



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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THURSDAY, JULY 21, 1994

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THURSDAY, JULY 21, 1994

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GENERAL CHAMBER'S PROPOSALS COST HIGHER: GOVERNOR

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, THIS (THURSDAY) AFTERNOON SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S INITIAL ASSESSMENT ON THE GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S PROPOSALS WAS THAT ITS COST WOULD PUT AT LEAST TWO PER CENT NOT ONLY ON PROFITS TAX BUT ALSO ON SALARY TAX.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER HIS VISIT TO PROJECT ORBIS AND THE AIRPORT FIRE STATION, MR PATTEN SAID: "IT'S OBVIOUSLY NECESSARY FOR US TO LOOK AT THAT PROPOSAL IN DETAIL. BUT WE DID, OF COURSE, CONSIDER THAT APPROACH OURSELVES BEFORE AND WE'LL BE KIDDING OURSELVES IF WE THOUGHT THAT WAS SOMEHOW A CHEAPER OR MORE AFFORDABLE OPTION."

THE GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE YESTERDAY PUT FORWARD THEIR PROPOSALS FOR NOT HAVING A COMPREHENSIVE OLD AGE PENSIONS SCHEME BUT FOR INCREASING THE AMOUNT OF OLD AGE ALLOWANCES.

"THERE'S CERTAINLY NO SUCH THING AS A FREE-FOR-THE-TAXPAYER INCREASE IN OLD AGE ALLOWANCES," MR PATTEN SAID.

"OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT THE COSTS OF THAT SCHEME WOULD PUT, AND ARE HIGHER, THE TAX BURDEN ONTO BUSINESS AND ONTO EMPLOYEES.

"I AM SURE THAT CAN'T HAVE BEEN THE INTENTION. I DON'T THINK IT'S WHAT PEOPLE WANT."

THE GOVERNOR REITERATED THAT ONE OF THE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES OF THE GOVERNMENT'S OLD AGE PENSIONS SCHEME WAS THAT THERE SHOULD BE AN ABSOLUTELY IRON-LINK BETWEEN CONTRIBUTIONS PUT IN AND BENEFITS TAKEN OUT.

"AND THAT IS SOMETHING WHICH, I BELIEVE IN THE INTEREST OF PRUDENCE, WE HAVE TO STAND BY," HE ADDED.

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE GOVERNOR'S MEDIA SESSION

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THE FOLLOWING IS THE TRANSCRIPT OF THE MEDIA SESSION BY THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, AFTER HIS VISIT TO PROJECT ORBIS AND THE AIRPORT FIRE STATION TODAY (THURSDAY):

GOVERNOR: I AM VERY PLEASED TO HAVE SEEN THIS AFTERNOON THE VERY IMPRESSIVE WORK BEING DONE BY ORBIS, THE FLYING EYE HOSPITAL. I HOPE THAT OTHERS WILL PLEDGE THEIR CORNEAS BECAUSE IT IS A VERY PRACTICAL WAY OF ASSISTING THE WORK OF THE OPHTHALMOLOGISTS WHO GIVE SO MUCH BENEFIT TO PEOPLE IN CHINA AND ALL THE OTHER COUNTRIES WHICH NEED OUR ASSISTANCE IN COPING WITH BLINDNESS WHICH CAN BE TREATED. I AM ALSO DELIGHTED THAT I'VE BEEN ABLE TO SEE ONCE AGAIN THE EXTREMELY IMPRESSIVE WORK DONE BY OUR FIRE SERVICE WHICH MUST BE ONE OF THE BEST IN THOSE PROFESSIONALS IN THE WORLD AND AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE, I THINK, OF THE SUCCESS OF LOCALISATION POLICY IN THE PAST. I HOPE SOME OF YOU WILL SIGN UP AND PLEDGE YOUR CORNEAS TOO AND OTHER ORGANS FOR THAT MATTER.

/PERHAPS, I

PERHAPS, I CAN JUST ADD ONE OR TWO COMMENTS ABOUT ANOTHER SUBJECT WHICH IS CURRENTLY THE SUBJECT OF A GOOD DEAL OF DEBATE. I AM VERY PLEASED THAT WE ARE HAVING IN THE COMMUNITY SUCH A VIGOROUS AND WIDE-RANGING DEBATE ABOUT OUR PROPOSALS TO TAKE SOME OF THE INSECURITY OUT OF OLD AGE BY ESTABLISHING A DECENT AND TOTALLY FINANCIABLE PENSION SCHEME. THE DEBATE IS NOW WELL AND TRULY ON AND I THINK THE GOVERNMENT IS PLEASED BY THE SUPPORT THAT WE'VE BEEN GETTING. WE DO HAVE TO TAKE SOME DECISIONS ABOUT PENSIONS AND HOW TO HELP THE ELDERLY. IN 1997, WE RECKON THAT ABOUT 11 PER CENT OF OUR POPULATION WILL BE 65 OR OVER, SO IT'S 600,000 PEOPLE. WE RECKON THAT OVER THE NEXT 40 YEARS, THE PROPORTION OF THE POPULATION WHICH IS OVER 65 WILL MORE THAN DOUBLE FROM 10 TO 20 PER CENT. SO, THERE IS AN IMPREGNABLE REQUIREMENT FOR US TO FACE UP TO THESE PROBLEMS OF PROVIDING MORE GENEROUS AND COMPREHENSIVE HELP FOR THE ELDERLY. THE SCHEME WHICH WE'VE PUT FORWARD AFTER A GREAT DEAL OF THOUGHTS AND DISCUSSIONS, IS, I THINK, THE BEST OPTION THAT'S ADVANCED THOUGH WE'LL LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING ABOUT OTHER PROPOSALS.

