINST ILLEGAL GAMBLING.

SPEAKING IN THE COUNCIL IN THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL, THE HON NGAI SHIU-KIT SAID THE PROPOSED TIGHTENING OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS IN THE ORDINANCE AND THE INCREASE IN THE MAXIMUM FINES FOR OPERATORS OF ILLEGAL GAMBLING ENTERPRISES WOULD DEAL A SEVERE BLOW TO THESE OPERATORS AND DETER PEOPLE FROM PATRONISING ILLEGAL GAMBLING ESTABLISHMENTS.

THE BILL ALSO CARRIED AN INCREASE IN MAXIMUM PENALTIES FOR VARIOUS GAMBLING OFFENCES APART FROM INCREASING THE MAXIMUM FINES FOR OPERATORS OF ILLEGAL GAMBLING ENTERPRISES FROM \$500,000 TO \$5 MILLION, HE NOTED.

MR NGAI SAID THE AD HOC GROUP HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN IN TWO AREAS, WHICH HAD BEEN ACCORDINGLY DEALT WITH BY THE ADMINISTRATION AFTER DELIBERATIONS.

THE FIRST WAS THE SEEMINGLY CONTRADICTORY APPROACH ADOPTED BY THE ADMINISTRATION TOWARDS ILLEGAL GAMBLING ACTIVITIES, I.E. WHILE TAKING TOUGHER MEASURES TO ERADICATE ILLEGAL GAMBLING WITHIN HONG KONG, OFFSHORE BUT HONG KONG BASED GAMBLING ON FLOATING CASINOS WAS TOLERATED.

MR NGAI SAID THE AD HOC GROUP WAS PLEASED TO LEARN THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAD DECIDED TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM OF FLOATING CASINOS AND THAT LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS WERE BEING DRAFTED FOR SUBMISSION TO LEGCO.

SECONDLY, THE GROUP HAD RESERVATION ON THE PROPOSED OUTRIGHT ABOLITION OF THE REQUIREMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CONSENT BEFORE INSTITUTING PROSECUTIONS RELATING TO ASSISTING IN BOOKMAKING AS IT WOULD REMOVE THE SAFEGUARD FOR INNOCENT PERSONS.

MR NGAI SAID THE GROUP PROPOSED THAT THE REQUIREMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CONSENT BE RETAINED AND THAT A NEW PROVISION SHOULD BE INTRODUCED TO EMPOWER THE COURTS TO AMEND CHARGES UNDER SECTION 7(1)(A) OR (B) TO ONE UNDER SECTION 7(1)(C).

THE PROPOSAL WAS AGREED BY THE ADMINISTRATION AND AMENDMENTS WOULD BE MOVED IN THE COMMITTEE STAGE, HE ADDED.

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CHANGES IN APPROVED ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE

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A SUMMARY OF ALL CHANGES MADE TO THE APPROVED ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1989-90 WAS TABLED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID NENDICK.

MR NENDICK SAID SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION OF \$875.5 MILLION HAD BEEN APPROVED.

"IT WAS FULLY OFFSET EITHER BY SAVINGS UNDER THE SAME OR OTHER HEADS OF EXPENDITURE OR BY THE DELETION OF FUNDS UNDER THE ADDITIONAL COMMITMENTS SUBHEADS," HE SAID.

"THIS INCLUDED \$474 MILLION FOR ADVANCE PAYMENT OF WATER CHARGES."

MR NENDICK NOTED THAT APPROVED NON-RECURRENT COMMITMENTS HAD INCREASED BY \$638.9 MILLION DURING THE PERIOD, AND NEW NON-RECURRENT COMMITMENTS OF \$2,197.1 MILLION HAD ALSO BEEN APPROVED.

IN THE SAME PERIOD, A NET DECREASE OF 1,679 POSTS HAD BEEN APPROVED.

MR NENDICK SAID ITEMS IN THE SUMMARY HAD BEEN APPROVED EITHER BY FINANCE COMMITTEE OR UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY.

"THE LATTER HAVE BEEN REPORTED TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 8(8)(A) OF THE PUBLIC FINANCE ORDINANCE," HE ADDED.

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STANDARD WEAPONS CARRIED BY POLICE OFFICERS CONSIDERED ADEQUATE

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A RECENTLY COMPLETED POLICE REVIEW HAS CONCLUDED THAT THE STANDARD WEAPONS CARRIED BY OFFICERS ON PATROL ARE ADEQUATE, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON IAN STRACHAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON LEUNG WAI-TUNG, MR STRACHAN SAID THAT GIVEN THE POTENTIAL DANGERS TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHICH MIGHT ARISE FROM AN EXCHANGE OF FIRE INVOLVING MORE POWERFUL WEAPONS, IT WAS NOT PROPOSED TO UPGRADE THE STANDARD WEAPONS PACKAGE.

HOWEVER, HE ASSURED MEMBERS THAT THE ADEQUACY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THAT PACKAGE WAS KEPT REGULARLY UNDER REVIEW.

/MR STRACHAN

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MR STRACHAN SAID THAT POLICE OFFICERS ON BEAT PATROL NORMALLY CARRIED THE FOLLOWING: A 0.38 CALIBRE SMITH AND WESSON MODEL 10 REVOLVER; A TRUNCHEON; A PAIR OF HANDCUFFS; A WHISTLE AND A LANYARD; AND A BEAT RADIO.

A REMINGTON SHOTGUN, A 1 1/2-INCH TEAR SMOKE PISTOL AND TEAR SMOKE GRENADES WERE CARRIED ON MOBILE PATROL AND EMERGENCY UNIT VEHICLES.

"IF REQUIRED, RIFLES AND OTHER WEAPONS ARE AVAILABLE FOR ISSUE FROM POLICE STATION ARMOURIES," HE ADDED.

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EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, ACTIVITIES IDENTIFIED FOR PRUNING, REFORM
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THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON K. Y. YEUNG, DETAILED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES THAT HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED FOR PRUNING, PHASING OUT AND REFORM.

MR YEUNG PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING LIST IN REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON RITA FAN:

- (A) A PHASED CONTRACTION OF ADULT EDUCATION SERVICES;
- (B) EFFECTING A GREATER DEVOLUTION OF AUTHORITY TO SCHOOLS OVER THE MANAGEMENT OF CERTAIN STAFF AND FINANCIAL MATTERS;
- (C) LOWERING THE FREQUENCY OF SUBJECT INSPECTIONS IN RESPECT OF THE BETTER ESTABLISHED SCHOOLS;
- (D) REDUCING ANNUAL RE-MAKES OF EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION (ETV) PROGRAMMES AND DISCONTINUING ETV INSPECTION WORK;
- (E) RE-DEPLOYING STAFF WITHIN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, AND MERGING CERTAIN UNITS;
- (F) MAKING THE DIRECTOR OF ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES THE AUTHORISED PERSON FOR MAJOR AND EMERGENCY REPAIRS IN RESPECT OF ALL NON-ESTATE AIDED SCHOOLS; AND
- (G) CHANGING THE MODE OF REFRESHER TRAINING COURSES FOR SERVING SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS FROM A BLOCK RELEASE TO DAY RELEASE BASIS.

MR YEUNG SAID THESE MEASURES WERE EXPECTED TO GENERATE ANNUALLY RECURRENT SAVINGS, MUCH OF WHICH WERE EXPECTED TO BE IN THE FORM OF PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS, OF ABOUT \$7.7 MILLION IN THE FIRST YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION, RISING TO \$18.1 MILLION ON REACHING MATURITY IN ABOUT FOUR YEARS.