UNLIKE A CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND, IT PROVIDES ASSISTANCE NOW RATHER THAN HAVING TO WAIT FOR A GENERATION. UNLIKE A CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND, IT HELPS THOSE WHO ARE IN NEED WHICH ISN'T THE CASE WITH A CPF. IT'S ALSO MUCH MORE AFFORDABLE THAN A CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT CONTRIBUTIONS, AS YOU KNOW, FROM THE EMPLOYERS AND THE EMPLOYEES OF ONE AND A HALF PERCENT WHICH IS CLEARLY WHOLLY AFFORDABLE. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF MAKING AN ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION WHICH WILL AMOUNT TO ABOUT 30 PER CENT OF THE COST OF THE SCHEME AND IN ADDITION, WE ARE PUTTING \$10 BILLION INTO THE SCHEME FOR A START SO THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE MEETING ABOUT 35 PER CENT OF THE COST. I DON'T THINK THAT THOSE WHO SAY THAT WE ARE ON THE SLIPPERY SLOPE TO A BANKRUPT WELFARE STATE, ARE TALKING SENSE. WE ARE ONLY TALKING ABOUT THE TOTAL SCHEME COSTING ABOUT ONE-AND-A-HALF PER CENT OF OUR GDP, TYPICALLY TRANSFER PAYMENT IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WHERE THEIR COMPREHENSIVE WELFARE PROVISIONS REPRESENT ABOUT 10 TIMES AT ABOUT 15 PER CENT OF GDP.

I SAID EARLIER THAT I WAS GLAD THAT OTHER PEOPLE WERE PUTTING FORWARD PROPOSALS AND NOT JUST CRITICISING AND, OBVIOUSLY, WE NEED TO EXAMINE THOSE PROPOSALS VERY CAREFULLY. THE GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE YESTERDAY PUT FORWARD THEIR PROPOSALS FOR NOT HAVING A COMPREHENSIVE SCHEME BUT FOR INCREASING THE AMOUNT OF OLD AGE ALLOWANCES. I THINK IT'S OBVIOUSLY NECESSARY FOR US TO LOOK AT THAT PROPOSAL IN DETAIL. BUT WE DID, OF COURSE, CONSIDER THAT APPROACH OURSELVES BEFORE AND WE'LL BE KIDDING OURSELVES IF WE THOUGHT THAT WAS SOMEHOW A CHEAPER OR MORE AFFORDABLE OPTION. OUR INITIAL ASSESSMENT, AND I WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT IT IS NOT FINAL BECAUSE WE'LL WANT TO DO A THOROUGH STUDY, BUT OUR INITIAL ASSESSMENT IS THAT THE COST OF THE GENERAL CHAMBER'S SCHEME WOULD PUT AT LEAST TWO PER CENT NOT ONLY ON PROFIT TAX BUT ON SALARY TAX AS WELL. THERE ISN'T ANY SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH AND THERE'S CERTAINLY NO SUCH THING AS A FREE-FOR-THE-TAXPAYER INCREASE IN OLD AGE ALLOWANCES. SO, OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT THE COSTS OF THAT SCHEME WOULD PUT, AND ARE HIGHER, THE TAX BURDEN ONTO BUSINESS AND ONTO EMPLOYEES AND I AM SURE THAT CAN'T HAVE BEEN THE INTENTION. I DON'T THINK IT'S WHAT PEOPLE WANT.

I WANT TO REPEAT ONCE AGAIN THAT ONE OF THE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES OF OUR SCHEME IS THAT THERE SHOULD BE AN ABSOLUTELY IRON-LINK BETWEEN CONTRIBUTIONS PUT IN AND BENEFITS TAKEN OUT AND THAT IS SOMETHING WHICH I BELIEVE, IN THE INTEREST OF PRUDENCE, WE HAVE TO STAND BY. I'VE SEEN TODAY THE WORK THAT THE FIRE SERVICE IS DOING IN ORDER TO GIVE US MORE SECURITY. I'VE SEEN THE WORK THAT ORBIS IS DOING IN ORDER, PARTICULARLY WITH THE ELDERLY BUT WITH OTHERS AS WELL, TO GIVE GREATER HELP. I THINK THAT OUR PENSION SCHEME PROVIDES GREATER SECURITY AND IT PROVIDES MORE HELP TO THOSE WHO REALLY NEED IT. WE DO, AS A COMMUNITY, HAVE OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS OUR OLDER CITIZENS WHO'VE CREATED THIS EXTRAORDINARY ECONOMIC MIRACLE AND I HOPE THAT IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS, WE WILL CONCLUDE THAT WE SHOULD DELIVER ON THOSE OBLIGATIONS AND INTRODUCE A COMPREHENSIVE SCHEME.

QUESTION: MR PATTEN, WILL YOU DISCUSS WITH JOHN MAJOR THE HONG KONG ISSUE DURING YOUR VACATION BREAK?

GOVERNOR: YES.

QUESTION: AND IN WHAT SCOPE?

GOVERNOR: I'LL BE SAYING A FEW WORDS TOMORROW ABOUT MY TRIP TO UNITED KINGDOM. I'LL CERTAINLY BE SEEING JOHN MAJOR PROBABLY ON MONDAY BUT I'LL CONFIRM THAT FOR YOU TOMORROW.

QUESTION: HOW ABOUT THE CHINESE SIDE TOLD MR GOODLAD THAT THE APPOINTMENT OF THE HIGHER-RANK CIVIL SERVANTS IN HONG KONG ... ENTIRELY INTERNAL MATTERS FOR CHINA AND THE SAR GOVERNMENT? TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU THINK THAT THAT STAND WILL AFFECT THE SMOOTH TRANSITION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE?