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AS TO WHETHER OTHER EDUCATIONAL SERVICES WOULD RECEIVE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM THESE SAVINGS, MR YEUNG SAID THE EXTENT TO WHICH POLICY SECRETARIES MIGHT DEPLOY SAVINGS WITHIN THEIR PROGRAMME AREAS WAS STILL UNDER EXAMINATION AGAINST THE WIDER BACKGROUND OF THE STRINGENT BUDGETARY STRATEGY TO BE ADOPTED FOR 1991-92.

"A DECISION WILL BE MADE ON THIS ISSUE TOWARDS THE MIDDLE OF THIS YEAR.

"I AM HOPEFUL, HOWEVER, THAT THE DECISION WILL BE A FAVOURABLE ONE AS FAR AS MY PROGRAMME AREA IS CONCERNED," MR YEUNG SAID.

FOR THIS REASON, MR YEUNG SAID, HE WAS PLANNING TO RE-DEPLOY THESE SAVINGS TOWARDS TWO URGENT ACTIVITIES FOR WHICH NO PROVISION HAD BEEN MADE IN THE 1990-91 ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE.

"THESE ARE, FIRST, THE PREPARATION OF THE SYLLABUSES FOR ADVANCED SUPPLEMENTARY LEVEL SUBJECTS, WHICH ARE DUE TO BE INTRODUCED INTO ALL SIXTH FORMS IN 1992 AND, SECONDLY, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT WORK INVOLVED IN FORMULATING ATTAINMENT STANDARDS AND ASSOCIATED TESTS FOR CORE SUBJECTS IN SCHOOLS," HE SAID.

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17,355 APPLICATIONS FOR CNCC IN FIRST QUARTER

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THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON IAN STRACHAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT 17,355 APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF NO CRIMINAL CONVICTION (CNCC) HAD BEEN RECEIVED IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF THIS YEAR, COMPARED WITH 18,327 IN THE PRECEDING QUARTER.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON HUI YIN-FAT, MR STRACHAN POINTED OUT THAT BECAUSE OF RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS, A CEILING OF 300 APPLICATIONS TO BE PROCESSED PER DAY HAD BEEN IMPOSED IN JANUARY THIS YEAR.

APPLICANTS WERE NOW REQUIRED TO BOOK AN APPOINTMENT FOR THE PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS FOR WHICH THERE WAS CURRENTLY A WAITING TIME OF 17 DAYS.

SUBSEQUENT PROCESSING WOULD NORMALLY BE COMPLETED WITHIN 21 WORKING DAYS.

"AS THE PRESENT AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME IS CONSIDERED REASONABLE IT IS NOT INTENDED, GIVEN OTHER POLICING COMMITMENTS, TO DEPLOY ADDITIONAL STAFF TO THE CNCC OFFICE AT THIS TIME," HE SAID.

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UPGC TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON MEETING
INCREASED DEMAND FOR ACADEMIC STAFF

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THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE HAS BEEN WORKING WITH THE TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO SEE HOW AN INCREASED DEMAND FOR ACADEMIC STAFF CAN BE MET, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON K.Y. YEUNG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON EDWARD HO, MR YEUNG SAID HE COULD ASSURE MEMBERS THAT THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD BE VERY CAREFULLY EXAMINED WHEN THEY REACHED HIM LATER THIS MONTH.

"WHILE THE TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS ARE, BY AND LARGE, ABLE TO RECRUIT SUITABLE ACADEMIC STAFF, THE CHALLENGE POSED BY THE GOVERNMENT'S PLAN TO DOUBLE THE PROVISION OF FIRST-YEAR FIRST-DEGREE PLACES BY 1994-95 IS A REAL ONE AND SHOULD NOT BE UNDER-ESTIMATED," HE SAID.

MR YEUNG SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE MEASURES THAT THE COMMITTEE HAD CONSIDERED INCLUDED A REVIEW OF SALARY RELATIVITIES BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT INSTITUTIONS, AN EXAMINATION OF POSSIBILITIES FOR HAVING A MORE FLEXIBLE PACKAGE OF FRINGE BENEFITS, RAISING OF EXISTING LEVELS OF PRODUCTIVITY, INCREASED FUNDING FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH, AND INCREASING THE LOCAL SUPPLY OF ACADEMIC STAFF THROUGH ENHANCED POST-GRADUATE PROGRAMMES.

"SEPARATELY MY BRANCH IS ALSO CONSIDERING THE NEED FOR AUGMENTING OUR EXISTING COMPLEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL PLACES, AS IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE RECRUITMENT OF OVERSEAS ACADEMICS WILL ADD TO THE GROWTH IN DEMAND FOR THIS TYPE OF EDUCATION," HE SAID.

MR YEUNG POINTED OUT THAT ON AT LEAST TWO OCCASIONS IN THE RECENT PAST, HE HAD INFORMED MEMBERS THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO FALLING OFF OF INTEREST IN ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT FROM EITHER LOCAL OR OVERSEAS SOURCES, AND THAT OUR TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS WOULD BE ABLE TO COMPETE SUCCESSFULLY FOR STAFF.

"I HAVE ENQUIRED AGAIN OF THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE AND CAN CONFIRM THAT ON THE WHOLE THIS REMAINS THE CASE.

"THERE ARE, HOWEVER, CERTAIN SECTORAL SHORTFALLS. A COMMON FEATURE AMONGST ALL THE INSTITUTIONS IS THAT GOOD PEOPLE ARE HARD TO GET IN CERTAIN DISCIPLINES, SUCH AS FINANCE, ACCOUNTING AND COMPUTING.

"I AM INFORMED, HOWEVER, THAT THIS REFLECTS WORLD-WIDE SHORTAGES," HE ADDED.

DECREASE IN TRIAD CRIMES

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THE NUMBER OF CRIMES INVOLVING TRIADS HAD DECREASED FROM 4,391 CASES IN 1985 TO 2,587 CASES IN 1989, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON IAN STRACHAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THIS REPRESENTED A REDUCTION OF 41 PER CENT OVER THE PERIOD, HE SAID IN REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON ROSANNA TAM.

MR STRACHAN ALSO LISTED MEASURES WHICH HAD BEEN IMPLEMENTED BY ADMINISTRATIVE OR LEGISLATIVE MEANS TO COMBAT TRIADS.

THESE WERE RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAD BEEN CONTAINED IN THE DISCUSSION DOCUMENT "OPTIONS FOR CHANGES IN THE LAW AND IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAW TO COUNTER THE TRIAD PROBLEM".

THE ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES, WHICH WERE STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY THE PUBLIC, INCLUDED:

- OMITTING ADDRESSES FROM WITNESS STATEMENTS TO BE SERVED ON THE DEFENCE;
- ALLOCATING, WHERE POSSIBLE, POLICE MANPOWER TO RESPOND TO WITNESSES WHO MIGHT BE INTIMIDATED;
- ISSUING A NOTICE OF THE POWER OF THE COURT TO REMOVE UNDESIRABLE PERSONS FROM THE PUBLIC GALLERY AND TO PROTECT WITNESSES;
- INTRODUCTION OF ONE-WAY VIEWERS FOR IDENTIFICATION PARADES IN SUITABLE CASES; AND
- USE OF THE TASK FORCE APPROACH TO INVESTIGATE TRIAD-BACKED ORGANISED CRIME.

MR STRACHAN SAID OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS, ALSO STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY THE PUBLIC, WHICH HAD BEEN, OR WERE BEING, IMPLEMENTED THROUGH LEGISLATION INCLUDED:

- INCREASING THE FINES UNDER THE SOCIETIES ORDINANCE FOR OFFENCES RELATED TO TRIAD SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP;
- INTRODUCTION OF THE TRIAD RENUNCIATION SCHEME;
- IMPOSITION OF HARSHER PENALTIES FOR ILLEGAL GAMBLING (THIS ITEM WAS ON TODAY'S AGENDA FOR COMPLETION OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES);
- BETTER CONTROL OF NUISANCES ASSOCIATED WITH PROSTITUTION - THIS WAS BEING EXAMINED BY THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP; AND
- IMPOSITION OF HARSHER PENALTIES FOR DRUG TRAFFICKERS.

/MR STRACHAN

MR STRACHAN SAID DIVERGENT VIEWS WERE EXPRESSED ON OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS. THOSE WHICH WERE BEING FURTHER STUDIED INCLUDED:

- INTRODUCTION OF A POST RELEASE SUPERVISION SCHEME FOR EX-OFFENDERS;
- INTRODUCTION OF ORGANISED CRIME LEGISLATION - THIS HAD THE SUPPORT OF THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE IN PRINCIPLE. A WHITE BILL WAS BEING PREPARED FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION; AND
- INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION GOVERNING PROSECUTION WITNESS AGREEMENTS.

MR STRACHAN SAID THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH DID NOT RECEIVE WIDE PUBLIC COMMENT OR APPROVAL INCLUDED:

- COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AT IDENTIFICATION PARADES. THIS PROPOSAL HAD NOW BEEN RULED OUT; AND
- AMENDMENTS TO THE CRIMES ORDINANCE TO PROTECT WITNESS EVIDENCE.

MR STRACHAN SAID APART FROM THE ABOVE RECOMMENDATIONS, THE FOLLOWING MEASURES HAD ALSO BEEN IMPLEMENTED TO COMBAT TRIADS:

- INTRODUCTION OF A TEACHING PACKAGE ON THE DANGERS OF TRIAD INVOLVEMENT TO ALL PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS;
- CONTINUOUS PUBLICITY EFFORTS; AND
- INTRODUCTION OF THE RELEASE UNDER SUPERVISION SCHEME AND THE COMMISSIONING OF A STUDY ON POST-RELEASE SERVICES FOR EX-PRISONERS.

MR STRACHAN ADDED THAT SO FAR THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT ENCOUNTERED ANY PARTICULAR DIFFICULTIES IN IMPLEMENTING THESE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN THE DISCUSSION DOCUMENT.

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POLLUTION NEGLIGIBLE IN WATERS NEAR DETENTION CENTRE

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REGULAR TESTING BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT HAS INDICATED THAT NEGLIGIBLE POLLUTION OF THE SURROUNDING WATERS OF THE HIGH ISLAND DETENTION CENTRE HAS OCCURRED.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, THE HON CLIVE OXLEY, SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

/IN REPLY

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON RONALD CHOW ON THE DISCHARGE OF IMPROPERLY TREATED WASTE FROM THE DETENTION CENTRE, MR OXLEY SAID THE DISCHARGE FROM THE CENTRE CONSISTED PRINCIPALLY OF GREY WATER -- STORM WATER, WASTE WATER AND SO ON -- WHICH WAS, HOWEVER, FROM TIME TO TIME CONTAMINATED BY SMALL AMOUNTS OF HUMAN WASTE.

"THIS CONTAMINATION IS THE RESULT OF THE BAD HYGIENE HABITS OF A FEW DETAINEES BUT I MUST STRESS THAT IT IS NOT OF MAJOR SIGNIFICANCE," MR OXLEY SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE DETAINEES THEMSELVES WERE THEREFORE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POLLUTION CAUSED, AND NOT A GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT.

HE ALSO SAID THERE WAS A VIGOROUS EDUCATION PROGRAMME UNDERWAY WITHIN THE DETENTION CENTRE WHICH HAD ALREADY RESULTED IN A MARKED IMPROVEMENT IN BEHAVIOUR.

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SETTLEMENT A PRIVATE COMMERCIAL MATTER

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THE SETTLEMENT BETWEEN THE OVERSEAS TRUST BANK LIMITED (OTB) AND MESSRS COOPERS AND LYBRAND IS A PRIVATE COMMERCIAL MATTER AND IT IS FOR THE BANK DIRECTORS TO DECIDE THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE DEAL AND ITS TERMS SHOULD BE DISCLOSED, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID NENDICK, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON PETER H. Y. WONG, MR NENDICK SAID: "IT MAY BE NOTED THAT THE BANK HAS ISSUED A PRESS RELEASE ON THE SETTLEMENT, AND THIS MAY BE TAKEN TO REFLECT ALL THAT THE BANK WISHES TO SAY ON THE MATTER."

HE SAID ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT WAS CURRENTLY THE SOLE SHAREHOLDER OF OTB AND HE, AS SECRETARY FOR MONETARY AFFAIRS, WAS EX-OFFICIO CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT A PARTY TO THE SETTLEMENT.

MANAGEMENT OF THE BANK RESTED WITH ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS WHOSE DUTY IT WAS TO ACT IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE BANK.

MR NENDICK SAID THAT ON THE BROADER QUESTION OF DISCLOSURE OF TRANSACTIONS AND SETTLEMENTS BY THE GOVERNMENT, HE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO GIVE MR WONG A PRECISE ANSWER WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT PARTICULAR TRANSACTIONS OR SETTLEMENTS HE HAD IN MIND.

"TRANSACTIONS OR SETTLEMENTS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE ENTITIES ARE NUMEROUS.

"AS IN THE CASE OF THOSE ONLY INVOLVING PARTIES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, SOME MAY WELL BE COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE WHILST OTHERS WILL BE OF LITTLE GENERAL INTEREST," HE SAID.

/MR NENDICK

MR NENDICK ADDED THAT THERE WOULD ALSO BE CASES WHERE DISCLOSURE MIGHT PREJUDICE ONGOING INVESTIGATIONS OR PROCEEDINGS.

"IN MY VIEW, THERE CAN THEREFORE BE NO HARD AND FAST RULES.

"EACH CASE MUST BE CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT OF ITS CIRCUMSTANCES AND A VIEW TAKEN AS TO HOW THE PUBLIC INTEREST IS BEST SERVED IN THAT PARTICULAR CASE," HE SAID.

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DECOMMISSIONING OF CHA KWO LING OIL DEPOT CLOSELY MONITORED
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THE GOVERNMENT IS CLOSELY MONITORING THE DECOMMISSIONING OF THE OIL DEPOT AT CHA KWO LING TO ENSURE THAT IT TIES IN WITH THE ONLY LARGE-SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, THE HON CLIVE OXLEY, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON POON CHI-FAI, MR OXLEY SAID PERMISSION FOR OCCUPATION WOULD NOT BE GRANTED UNTIL DECOMMISSIONING OF THE LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS (LPG) FACILITIES HAD BEEN COMPLETED.

ACCORDING TO THE TIMETABLE FOR THE RELOCATION, THE DECOMMISSIONING OF THE LPG SPHERES WHICH CONSTITUTED THE MAJOR POTENTIAL HAZARD AT THE DEPOT WOULD TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR WHILE THE DEPOT WOULD BE TOTALLY DECOMMISSIONED BY THE END OF MARCH 1992.

SITE CLEARANCE WOULD FOLLOW DECOMMISSIONING AND WOULD TAKE ABOUT FOUR MONTHS.

MR OXLEY SAID LIMITED OCCUPANCY OF SELECTED BLOCKS WOULD BE PERMITTED DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD BETWEEN THE DECOMMISSIONING OF THE LPG FACILITIES AND TOTAL CLEARANCE OF THE DEPOT SITE.