GOVERNOR: I DON'T THINK THAT'S, AS I RECALL FROM THE NOTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THAT ISSUE, ACTUALLY CAME UP. I DON'T THINK MR GOODLAD RAISED IT. HE DID TALK ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SMOOTH TRANSITION FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE. I THINK THAT'S AN OBJECTIVE THAT WE ALL SHARE BUT I'VE SEEN ONE OR TWO SPECULATIVE ACCOUNTS OF WHAT MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN SAID WHICH DON'T BEAR ANY RESEMBLANCE, I THINK, TO WHAT ACTUALLY TOOK PLACE.

QUESTION: MANY LEGISLATORS SAID THAT ... MR GOODLAD'S VISIT, THERE WAS NO IMPROVED SINO-BRITISH RELATIONSHIP. WOULD IT IN A WAY AFFECT THE TALKS ON THE NEW AIRPORT'S FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS, ANY PROGRESS NOW IN THE TALKS?

GOVERNOR: I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT IT WILL HELP TO SPEED UP THOSE TALKS BECAUSE THERE IS VERY LITTLE, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES. I THINK THAT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO REACH AGREEMENT IF THE CHINESE SIDE IS SINCERE AND WANTS TO REACH AN AGREEMENT VERY QUICKLY. I HOPE WE CAN DO THAT. I WISH TO THINK IT'S BETTER WHEN YOU HAVE DISAGREEMENTS TO TALK TO PEOPLE RATHER THAN NOT TALK TO PEOPLE AND THAT SEEMS TO BE THE VIEW OF MOST OF THE WORLD AND I CERTAINLY THINK IT'S THE VIEW OF THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF PEOPLE IN HONG KONG.

/QUESTION:

QUESTION: MR CHRIS PATTEN, HAVE YOU RECEIVED ANY COMMENT FROM THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT ABOUT THE RETIREMENT SCHEME SO FAR?

GOVERNOR: NO, WE HAVEN'T. I'VE READ ONE OR TWO COMMENTS BY OFFICIALS BUT WE HAVEN'T HAD A COMPREHENSIVE OR OFFICIAL RESPONSE SO FAR. WE TOTALLY RECOGNISE THAT IT'S AN ISSUE WHICH PRC OFFICIALS WILL WANT TO CONSIDER CAREFULLY AND CONSTRUCTIVELY. I'M SURE THAT THEY ALL WANT TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE DEBATE IN HONG KONG, OF THE ENTHUSIASM FOR A COMPREHENSIVE SCHEME IN HONG KONG AND I'M SURE THEY'LL WANT THE HONG KONG, IN THE INTEREST OF THE FUTURE WELL-BEING OF HONG KONG AND OF THE SAR, TO GET A MOVE-ON AND TO PUT THINGS IN PLACE AS SOON AS IT'S POSSIBLE. BUT IT IS OF COURSE ENTIRELY RIGHT SINCE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A MAJOR COMMITMENT FOR THE FUTURE THAT THERE SHOULD BE A PROPER OPPORTUNITY FOR PRC OFFICIALS TO LOOK AT THE SCHEME. THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED.

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GOVERNOR VISITS NEW FLYING EYE HOSPITAL

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, TODAY (THURSDAY) GAVE HIS STRONG SUPPORT TO PROJECT ORBIS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST BLINDNESS BY SYMBOLICALLY PLEDGING HIS CORNEAS AFTER DEATH DURING A VISIT TO THE NEW ORBIS FLYING EYE HOSPITAL.

ACCOMPANIED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, AND THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION, MR PETER LOK, THE GOVERNOR TOURED THE NEW DC-10 FLYING EYE HOSPITAL AND SHOWED GREAT INTEREST IN ITS FACILITIES INCLUDING THE OPERATING ROOM, LASER TREATMENT ROOM AND AUDIO-VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE.

MR PATTEN LEARNED THAT THE NEW DC-10 WAS PURCHASED WITH THE DONATIONS OF ALMOST US\$14 MILLION FROM THREE GENEROUS BENEFACTORS, TWO OF WHOM ARE FROM HONG KONG.

IT REPLACED THE 33-YEAR-OLD DC-8 TO CONTINUE THE MISSION OF BRINGING SIGHT AND RENEWED HOPE TO MILLIONS WHO ARE NEEDLESSLY BLIND.

THE NEW AIRCRAFT IS MORE THAN TWICE THE SIZE OF THE DC-8 ALLOWING FOR EXPANSION OF ITS ORIGINAL FACILITIES.

THE GOVERNOR MET THE ORBIS MEDICAL TEAM OF DOCTORS, NURSES AND TECHNICIANS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE PROJECT'S SIGHT-SAVING MEDICAL PROGRAMMES AND ITS MISSIONS TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

THE NEW ORBIS FLYING EYE HOSPITAL IS CURRENTLY IN HONG KONG FOR A BRIEF STAY BEFORE TAKING OFF TO BEIJING ON JULY 23 FOR A THREE-WEEK MISSION THERE.

SINCE 1982, PROJECT ORBIS HAS RESTORED SIGHT TO MORE THAN 18,000 PATIENTS AND TAUGHT SIGHT-SAVING SKILLS TO 28,000 DOCTORS AND NURSES IN 70 COUNTRIES SINCE 1982.

THE GOVERNOR TODAY ALSO VISITED THE AIRPORT FIRE STATION AND SAW SOME OF THE MODERN FIRE APPLIANCES AND EQUIPMENT USED FOR FIGHTING AIRCRAFT FIRES AND RESCUING VICTIMS IN EMERGENCIES.

/HE WAS

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HE WAS MET ON ARRIVAL BY THE DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES, MR JERRY LAM CHEK-YUEN, THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, MR PETER CHEUNG, AND SENIOR DIVISIONAL OFFICER (AIR), MR ALBERT CHAN TING-KAI.