"THE GOVERNMENT IS SATISFIED THAT THE FIRE PROTECTION MEASURES IN THE DEPOT ARE PROVIDED TO INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED SAFETY STANDARDS AND THAT THE REMAINING OIL STORAGE TANKS DO NOT POSE AN UNACCEPTABLE RISK TO NEARBY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS," HE SAID.

THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO INSPECT THE SITE REGULARLY TO ENSURE THAT THE HIGHEST SAFETY STANDARDS WERE MAINTAINED, HE ADDED.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1990

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DECISION SOON ON RELOCATION OF OIL DEPOT AT NGA YING CHAU

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A FIRM DECISION ON THE RELOCATION OF THE OIL DEPOT OF CHINA RESOURCES COMPANY (CRC) AT NGA YING CHAU COULD BE MADE EARLY NEXT YEAR, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, THE HON CLIVE OXLEY, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON RONALD CHOW, MR OXLEY SAID DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COMPANY ON THE RELOCATION WERE SUSPENDED DUE TO VARIOUS FACTORS INCLUDING UNCERTAINTIES OVER THE AVAILABILITY OF THE PROPOSED RELOCATION SITE AS A RESULT OF PORT AND AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY STUDIES AND OF THE PLANNING FOR THE ROUTE 3 CONNECTION.

"THE AVAILABILITY OF THE RELOCATION SITE HAS STILL NOT BEEN CONCLUSIVELY RESOLVED PENDING COMPLETION OF THE CONTAINER TERMINAL 9 STUDY," MR OXLEY SAID.

"HOWEVER, THE INDICATIONS ARE PROMISING AND A FIRM DECISION CAN POSSIBLY BE MADE EARLY NEXT YEAR."

MR OXLEY POINTED OUT THAT THE OIL DEPOT WAS NOT REGARDED AS A POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS INSTALLATION SINCE IT DID NOT STORE OR HANDLE LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS.

"IN THE 1989 TSING YI RISK ASSESSMENT STUDY, THE CONSULTANT NEVERTHELESS RECOMMENDED THE EVENTUAL REMOVAL OF THE OIL DEPOT SINCE IT IS CONSIDERED TO BE INCOMPATIBLE WITH NEARBY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT," HE SAID.

"HOWEVER, SINCE THE DESIRABILITY OF REMOVING THE OIL DEPOT IS BASED ON PLANNING, AND NOT ON RISK GROUNDS, THERE ARE INSUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR GOVERNMENT TO FORCE CRC TO RELOCATE."

MR OXLEY ADDED THAT THE DEPOT SITE AT NGA YING CHAU WAS REZONED IN THE DRAFT TSING YI OUTLINE ZONING PLAN FROM "INDUSTRIAL" TO "COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT AREA".

HE BELIEVED THIS SHOULD PROVIDE AN ENHANCED INCENTIVE FOR CRC TO RELOCATE ITS DEPOT AND REDEVELOP THE SITE.

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WAYS TO HELP ALLEVIATE STRESS, AND REDUCE FAMILY TRAGEDIES

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EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEMS BY THE INDIVIDUALS CONCERNED, AND BY A CARING COMMUNITY, COUPLED WITH TIMELY INTERVENTION BY PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKERS, CAN HELP ALLEVIATE STRESS AND REDUCE FAMILY TRAGEDIES.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON IAN STRACHAN, SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON ROSANNA TAM.

/HOWEVER, MR

HOWEVER, MR STRACHAN SAID, BECAUSE OF THE UNPREDICTABILITY OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR UNDER PRESSURE THERE WOULD ALWAYS BE AN ELEMENT OF THE UNFORESEEN.

"WITH THE LOOSENING OF TRADITIONAL FAMILY TIES, FAMILY MEMBERS WITH SERIOUS PROBLEMS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO FIND SUPPORT AND HELP WITHIN THE EXTENDED FAMILY.

"SOMETIMES, TRADITIONAL CHINESE VALUES, SUCH AS KEEPING FAMILY PROBLEMS WITHIN THE FAMILY, TEND TO INHIBIT PEOPLE IN TROUBLE FROM SEEKING PROFESSIONAL HELP AT AN EARLY STAGE," HE SAID.

"WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK TO CHANGE THESE ENTRENCHED ATTITUDES, AND TO ENHANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE VARIOUS WELFARE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO THEM," HE SAID.

ON THE CAUSES OF DOMESTIC HOMICIDES, MR STRACHAN SAID SUCH TRAGEDIES WERE ATTRIBUTABLE TO A WIDE RANGE OF FACTORS.

"DIRECT CAUSES INCLUDE PROBLEMS ARISING FROM PERSONALITY AND COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES; MARITAL DISCORD; FINANCIAL WORRIES; AND MENTAL OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES WHICH RESULT IN INTOLERABLE STRESS, AND EVENTUAL TRAGEDY; OR INDEED A COMBINATION OF ANY OF THESE FACTORS WHICH TOGETHER RESULT IN A FAMILY MEMBER BEING UNABLE TO FACE THE STRESSES AND PROBLEMS OF EVERY DAY LIVING.

"THE POLICE ROUTINELY REPORT ANY SUCH CASES OF SIGNIFICANCE TO THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT," HE SAID.

MR STRACHAN SAID THE NUMBER OF DOMESTIC HOMICIDES HAD REMAINED FAIRLY CONSTANT.

THERE WERE SIX SUCH CASES IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF LAST YEAR; SEVEN IN THE SECOND QUARTER; 11 IN THE THIRD QUARTER; SIX IN THE FOURTH QUARTER; AND SEVEN IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF THIS YEAR.

MR STRACHAN SAID THAT WITH THE CHANGING OF ENTRENCHED ATTITUDES AND ENHANCING OF PUBLIC AWARENESS IN MIND, THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN CARRYING OUT A VARIETY OF PROGRAMMES.

THESE INCLUDED:

- INTRODUCING THE PUBLIC TO SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES BY MEANS OF PAMPHLETS, POSTERS, TALKS AND EXHIBITIONS, AND MAKING PEOPLE AWARE THAT IT IS NO DISGRACE TO SEEK HELP;

- ORGANISING SUPPORTIVE GROUP WORK SERVICES, FAMILY LIFE AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION, THROUGH WHICH LOCAL RESIDENTS ARE HELPED TO REALISE THEIR OWN RESPONSIBILITIES TO THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS, AND THE NEED TO PROMOTE MUTUAL AID AND NEIGHBOURLINESS, SO THAT TIMELY ASSISTANCE CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE TO FAMILIES AT RISK; AND

- IN TERMS OF THE PROVISION OF WELFARE SERVICES, GOVERNMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WORKING TOGETHER TO IDENTIFY THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY, DEVELOPING APPROPRIATE SUPPORTING WELFARE SERVICES, IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF EXISTING SOCIAL SERVICES, AND FORMING COMMUNITY NETWORKS AMONG SOCIAL WELFARE ORGANISATIONS AND THE PUBLIC.

IN ADDITION, HE SAID, THE TERRITORY-WIDE NETWORK OF FAMILY SERVICE CENTRES ADOPTED A POSITIVE ROLE BY INITIATING OUTREACHING CONTACTS TO FAMILIES REPORTED TO BE IN NEED OF HELP.

SPECIAL CASES MIGHT ALSO BE HELPED BY THE DISTRICT SOCIAL CASE TEAMS COMPRISING, AS APPROPRIATE, REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION, HOSPITAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT, HOUSING DEPARTMENT, THE POLICE AND THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, HE ADDED.

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CONTROL SCHEME BEING DEVELOPED ON FOLDING TABLE PROBLEM

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THE GOVERNMENT IS DEVELOPING A CONTROL SCHEME TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF CHILDREN BEING TRAPPED BY FOLDING TABLES, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID NENDICK, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE SCHEME WOULD BE PROVIDED FOR UNDER A TOYS AND CHILDREN'S PRODUCT SAFETY BILL WHICH HE HOPED TO INTRODUCE INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BY THE END OF THIS YEAR, MR NENDICK SAID IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON LEUNG WAI-TUNG.

"UNDER THE PROPOSED CONTROL SCHEME, FOLDING TABLES INTENDED FOR CHILDREN'S USE WILL BE REQUIRED TO MEET SPECIFIC SAFETY STANDARDS BEFORE BEING ALLOWED TO BE IMPORTED INTO HONG KONG OR PUT ON LOCAL SALE," HE SAID.

MR NENDICK SAID THAT ANY FOLDING TABLE NOT FOUND TO BE TOTALLY SAFE WOULD BE REMOVED FROM SALE BY MEANS OF A PROHIBITION ORDER WHICH THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY WOULD BE EMPOWERED TO ISSUE.

HE ADDED THAT FOR ALL OTHER FOLDING TABLES, A SIMILAR CONTROL SCHEME WAS ENVISAGED, AND THAT WOULD BE PROVIDED FOR UNDER A GENERAL CONSUMER PRODUCTS SAFETY BILL WHICH IT WAS HOPED WOULD BE INTRODUCED INTO THE COUNCIL NEXT YEAR.

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TWO BILLS PASSED

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THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989 AND THE GAMBLING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1990 WERE PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE YEAR FOR THE GAMBLING (AMENDMENT) BILL WAS CHANGED TO 1990, FROM 1989, IN THE COMMITTEE STAGE.

THE INSURANCE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1990 WAS INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS. DEBATE ON IT WAS ADJOURNED.

IN ADDITION, A MOTION MOVED BY THE HON MARTIN LEE, ON ALLEGED SMUGGLING OF CARS TO CHINA, WAS PASSED AFTER DEBATE.

TEN MEMBERS SPOKE IN THE MOTION DEBATE, AND THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY SPOKE ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT.

THE MOTION READ: "THIS COUNCIL NOTES WITH CONCERN THE INCIDENT INVOLVING THE ALLEGED SMUGGLING OF THREE MERCEDES BENZ MOTOR CARS ON MAY 3, 1990, THE TEMPORARY DETENTION OF TWO HONG KONG POLICEMEN AND THE FOUR-WEEK-LONG DETENTION OF FIVE HONG KONG SEAMEN IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IN RELATION TO THAT ALLEGED SMUGGLING".

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WILL BE ON JUNE 27.

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GOVERNOR DEPLORES VIOLENCE

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THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT ANY SORT OF DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR ANY SORT OF VIOLENCE IS TO BE DEPLORED.

SIR DAVID WAS SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING WHEN HE WAS ASKED TO COMMENT ON AN INCIDENT IN WHICH A WINDOW PANE IN AN UNOCCUPIED ROOM OF AN NCNA BUILDING IN HAPPY VALLEY WAS HIT BY A BULLET.

"IT WILL BE INVESTIGATED AND WILL BE DEALT WITH," HE SAID.

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STATEMENT ON DEATH OF POLICE CONSTABLE

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THE FOLLOWING IS A STATEMENT BY THE ACTING CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR PIERS JACOBS, ON THE DEATH OF POLICE CONSTABLE CHAN KUN-PUN:

"I AM DEEPLY GRIEVED BY THE DEATH OF POLICE CONSTABLE CHAN KUN-PUN AS A DIRECT RESULT OF INJURIES SUSTAINED WHILST ON ANTI-SMUGGLING DUTY.

"THIS TRAGIC INCIDENT HIGHLIGHTS THE DANGERS FACED BY THE MARINE POLICE IN COMBATTING RUTHLESS AND VICIOUS SMUGGLERS. I EXTEND MY SYMPATHIES TO CONSTABLE CHAN'S FAMILY AND COLLEAGUES.

"THE GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO STAMP OUT ALL FORMS OF SMUGGLING. THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF CONSTABLE CHAN WILL ONLY STRENGTHEN OUR RESOLVE TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE."

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NO AMNESTY FOR II'S FROM CHINA

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THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR IAN STRACHAN, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) REFUTED REPORTED RUMOURS THAT THERE WOULD BE AN AMNESTY FOR ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS ARRIVING IN HONG KONG FROM CHINA.

"THIS IS UTTERLY NOT TRUE. THERE IS, AND WILL BE, NO CHANGE WHATSOEVER TO OUR EXISTING POLICY ON ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS," HE SAID.

"ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE ARRESTED WHEN THEY TRY TO COME INTO HONG KONG, AND SENT BACK TO CHINA.

"SIMILARLY, ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WHO ARE FOUND IN HONG KONG WILL ALSO BE ARRESTED AND REPATRIATED.

/"THIS REMAINS

"THIS REMAINS THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT'S POLICY."

MR STRACHAN POINTED OUT THAT THE RECENT REVIEW OF POLICY TO ALLOW FURTHER LEGAL IMPORTATION OF LABOUR DID NOT MEAN THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD RELAX ITS ONGOING POLICY TO ARREST AND REPATRIATE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

"THERE WILL BE NO AMNESTY," HE SAID.

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

IN THE FIRST FIVE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR, OVER 10,000 ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WERE CAUGHT AND REPATRIATED TO CHINA.

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EXCO APPROVES CAPITAL ASSISTANCE LOANS SCHEME FOR SCHOOLS

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THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HAS APPROVED A PACKAGE OF CAPITAL ASSISTANCE LOANS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL NON-PROFITMAKING DIRECT SUBSIDY SCHEME (DSS) SCHOOLS, SUBJECT TO ACCEPTANCE OF THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

ANNOUNCING THIS TODAY (WEDNESDAY), A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THE INTEREST-FREE LOANS WERE AN ENHANCEMENT TO THE DIRECT SUBSIDY SCHEME, AND A SEPARATE CIRCULAR WOULD BE ISSUED LATER THIS MONTH TO INFORM SCHOOLS OF THE DETAILS.

"THE DSS, RECOMMENDED BY THE EDUCATION COMMISSION IN ITS REPORT NO. 3 AS A MEANS TO ENCOURAGE A STRONG, INDEPENDENT PRIVATE SCHOOLS SECTOR, WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN SEPTEMBER 1991," HE SAID.

"SCHOOLS ADMITTED TO THE DSS WILL BE PAID A SUBSIDY BASED ON THE UNIT COST OF A PLACE IN AN AIDED SECONDARY SCHOOL. THE ACTUAL LEVEL OF THE SUBSIDY WILL DEPEND ON THE FEES CHARGED BY INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS.

"THE MAIN AIM OF THE DSS IS TO INCREASE THE RANGE OF CHOICES OF SCHOOLS FOR PARENTS AND ALSO TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DIFFERENTIATION WITHIN THE SCHOOLS SECTOR TO ALLOW FOR INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENT.

"THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAS ISSUED A CIRCULAR TO ALL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN HONG KONG INVITING THEM TO APPLY BY OCTOBER 1 THIS YEAR SHOULD THEY WISH TO JOIN DSS IN 1991."

THE SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED THAT THE NEED FOR A CAPITAL ASSISTANCE LOAN SCHEME AROSE FROM TWO MAIN FACTORS.

/"FIRST, THE

"FIRST, THE PRIVATE SCHOOLS REVIEW COMMITTEE (PSRC) SET UP TO ADVISE ON ALL MATTERS RELATING TO THE DSS, ADVISED THAT IN ORDER TO MAKE THE DSS ATTRACTIVE TO AIDED SCHOOLS, PARTICULARLY THOSE ESTABLISHED ONES IN OLD BUILDINGS WHO MAY WISH TO JOIN, SOME FORM OF CAPITAL ASSISTANCE ASSURANCE WOULD BE NEEDED TO REPLACE THE PRESENT GRANTS UNDER THE CODES OF AID," HE SAID.