MR PATTEN WAS TOLD THAT THE HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, RECKONED AS ONE OF THE BUSIEST AIRPORTS IN THE WORLD, HOUSES TWO FIRE STATIONS AT BOTH ENDS OF THE RUNWAY TO PROVIDE FASTER AND MORE EFFICIENT SEA AND LAND RESCUE SERVICES.

THE 128-STRONG FIRE CONTINGENT, OPERATING AROUND THE CLOCK, IS EQUIPPED WITH 12 MODERN AND POWERFUL RESCUE AND FIRE-FIGHTING VEHICLES, THREE INFLATABLE RESCUE BOATS AND TWO RESCUE LAUNCHES, ONE OF WHICH CAN CARRY 510 PEOPLE.

DURING THE HOUR-LONG TOUR, THE GOVERNOR ALSO OBSERVED FIREMEN DEMONSTRATE FIRE-FIGHTING SKILLS AND THE USE OF SPECIALISED AIRCRAFT RESCUE AND BREAKING-IN EQUIPMENT.

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OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME CAREFULLY STRUCTURED: FS

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS CAREFULLY STRUCTURED THE PROPOSED OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF \$10 BILLION UP-FRONT PAYMENT, TO MEET REQUESTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONTRIBUTE ONE-THIRD OF THE COST OF THE SCHEME, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, SIR HAMISH MACLEOD, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER VISITING THE CHEUNG MUK TAU HOLIDAY CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY, SIR HAMISH NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SEEMED TO BE GETTING OVER THE MESSAGE THAT IT WAS IN FACT CONTRIBUTING MORE THAN ONE-THIRD TO THE SCHEME.

HE WAS HOWEVER DISAPPOINTED THAT SOME CRITICS WERE NOW SHIFTING GROUND BY DEMANDING EVEN MORE.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION, SIR HAMISH SAID HE WAS AMAZED AT THE HONG KONG GENERAL CHAMBER'S SUGGESTION THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD FUND AN ENHANCED OLD AGE ALLOWANCE INSTEAD OF AN OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME.

IF PEOPLE WERE WORRIED ABOUT WELFARISM, THEN OF COURSE THEIR PROPOSAL WAS PRECISELY WHAT PEOPLE MEANT BY WELFARISM BECAUSE THE ENTIRE BURDEN OF THAT PROPOSAL WOULD GO ON TO THE TAXPAYER, HE SAID.

"THERE IS NO QUESTION OF ANY CONTRIBUTION AS FAR AS I CAN SEE IN THE CHAMBER'S SUGGESTION. SO IT WOULD BE ENTIRELY A BURDEN ON THE TAXPAYER," HE SAID.

SIR HAMISH GAVE A REASSURANCE THAT HONG KONG WAS NOT MOVING TOWARDS WELFARISM -- TOWARDS A SLIPPERY SLOPE OF EVER INCREASING CONTRIBUTIONS BY THE TAX PAYER.

"THAT IS PRECISELY THE MERIT OF THE SCHEME -- SELF CONTAINED, WITH AN IRON LINK BETWEEN CONTRIBUTIONS AND BENEFITS."

/SIR HAMISH

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SIR HAMISH SAID PROJECTIONS SHOWED THAT THE CONTRIBUTION RATE OF 1.5 PER CENT SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT FOR THE LEVEL OF BENEFITS PROPOSED WELL INTO THE NEXT CENTURY.

"IT IS NOW TIME TO FACE SQUARELY OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE A SECURE RETIREMENT FOR OUR ELDERLY. THE COMMUNITY CAN WELL AFFORD TO DO SO," SIR HAMISH ADDED.

SIR HAMISH SAID HE WAS PLEASED TO SEE SO MANY ELDERLY PEOPLE ENJOYING THEMSELVES AT THE HOLIDAY CENTRE.

"OUR SENIOR CITIZENS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO OUR GROWTH AND PROSPERITY DURING THEIR YOUNGER YEARS. THEY DESERVE A HAPPY AND SECURE RETIREMENT," HE SAID.

DURING THE VISIT, SIR HAMISH WATCHED ELDERLY CAMPERS TAKING PART IN SUCH RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AS SWIMMING, INDOOR GATE BALL AND HANDICRAFT.

THE CHEUNG MUK TAU HOLIDAY CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY WAS OPENED IN SEPTEMBER 1993 FUNDED BY A GRANT OF \$80 MILLION FROM THE SPECIAL COIN SUSPENSE ACCOUNT. IT IS RUN BY HELPING HAND WHICH IS A NON-GOVERNMENT WELFARE AGENCY.

SIR HAMISH WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MRS LOUISE WONG.

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INTERIM RECOMMENDATIONS ON LAND AUCTION ANNOUNCED

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THE THREE-MEMBER PANEL TASKED TO REVIEW LAND AUCTION ARRANGEMENTS TODAY (THURSDAY) ANNOUNCED ITS INTERIM RECOMMENDATIONS.

THE PANEL RECOMMENDED A SET OF GUIDELINES ON CONDUCT OF AUCTIONS WHICH EMBODIED ITS RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE POWER OF THE AUCTIONEER, SEATING ARRANGEMENTS AND MOVEMENT ABOUT THE AUCTION HALL DURING THE PROCEEDINGS, AND THAT THEY SHOULD BE APPLIED TO THE LAND AUCTION NEXT TUESDAY (JULY 26).