"THE GOVERNMENT HAS ACCEPTED THIS ADVICE SINCE IT IS IMPORTANT TO ATTRACT FROM THE OUTSET A NUMBER OF AIDED SCHOOLS WITH ESTABLISHED REPUTATIONS INTO THE DSS.

"SECONDLY, PROJECTIONS OF DEMAND FOR PLACES IN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS ARISING FROM INVESTMENT BY OVERSEAS BUSINESS CONCERNS, RETURNING EMIGRANTS AND TERTIARY EXPANSION, SHOW AN APPRECIABLE SHORTFALL IN THE PROVISION OF PLACES IN THE 1990'S.

"THIS INDICATES A NEED FOR ONE NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL, OR CONSIDERABLE EXPANSION OF EXISTING SCHOOLS."

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S PRESENT POLICY TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS WAS LIMITED TO THE PROVISION OF A PRIVATE TREATY GRANT OF LAND AT NIL PREMIUM.

"SPONSORS OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS HAVE FOUND DIFFICULTY RAISING ADEQUATE FUNDS FOR EXPANSION TO MEET THE EXTRA DEMAND FOR PLACES, PARTLY BECAUSE THE TERMS OF THESE LAND GRANTS PREVENT SCHOOLS MORTGAGING OUT THE PREMISES AS COLLATERAL TO SECURE LOANS ON THE OPEN MARKET, AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF RAPIDLY RISING CONSTRUCTION COSTS," HE SAID.

"AS IT IS IN HONG KONG'S INTEREST TO ENSURE AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF SUCH SCHOOL PLACES, CAPITAL ASSISTANCE LOANS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS ONCE THEY HAVE JOINED THE DSS.

"THE AVAILABILITY OF THESE LOANS SHOULD ACT AS AN INCENTIVE TO ENCOURAGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS TO JOIN."

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE LOANS WOULD BE AT NIL INTEREST AND REPAYABLE OVER 10 YEARS. ANY INCREASE IN SCHOOL FEES TO FINANCE SUCH LOANS WOULD NOT RESULT IN A CORRESPONDING REDUCTION IN GOVERNMENT SUBSIDY.

"THE LOANS CAN BE USED FOR REDEVELOPING OLD AND UNSERVICEABLE SCHOOL BUILDINGS, MAJOR STRUCTURAL REPAIRS, AND IN THE CASE OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS JOINING THE DSS, FOR EXPANSION OF FACILITIES TO MEET ADDITIONAL DEMAND," HE SAID.

"THE AMOUNT OF THE LOANS WILL BE LIMITED FOR EACH SCHOOL TO A MAXIMUM CUMULATIVE TOTAL OF 155 PER CENT OF THE COST OF A STANDARD AIDED SECONDARY SCHOOL WHICH AT PRESENT IS ABOUT \$34 MILLION, ON THE BASIS THAT THIS IS THE CEILING FOR ASSISTANCE TO ENGLISH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION SCHOOLS.

"THE LOANS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO DSS SCHOOL IRRESPECTIVE OF THE LEVEL OF SUBSIDY THEY RECEIVE."

MORE POSITIVE MARKETING APPROACH URGED

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THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR JOHN CHAN, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) URGED LOCAL TRADERS AND MANUFACTURERS TO ADOPT A MORE POSITIVE AND AGGRESSIVE APPROACH IN MARKETING THEIR PRODUCTS.

SPEAKING AT A LUNCH MEETING OF THE INDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, MR CHAN SAID THIS COULD BE DONE BY ESTABLISHING OVERSEAS SALES AND MARKETING OFFICES; STEPPING UP EFFORTS IN MARKET AND PRODUCT RESEARCH; ADVERTISING PRODUCTS IN TRADE MAGAZINES; PARTICIPATING IN INTERNATIONAL FAIRS AND EXHIBITIONS; AND MAKING DIRECT CONTACT WITH CUSTOMERS.

TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE, HE SAID, HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURERS MUST BE ABLE TO PRODUCE QUALITY GOODS OF HIGHER PRECISION AND ACCURACY AND WITH BETTER RELIABILITY AND LOWER DEFECT RATES.

"TO MOVE UP MARKET, MANUFACTURERS WILL HAVE TO MAKE GREATER USE OF NOT ONLY HARD TECHNOLOGIES, SUCH AS ADVANCED MACHINERY, PRODUCTION PROCESSES AND TESTING AND MEASURING EQUIPMENT, BUT ALSO SOFT TECHNOLOGIES LIKE QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS," HE SAID.

MR CHAN SAID THAT, TOGETHER WITH THE MOVE TOWARDS HIGHER TECHNOLOGY, IT WAS TIME FOR HONG KONG MANUFACTURERS TO CONSIDER DEVELOPING THEIR OWN BRAND NAMES AND REDUCING CONVENTIONAL RELIANCE ON ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURE (OEM) BUSINESS.

"AN IDENTIFIABLE BRAND NAME ASSOCIATED WITH HONG KONG'S REPUTABLE TRADING IMAGE WOULD BE A STRONG IMPETUS TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR TRADE PERFORMANCE," HE SAID.

MR CHAN ALSO CALLED ON THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE TO REDOUBLE ITS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE EXPORT PERFORMANCE.

"AFTER ALL, WELCOME AS THE GROWTH OF OUR RE-EXPORTS MAY BE, OUR DOMESTIC EXPORTS COUNT FAR MORE IN TERMS OF VALUE ADDED IN HONG KONG AND OF CONTRIBUTION TO THE WEALTH OF THE COMMUNITY.

"WE MUST THEREFORE CONTINUE TO SEEK OUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OPENING UP NEW MARKETS AS WELL AS TO INCREASING OUR SALES TO EXISTING ONES.

"AT THE SAME TIME, WE MUST CONTINUE TO UPGRADE THE QUALITY OF OUR PRODUCTS IF WE ARE TO MAINTAIN OUR EDGE IN WORLD MARKETS AGAINST EVER-INCREASING COMPETITION," HE SAID.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA, MR CHAN SAID, HONG KONG PLAYED A FULL PART IN THE ONGOING URUGUAY ROUND OF MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH NOT ONLY EMBRACED TRADITIONAL AREAS OF TRADE IN GOODS, BUT ALSO BROKE NEW GROUND BY ADDRESSING ISSUES SUCH AS INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND TRADE IN SERVICES.

"WE ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO MAINTAINING THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND STRENGTHENING THE DISCIPLINES OF THE MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM WHICH PROVIDE HONG KONG, A SMALL TERRITORY WITH VERY LITTLE NEGOTIATING LEVERAGE, WITH THE ONLY PROTECTION IT HAS AGAINST TRADE PROTECTIONISM IN ITS EXPORT MARKETS.

"TO THIS END, THE GOVERNMENT WILL DEVOTE ITS UTMOST EFFORTS TOWARDS ENSURING THE SUCCESS OF THE URUGUAY ROUND NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WILL BE CONCLUDED BY DECEMBER THIS YEAR," HE SAID.

MR CHAN SAID THE GOVERNMENT ALSO WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE HONG KONG TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL IN FORMULATING THE BEST POSSIBLE STRATEGY FOR PROMOTING HONG KONG'S TRADE WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD.

"THE WIDE RANGE OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE COUNCIL, FROM HANDLING TRADE ENQUIRIES AND CONDUCTING MARKET RESEARCH TO ORGANISING TRADE FAIRS AND SEMINARS, WILL CONTINUE TO RENDER EXTENSIVE AND VALUABLE SUPPORT TO OUR TRADERS AND MANUFACTURERS.

"THESE, TOGETHER WITH THE TRADE PROMOTION EFFORTS INITIATED BY DIFFERENT TRADE ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS YOUR CHAMBER, WILL DEFINITELY BE CONDUCTIVE TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF HONG KONG'S TRADE PERFORMANCE," HE SAID.

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LADY WILSON VISITS TSEUNG KWAN O CHILDREN AND YOUTH CENTRE
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CHILDREN AND YOUTH CENTRES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE PRIMARY MEANS OF THE HONG KONG FEDERATION OF YOUTH GROUPS IN REACHING AND PROVIDING SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN HONG KONG.

LADY WILSON WAS TOLD THIS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN SHE VISITED THE TSUI LAM CHILDREN AND YOUTH CENTRE AND THE STUDY/READING ROOMS IN TSEUNG KWAN O - ONE OF THE 35 CHILDREN AND YOUTH CENTRES RUN BY THE FEDERATION IN THE TERRITORY.

THE FACILITIES AND SERVICES PROVIDED IN THESE CENTRES ARE AIMED AT PROMOTING THE SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL, INTELLECTUAL AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE OFFICER-IN-CHARGE OF THE TSUI LAM CENTRE AND THE STUDY/READING ROOMS, MISS KAREN LAM, TOLD LADY WILSON THAT THE CENTRE WAS OPENED IN MID 1988 TO SERVE MAINLY THE YOUNG POPULATION IN TSUI LAM AND KING LAM ESTATES AND HONG SING GARDEN IN TSEUNG KWAN O NEW TOWN.

THE FACILITIES INCLUDE A TOY LIBRARY, STUDY AND READING ROOMS, A GYMNASIUM, A DARK ROOM, A DOMESTIC SCIENCE ROOM, SITTING AREA, A HALL AND ROOMS FOR INTEREST CLASSES SUCH AS HANDICRAFT MAKING, PAINTING AND COOKING.

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THE CENTRE HAS A MEMBERSHIP OF MORE THAN 1,500 AND ABOUT 500 FAMILY UNITS ARE REGISTERED AS FAMILY MEMBERS.

LADY WILSON WAS SHOWN AROUND THE CENTRE WHERE SHE SAW CHILDREN ENJOYING A STORY TELLING SESSION, PAINTING, SINGING AND DANCING; AND YOUNG PEOPLE ENJOYING KARAOKE SINGING, PLAYING CHESS AND PRACTISING GYMNASTICS.

SHE ALSO TOOK PART IN A HANDICRAFT INTEREST CLASS WITH THE CHILDREN AND LEARNT HOW TO MAKE FIGURINES WITH JAPANESE CLAY.

LADY WILSON WAS ACCOMPANIED ON THE VISIT BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR ADOLF HSU, SAI KUNG DISTRICT OFFICER, MR FREDERICK TONG, AND THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT AND VICE COUNCIL PRESIDENT OF THE HONG KONG FEDERATION OF YOUTH GROUPS, MR LAO MOU-CHI AND MR DAVID LUNG.

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NORTH DB MEMBERS VISIT SPECIAL SCHOOLS

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NORTH DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS THIS (WEDNESDAY) MORNING VISITED TWO SPECIAL SCHOOLS TO SEE THEIR OPERATION AND FACILITIES.

FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS, MEMBERS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL PLACES FOR MENTALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN THE DISTRICT.

THROUGH CONCERTED EFFORTS, TWO SPECIAL SCHOOLS - THE BUDDHIST PO KWONG SCHOOL NEAR TIN SAM TEMPORARY HOUSING AREA IN FANLING, AND THE SALVATION ARMY SHEK WU SCHOOL IN TIN PING ESTATE IN SHEUNG SHUI - STARTED OPERATION IN MARCH 1988 AND FEBRUARY 1990 RESPECTIVELY.

LED BY THE NORTH DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMAN, MR RAYMOND PANG, AND ACCOMPANIED BY THE DISTRICT OFFICER, MR WILLIAM HUI, THE PARTY FIRST WENT TO THE BUDDHIST PO KWONG SCHOOL TODAY.

THE SCHOOL, OPERATED BY THE HEUNG HOI CHING KWOK LIN ASSOCIATION, HAS AN INTAKE OF 70 MILDLY AND MODERATELY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN.

NEXT THEY VISITED THE SALVATION ARMY SHEK WU SCHOOL WHICH CAN ACCOMMODATE 60 MILDLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN.

ON COMPLETION OF A THREE-PHASE CONVERSION PROGRAMME IN 1992-93, THE INTAKE OF THE SCHOOL WILL BE BOOSTED TO 200.

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AWARDS FOR MODEL STUDENTS IN EASTERN DISTRICT

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SCHOOL PRINCIPALS ARE INVITED TO NOMINATE STUDENTS WHO EXCEL IN BOTH ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT MODEL STUDENTS AWARDS.

THE AWARD SCHEME IS ORGANISED BY THE EASTERN DISTRICT SCHOOL LIAISON COMMITTEE AND SPONSORED BY THE DISTRICT BOARD.

THE AWARDS ARE DIVIDED INTO FIVE CATEGORIES: SENIOR SECONDARY SECTION FOR FORMS FIVE TO SEVEN STUDENTS; JUNIOR SECONDARY SECTION FOR FORMS TWO TO FOUR STUDENTS; PRIMARY FOUR TO SIX SECTION; PRIMARY TWO TO THREE SECTION; AND THE KINDERGARTEN SECTION.

SELECTION CRITERIA ARE BASED ON THE STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE IN THE 1988-89 FINAL EXAMINATION AND THE FIRST TERM EXAMINATION IN THE CURRENT ACADEMIC YEAR. CREDITS WILL ALSO BE GIVEN FOR GOOD BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOL.

FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY STUDENTS, THEIR PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY SERVICE WILL ALSO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

COMPLETED NOMINATION FORMS SHOULD REACH THE EASTERN DISTRICT SCHOOL LIAISON COMMITTEE AT THE EASTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, GROUND FLOOR, 880-886 KING'S ROAD, BEFORE JUNE 15.

THE COMMITTEE WILL NOTIFY SCHOOLS OF THE RESULTS BEFORE JULY 1. WINNERS WILL BE AWARDED CERTIFICATES.

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DB TO DISCUSS IMPACT OF KARAOKES

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THE YUEN LONG DISTRICT BOARD WILL STUDY PROBLEMS CAUSED BY THE INCREASING NUMBER OF KARAOKE LOUNGES IN THE DISTRICT AT ITS MEETING TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

DISCUSSION WILL FOCUS ON THE NOISE NUISANCE PRODUCED BY THESE ESTABLISHMENTS, THE ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES THAT MIGHT STEM FROM THEIR OPERATION AND THE EXISTING LEGISLATIVE CONTROL OVER THEM.

THE MEETING WILL ALSO DISCUSS NOISE POLLUTION CAUSED BY VENTILATION SYSTEMS INSTALLED IN NEW SHOPPING ARCADES, AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF WATER QUALITY.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE YUEN LONG DISTRICT BOARD MEETING TO BE HELD TOMORROW (THURSDAY) IN THE DB CONFERENCE ROOM, 13TH FLOOR, YUEN LONG GOVERNMENT OFFICES, 2 KIU LOK SQUARE, YUEN LONG. THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 9.30 AM.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1990

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DB COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS AIRPORT TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMME
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THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE OF THE KWUN TONG DISTRICT BOARD WILL DISCUSS THE KAI TAK AIRPORT TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMME OF THE CENTRAL KOWLOON TRAFFIC STUDY AT A MEETING TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE CIVIL ENGINEERING SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT WILL BRIEF MEMBERS ON THE DOCUMENT.