THE GUIDELINES ARE:

1. THE AUCTIONEER SHALL ANNOUNCE THE COMMENCEMENT AND THE CONCLUSION OF THE AUCTION PROCEEDINGS.
2. THE AUCTIONEER MAY GIVE SUCH DIRECTIONS AS TO THE CONDUCT AND PROCEDURE OF THE AUCTION PROCEEDINGS, INCLUDING DIRECTIONS AS TO THE SEATING, MOVEMENTS OR CONDUCT OF ALL PERSONS ATTENDING THE AUCTION, AS HE CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE.
3. PERSONS WHO WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BIDDING ARE ENCOURAGED TO SIT IN THE SECTION OF THE AUCTION HALL IN FRONT OF THE AUCTIONEER AND HIS ASSISTANTS.

/4. MEDIA

4. MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD KEEP TO THE SIDES OF THE AUCTION HALL DURING THE PROCEEDINGS AND SHOULD NOT SEEK INTERVIEWS OF THE AUCTIONEER, BIDDERS OR OTHERS BEFORE THE PROCEEDINGS HAVE CONCLUDED.

5. THERE SHOULD BE NO MOVEMENT ABOUT THE AUCTION HALL DURING THE PROCEEDINGS.

6. ANY PERSON ATTENDING THE AUCTION WHO FAILS TO COMPLY WITH ANY DIRECTIONS GIVEN BY THE AUCTIONEER MAY BE EXCLUDED FROM THE AUCTION HALL.

7. THE AUCTIONEER SHALL REGULATE THE BIDDING. THE AUCTIONEER MAY REFUSE TO ACCEPT ANY BID AND NO PERSON SHALL AT ANY BID ADVANCE LESS THAN THE AMOUNT FIXED FOR THAT PURPOSE BY THE AUCTIONEER.

8. IN THE EVENT THAT ANY DISPUTE ARISES, WHETHER BETWEEN TWO OR MORE BIDDERS OR OTHERWISE, AS TO ANY BID, THE AUCTIONEER MAY AT HIS DISCRETION FORTHWITH DETERMINE THE DISPUTE OR AGAIN PUT UP THE LOT FOR SALE AT THE LAST UNDISPUTED BID, OR WITHDRAW THE LOT FROM SALE.

9. THE AUCTIONEER MAY STOP THE BIDDING, WITHDRAW ANY LOT FROM AUCTION OR STOP THE AUCTION ALTOGETHER IF, IN HIS OPINION, MOVEMENT ABOUT THE AUCTION HALL OR OTHER ACTIVITY IS AFFECTING THE CONDUCT OF THE PROCEEDINGS.

IN ITS INTERIM REPORT, THE PANEL SAID MEMBERS HAD CONTACTED A RANGE OF PEOPLE, INCLUDING ARCHITECTS, SURVEYORS, LAWYERS, AUCTIONEERS, DEVELOPERS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, ON AN INFORMAL BASIS TO SOLICIT THEIR VIEWS.

THE PANEL NOTED THAT THE HONG KONG SYSTEM OF SELLING LAND BY AUCTION WAS REGARDED BY OTHER TERRITORIES AS A SUCCESSFUL METHOD OF LAND DISPOSAL, AND FELT THAT IT SHOULD BE CAUTIOUS ABOUT RECOMMENDING DRASTIC CHANGES IN RESPONSE TO ONE PARTICULAR OCCURRENCE WITHOUT GIVING FURTHER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

"THE PANEL RECOGNISES THAT, GIVEN THE SIZE, COMPLEXITY AND COST OF MANY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, THERE IS A LEGITIMATE ROLE FOR JOINT VENTURES OR CONSORTIA.

"AT THE SAME TIME, THERE IS A NEED TO ENSURE FAIR AND GENUINE COMPETITION IN LAND AUCTIONS," THE PANEL SAID.

ON OTHER RELATED MATTERS, THE PANEL CONSIDERED THAT THERE WAS NO NEED TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF MOBILE PHONES WITHIN THE AUCTION HALL AS LONG AS THE CONDUCT OF THE AUCTION WAS ORDERLY.

THE PANEL ALSO EXAMINED THE SUITABILITY OF DIFFERENT AUCTION VENUES AND FELT THAT SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS COULD BE MADE IN ALL OF THE VENUES NORMALLY USED, ALTHOUGH SOME MIGHT BE BETTER THAN OTHERS FROM AN OVERALL CONTROL POINT OF VIEW.

THE PANEL WILL CONTINUE TO CONSIDER OTHER ASPECTS OF LAND AUCTION ARRANGEMENTS IDENTIFIED DURING ITS DELIBERATIONS WHICH REQUIRE MORE IN-DEPTH EXAMINATION.

/THESE INCLUDE

THESE INCLUDE PRE-REGISTRATION OF BIDDERS, THE NEED FOR SETTING A RESERVE PRICE, THE SIZE OF LOTS FOR AUCTION, THE TIMING OF AUCTIONS AND THE ROLE OF AUCTIONS AS AGAINST OTHER FORMS OF LAND DISPOSAL METHOD SUCH AS TENDER.

THE PANEL EXPECTS TO COMPLETE ITS WORK IN AUGUST.

THE THREE PANEL MEMBERS ARE PROFESSOR C K LEUNG, DIRECTOR OF THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION AND CHAIRMAN OF THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE; MS AUDREY EU, QUEEN'S COUNSEL AND MEMBER OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY, THE CONSUMER COUNCIL AND THE LAND AND BUILDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE; AND MR C N BROOKE, CHARTERED SURVEYOR, AND MEMBER OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY AND THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD.

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INTERIM RECOMMENDATIONS ON LAND AUCTION ACCEPTED

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THE INTERIM RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE THREE-MEMBER PANEL SET UP TO REVIEW LAND AUCTION ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

THE RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE POWER OF THE AUCTIONEER, SEATING ARRANGEMENTS AND MOVEMENT ABOUT THE AUCTION HALL DURING THE PROCEEDINGS WOULD BE INTRODUCED IN THE FORTHCOMING LAND AUCTION ON NEXT TUESDAY (JULY 26), MR EASON SAID.

AS RECOMMENDED BY THE REVIEW PANEL, THESE RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD BE EMBODIED IN A SET OF GUIDELINES ON THE CONDUCT OF LAND AUCTIONS TO BE ADOPTED FOR THE NEXT LAND AUCTION, HE SAID.

MR EASON SAID THE PANEL WOULD CONTINUE TO REVIEW OTHER ASPECTS OF LAND AUCTION ARRANGEMENTS, INCLUDING PRE-REGISTRATION OF BIDDERS, THE NEED FOR SETTING A RESERVE PRICE, THE SIZE OF LOTS FOR AUCTION, THE TIMING OF AUCTIONS AND THE ROLE OF AUCTIONS AS AGAINST OTHER FORMS OF LAND DISPOSAL METHOD SUCH AS TENDER.

THE PANEL EXPECTS TO COMPLETE THE WHOLE REVIEW IN AUGUST.

HE THANKED MEMBERS OF THE PANEL FOR THEIR HARD WORK IN WORKING OUT THE INTERIM RECOMMENDATIONS WITHIN SUCH A SHORT TIME.

THE THREE MEMBERS ARE PROFESSOR C K LEUNG, DIRECTOR OF THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION AND CHAIRMAN OF THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE; MS AUDREY EU, QUEEN'S COUNSEL AND MEMBER OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY, THE CONSUMER COUNCIL AND THE LAND AND BUILDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AND MR C N BROOKE, CHARTERED SURVEYOR, AND MEMBER OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY AND THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD.

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LEGAL AID POLICY REVIEW REPORT PUBLISHED

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THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL HAS APPROVED ALL THE 25 RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE REPORT ON LEGAL AID POLICY REVIEW COMPILED BY AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP RECONVENED IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR, THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION AND CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING GROUP, MR ALAN LAI, TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE THIS (THURSDAY) AFTERNOON.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE WERE THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AID, LADY CHEUNG, AND THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION, MISS ANNIE TAM.

MR LAI ANNOUNCED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SET UP AN INDEPENDENT LEGAL AID SERVICES COUNCIL (LASC) BY STATUTE, WITH THE LEGAL AID DEPARTMENT (LAD) AND DUTY LAWYER SERVICE (DLS) ACTING AS ITS EXECUTIVE AGENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF LEGAL AID SERVICES.

THE LASC WILL MONITOR THE GENERAL PERFORMANCE OF THE LAD AND THE DLS, AND ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT ON LEGAL AID POLICY AND FUNDING REQUIREMENTS.

"THE LASC WILL BE CHAIRED BY A NON-OFFICIAL WHO IS INDEPENDENT OF BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE LEGAL PROFESSION, AND COMPRISE FOUR LAWYERS AND FOUR DISTINGUISHED LAY MEMBERS, IN ADDITION TO THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AID (DLA) AND THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE DLS," MR LAI SAID.

THE PROPOSED LASC WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS ENHANCING THE INDEPENDENCE OF LEGAL AID ADMINISTRATION. IT WILL PROVIDE GREATER OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF LEGAL AID AND POLICY FORMULATION AND IN THE MONITORING OF ITS COST-EFFECTIVENESS, AND WOULD THEREBY ENHANCE THE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF LEGAL AID ADMINISTRATION.

MR LAI SAID HE WAS AWARE THAT A CERTAIN SECTOR OF THE COMMUNITY HAD URGED FOR GREATER INDEPENDENCE OF LEGAL AID ADMINISTRATION BY ESTABLISHING A NON-GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY FOR THE DAY-TO-DAY ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLICLY-FUNDED LEGAL AID SERVICES. THIS WOULD INVOLVE THE DIS-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LAD.

HE DID NOT RULE OUT THIS POSSIBILITY. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF ITS FAR-REACHING IMPLICATIONS, THE SUBJECT SHOULD BE EXAMINED IN GREATER DETAIL.

HE SAID: "THE LASC WILL BE ASKED TO EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY AND DESIRABILITY OF ESTABLISHING A NON-GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY FOR THE DAY-TO-DAY ADMINISTRATION OF ALL PUBLICLY-FUNDED LEGAL AID SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE LAD AND THE DLS."

IN RESPECT OF SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE THE ACCESSIBILITY OF LEGAL AID, INCLUDING IN BILL OF RIGHTS (BOR) CASES, A LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENT WILL BE MADE TO EXTEND THE DLA'S PRESENT DISCRETIONARY POWER TO WAIVE THE MEANS TEST IN CRIMINAL CASES TO MERITORIOUS BOR CASES.

"ALL BOR CASES ARE ALREADY COVERED BY THE EXISTING SCOPE OF LEGAL AID. THERE IS THEREFORE NO NEED TO SET UP ANY SPECIAL LEGAL AID SCHEME FOR BOR CASES," MR LAI SAID.

THE RECONVENED WORKING GROUP ON LEGAL AID POLICY REVIEW HAS REJECTED THE PROPOSAL TO CHARGE AN APPLICATION FEE OF \$300 ON EACH APPLICANT UNDER THE STANDARD LEGAL AID SCHEME.

THIS PROPOSAL WAS PUT FORWARD IN THE CONSULTATIVE PAPER ON LEGAL AID AS A MEANS TO DETER UNDESERVING AND DISINGENUOUS APPLICATIONS.

THE RECONVENED WORKING GROUP DID NOT SUPPORT THE PROPOSAL BECAUSE THE NUMBER OF FRIVOLOUS AND REPEAT APPLICANTS WAS TOO INSIGNIFICANT TO JUSTIFY THE IMPOSITION OF THE APPLICATION FEE.