MEMBERS WILL ALSO STUDY THE PUBLIC LIGHT BUS POLICY AND THEIR OPERATIONS IN THE DISTRICT.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE KWUN TONG DISTRICT BOARD'S TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE MEETING WHICH WILL BEGIN AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) IN THE DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM, TUNG YAN STREET.

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THREE GOVT LOTS TO LET BY TENDER
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THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT IS INVITING TENDERS FOR THE SHORT TERM TENANCY OF THREE GOVERNMENT LAND LOTS.

THE FIRST LOT, WITH AN AREA OF ABOUT 4,050 SQUARE METRES, IS LOCATED AT CHOI SHEK LANE IN KOWLOON. IT IS FOR THE USE OF OPEN STORAGE, EXCLUDING CONTAINERS.

THE TENANCY IS FOR ONE YEAR, RENEWABLE QUARTERLY AFTERWARDS.

THE SECOND LOT IS LOCATED AT AREA 35, TSUEN WAN. WITH AN AREA OF ABOUT 25,890 SQUARE METRES, IT IS FOR THE USE OF OPEN STORAGE OF NON-OFFENSIVE AND NON-DANGEROUS GOODS, EXCLUDING STORAGE OF CONTAINERS AND MOTOR VEHICLES.

THE TENANCY IS FOR ONE YEAR, RENEWABLE MONTHLY AFTERWARDS.

THE THIRD LOT IS A 10,000-SQUARE-METRES SITE AT AREA 35, TSUEN WAN. IT IS FOR FEE PAYING PUBLIC CARPARK FOR MOTOR VEHICLES, INCLUDING GOODS VEHICLES BUT EXCLUDING CONTAINER TRACTORS AND TRAILORS, CURRENTLY LICENSED UNDER THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE.

/THE TENANCY

WEDNESDY, JUNE 6, 1990

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THE TENANCY IS FOR TWO YEARS, RENEWABLE QUARTERLY AFTERWARDS.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF TENDERS IS NOON ON JUNE 22.

FORMS OF TENDER, TENDER NOTICE AND CONDITIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM AND TENDER PLANS INSPECTED AT THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, TSUEN WAN STATION MULTI-STOREY CARPARK BUILDING, 10TH FLOOR, 174-208 CASTLE PEAK ROAD; THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG; AND THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES KOWLOON, 10TH FLOOR, YAU MA TEI CARPARK BUILDING, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, KOWLOON.

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TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN EASTERN DISTRICT

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES THAT FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (JUNE 8), TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED TO FACILITATE THE RECONSTRUCTION OF KING'S ROAD.

THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS OF ROADS WILL BE DESIGNATED 24-HOUR DAILY URBAN CLEARWAYS FOR NINE MONTHS:

- NGAN MOK STREET FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH KING'S ROAD TO A POINT ABOUT 30 METRES NORTH OF THE SAME JUNCTION;
- KING'S ROAD EASTBOUND FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH HING FAT STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 55 METRES EAST OF NGAN MOK STREET;
- KING'S ROAD EASTBOUND FROM A POINT ABOUT FIVE METRES WEST OF LAU LI STREET TO A POINT ABOUT FIVE METRES WEST OF WING HING STREET;
- KING'S ROAD EASTBOUND FROM A POINT ABOUT FIVE METRES WEST OF JUPITER STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 20 METRES EAST OF SHELL STREET;
- KING'S ROAD EASTBOUND FROM A POINT ABOUT FIVE METRES WEST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH NORTH POINT ROAD TO A POINT ABOUT 80 METRES EAST OF THE SAME JUNCTION;
- KING'S ROAD EASTBOUND FROM A POINT ABOUT 55 METRES WEST OF SHU KUK STREET TO A POINT ABOUT FIVE METRES EAST OF KAM HONG STREET;
- KING'S ROAD EASTBOUND FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH MAN HONG STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 155 METRES EAST OF THE SAME JUNCTION;

/- KING'S ROAD

- KING'S ROAD EASTBOUND FROM A POINT ABOUT FIVE METRES WEST OF HEALTHY STREET EAST TO A POINT ABOUT 45 METRES EAST OF JAVA ROAD; AND
- KING'S ROAD EASTBOUND FROM A POINT ABOUT 60 METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH PAN HOI STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 175 METRES EAST OF THE SAME JUNCTION.

THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS OF ROADS WILL BE DESIGNATED 7 AM TO MIDNIGHT DAILY URBAN CLEARWAYS ALSO FOR NINE MONTHS:

- KING'S ROAD WESTBOUND FROM A POINT ABOUT 65 METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH LAU SIN STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 180 METRES EAST OF THE SAME JUNCTION;
- KING'S ROAD WESTBOUND FROM A POINT ABOUT 70 METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH SHU KUK STREET TO A POINT ABOUT FIVE METRES WEST OF THE SAME JUNCTION;
- KING'S ROAD WESTBOUND FROM A POINT ABOUT FIVE METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH HEALTHY STREET EAST TO A POINT ABOUT 65 METRES WEST OF THE SAME JUNCTION;
- KING'S ROAD WESTBOUND FROM A POINT ABOUT FIVE METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH MODEL LANE TO A POINT ABOUT 55 METRES WEST OF THE SAME JUNCTION;
- KING'S ROAD WESTBOUND FROM A POINT ABOUT FIVE METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH MANSION STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 90 METRES WEST OF THE SAME JUNCTION;
- KING'S ROAD WESTBOUND FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH QUARRY BAY STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 120 METRES WEST OF THE SAME JUNCTION;
- KING'S ROAD WESTBOUND FROM A POINT ABOUT FIVE METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH YAU MAN STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 15 METRES WEST OF THE SAME JUNCTION; AND
- KING'S ROAD EASTBOUND FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH WESTLANDS ROAD TO A POINT ABOUT 20 METRES EAST OF THE SAME JUNCTION.

NO VEHICLES EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS THERE.

IN ADDITION, THE EXISTING TRAM LANE ON KING'S ROAD EASTBOUND BETWEEN TSING FUNG STREET AND WING HING STREET, WILL BE CANCELLED FOR ABOUT NINE MONTHS.

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URBAN CLEARWAY IN POK FU LAM

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES THAT FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (JUNE 8), THE SOUTHBOUND CARRIAGEWAY OF POK FU LAM ROAD FROM A POINT ABOUT 20 METRES NORTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH THE SLIP ROAD LEADING TO CHI FU ROAD TO A POINT ABOUT 80 METRES SOUTH OF THE SAME JUNCTION WILL BE DESIGNATED AN URBAN CLEARWAY FROM 7 AM TO 7 PM DAILY.

NO VEHICLES EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS THERE.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE EXISTING RESTRICTION ON THE SECTION OF POK FU LAM ROAD WILL BE CANCELLED.

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URBAN CLEARWAY IN SHA TIN

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES THAT FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (JUNE 8), THE EASTERN KERBSIDE LANE OF TAM KON PO STREET IN SHA TIN FROM A POINT 45 METRES SOUTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH SHA TIN CENTRE STREET TO A POINT 70 METRES SOUTH OF THE SAME JUNCTION WILL BE DESIGNATED AN URBAN CLEARWAY FROM 7 AM TO 7 PM DAILY.

WITHIN THE RESTRICTED AREA, ALL MOTOR VEHICLES, EXCEPT THOSE WITH PERMITS ISSUED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM STOPPING FOR PASSENGERS AND GOODS.

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