MR LAI SAID THAT THE RECONVENED WORKING GROUP HAD MODIFIED OR REJECTED SOME OTHER PROPOSALS IN RESPECT OF CIVIL LEGAL AID AND LEGAL ADVICE.

FOR EXAMPLES, THERE WERE SOME CHANGES TO THE EXISTING LIST OF EXCEPTED PROCEEDINGS. THE EXISTING EXCEPTED PROCEEDING OF "IN DISTRICT COURT, PROCEEDINGS FOR DAMAGES FOR ASSAULT AND BATTERY" WOULD BE DELETED SO THAT LEGAL AID WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR THOSE PROCEEDINGS.

THE PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE A FIXED FEE INTERVIEW SCHEME, IN ADDITION TO THE DLS'S LEGAL ADVICE SCHEME, WAS DROPPED.

THE RECONVENED WORKING GROUP REAFFIRMED THE 13 PROPOSALS IN THE CONSULTATIVE PAPER WHICH HAD BEEN GENERALLY WELL-RECEIVED IN THE CONSULTATION EXERCISE.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL 25 RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE REPORT OF THE RECONVENED WORKING GROUP WOULD INVOLVE AN ADDITIONAL ANNUALLY RECURRENT COST OF \$61.7 MILLION.

"THE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ARE BEING SOUGHT," MR LAI SAID.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MOST OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS WILL ALSO REQUIRE LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS. MR LAI ENVISAGED THAT THE NECESSARY LEGISLATION COULD BE ENACTED IN THE 1994/95 SESSION AND THAT THE VARIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS SHOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE EFFECT BY APRIL NEXT YEAR.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

THE 13 PROPOSALS IN THE CONSULTATIVE PAPER ON LEGAL AID REAFFIRMED BY THE RECONVENED WORKING GROUP ON LEGAL AID POLICY REVIEW ARE:

- * THE UPPER FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY LIMIT FOR THE STANDARD LEGAL AID SCHEME (CURRENTLY \$120,000) SHOULD BE REVISED ONCE EVERY TWO YEARS IN THE LIGHT OF INFLATION.
- * A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE OVERALL APPROACH TOWARDS ASSESSING THE FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED ONCE EVERY FIVE YEARS.

- * NO CHANGE SHOULD BE MADE TO THE EXISTING LEGAL AID SYSTEM WHEREBY FINANCIALLY ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS WHO HAVE A REASONABLE CAUSE OF ACTION ARISING IN HONG KONG ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE GRANT OF CIVIL LEGAL AID, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR RESIDENCE AND IMMIGRATION STATUS.
- * IN THE CASE OF THOSE LEGALLY AIDED PERSONS WHOSE DISPOSABLE FINANCIAL RESOURCES EXCEED \$120,000, THEY SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS LEGAL COSTS AT A HIGHER RATE, RANGING FROM 43 PER CENT TO 67 PER CENT OF THEIR DISPOSABLE FINANCIAL RESOURCES.
- * THE LAD SHOULD NOT BE ASKED TO SET UP ANY SPECIAL LEGAL AID SCHEMES FOR THE BOR AND CONSUMER PROTECTION CASES.
- * THE SCOPE OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY LEGAL AID SCHEME (SLAS) SHOULD BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE MEDICAL AND DENTAL NEGLIGENCE CLAIMS, AND CLAIMS INVOLVING PROFESSIONAL NEGLIGENCE ON THE PART OF LAWYERS.
- * THE ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURE OF REFUNDING TO AIDED PERSONS UNDER SLAS THEIR APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION FEES, EACH OF \$1,000, SHOULD BE DISCONTINUED.
- * THE RATE OF CONTRIBUTION FROM A SUCCESSFUL SLAS LITIGANT SHOULD BE INCREASED TO A FLAT RATE OF 15 PER CENT.
- * THE DEDUCTIONS FROM CONTRIBUTIONS FROM SLAS LITIGANTS FOR SETTLEMENT OF CLAIMS AFTER DELIVERY OF A BRIEF TO COUNSEL SHOULD BE DISCONTINUED.
- * THE LEGAL PROFESSION SHOULD BE ASKED TO CONSIDER RELAXING THE RESTRICTION REGARDING LAWYERS WORKING FOR VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, SO AS TO ALLOW THESE AGENCIES TO EMPLOY QUALIFIED LAWYERS TO PROVIDE FREE LEGAL ADVISORY SERVICE ON A FULL TIME BASIS.
- * THE SCALE OF CONTRIBUTION PAYABLE BY THE LEGALLY-AIDED PERSONS SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO BIENNIAL REVIEW TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT INFLATION.
- * OTHER WAYS OF FUNDING LEGAL AID SERVICES SHOULD BE KEPT UNDER REVIEW.
- * THE DLS AND THE LAD SHOULD BE KEPT AS SEPARATE ORGANISATIONS AND BOTH SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE TO THE LASC ONCE IT IS ESTABLISHED.

THURSDAY, JULY 21, 1994

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CONSUMER PRICE INDICES FOR JUNE 1994

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THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A) AND THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (B) IN JUNE 1994 WERE 7.5% AND 8.1% RESPECTIVELY HIGHER THAN IN JUNE 1993, ACCORDING TO FIGURES RELEASED TODAY (THURSDAY) BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

THESE WERE LOWER THAN THE CORRESPONDING INCREASES OF 7.8% AND 8.4% IN MAY.

COMPARING THE FIRST HALF OF 1994 WITH THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR, THE CPI(A) ROSE BY 7.5% AND THE CPI(B) BY 8.0%. THE CORRESPONDING AVERAGE ANNUAL INCREASES FOR 1993 WERE 8.5% AND 8.7%.

COMMENTING ON THE LATEST FIGURES, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID: "ALTHOUGH PRICES OF SOME FRESH FOOD ITEMS WENT UP IN THE LATTER PART OF JUNE CAUSED BY THE RECENT FLOODING IN SOUTH CHINA, PRICES OF VEGETABLES SHOWED EVEN SHARPER INCREASES IN JUNE LAST YEAR, AFFECTED BY POOR WEATHER CONDITIONS WITH TYPHOON AND SEVERAL RAINSTORMS.

"AS A RESULT, THE AVERAGE PRICES OF VEGETABLES FOR JUNE 1994 WERE STILL LOWER THAN THAT IN JUNE 1993."

THE HANG SENG CPI WAS HIGHER BY 10.1% IN JUNE 1994 THAN IN THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR. THE CORRESPONDING INCREASE IN MAY 1994 WAS 10.0%.

THE LARGER INCREASE IN THE HANG SENG CPI IN JUNE THAN THE CPI(A) WAS MAINLY BECAUSE OF A FASTER INCREASE IN RENTAL PAID BY HOUSEHOLDS COVERED BY THE HANG SENG CPI.

THE COMPOSITE CPI, WHICH IS COMPILED BASED ON THE COMBINED EXPENDITURE PATTERN OF HOUSEHOLDS COVERED BY THE THREE CPIS, SHOWED AN INCREASE OF 8.4% IN JUNE 1994 OVER THE SAME MONTH IN 1993. THIS WAS SLIGHTLY LOWER THAN THE CORRESPONDING INCREASE OF 8.6% IN MAY.

COMPARING JUNE 1994 WITH JUNE 1993, RELATIVELY SLOWER PRICE INCREASES THAN THE OVERALL AVERAGE WERE RECORDED FOR FOOD (EXCLUDING MEALS AT RESTAURANTS) (1.6% IN THE CPI(A) AND 2.2% IN THE CPI(B)); DURABLE GOODS (3.1% AND 3.5%); FUEL AND LIGHT (3.7% AND 3.6%); ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AND TOBACCO (5.4% AND 6.1%); MISCELLANEOUS GOODS (5.9% AND 5.3%); AND CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR (7.0% AND 7.3%).

ON THE OTHER HAND, RELATIVELY FASTER PRICE INCREASES THAN THE OVERALL AVERAGE WERE RECORDED FOR MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES (12.3% IN THE CPI(A) AND 11.2% IN THE CPI(B)); HOUSING (11.4% AND 12.0%); AND TRANSPORT (9.1% AND 9.0%).

AS FOR MEALS AT RESTAURANTS, THE CORRESPONDING INCREASE WAS 8.0% IN THE CPI(A) AND 7.8% IN THE CPI(B).

COMPARING JUNE 1994 WITH MAY 1994, THE CPI(A) AND CPI(B) INCREASED BY 0.8% AND 0.6% RESPECTIVELY. HOWEVER, THIS COMPARISON COULD HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY SEASONAL FACTORS.

/SECONDALLY ADJUSTED

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SEASONALLY ADJUSTED SERIES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE FOR THE CPIS. THE DESEASONALISED CPI(A) AND CPI(B) BOTH INCREASED AT AN AVERAGE RATE OF 0.7% PER MONTH DURING THE THREE MONTHS ENDED JUNE 1994.

FURTHER DETAILS ARE SHOWN IN TABLES 1-2 AND CHARTS 1-4.

THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX REPORT

MORE DETAILS ARE GIVEN IN THE "CONSUMER PRICE INDEX REPORT" FOR JUNE 1994, WHICH IS AVAILABLE AT \$16.5 PER COPY FROM THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, GROUND FLOOR, CONNAUGHT PLACE, HONG KONG; OR FROM THE PUBLICATIONS SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT, 19TH FLOOR, WANCHAI TOWER, 12 HARBOUR ROAD, WAN CHAI, HONG KONG.

FOR LOCAL AND OVERSEAS MAILINGS, CONTACT SHOULD BE MADE WITH THE INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT, FRENCH MISSION BUILDING, 1 BATTERY PATH, HONG KONG.

FOR ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE INDICES, PLEASE TELEPHONE THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ON TEL 805 6403.

DETAILS REGARDING THE HANG SENG CPI ARE CONTAINED IN THE HANG SENG CPI REPORT ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF HANG SENG BANK LIMITED.

/Table 1

Table 1 Consumer Price Indices and Rates of Increase for June 1994
(Oct. 89 - Sep. 90 = 100)

Component	CPI(A)		CPI(B)		Hang Seng CPI		Composite CPI	
	Index for Jun 94	% change over Jun 93	Index for Jun 94	% change over Jun 93	Index for Jun 94	% change over Jun 93	Index for Jun 94	% change over Jun 93
Food	141.1	+4.9	142.8	+5.6	144.2	+7.2	142.4	+5.6
Meals bought away from home	151.3	+8.0	151.0	+7.8	150.9	+9.7	151.1	+8.3
Food, excluding meals bought away from home	131.0	+1.6	131.5	+2.2	132.8	+2.7	131.5	+2.0
Housing	163.5	+11.4	165.4	+12.0	172.3	+15.2	167.0	+12.8
Fuel and light	124.1	+3.7	123.3	+3.6	123.7	+3.6	123.7	+3.6
Alcoholic drinks and tobacco	186.6	+5.4	177.5	+6.1	172.9	+6.0	181.5	+5.7
Clothing and footwear	138.2	+7.0	140.4	+7.3	158.7	+12.0	146.1	+8.9
Durable goods	112.6	+3.1	112.6	+3.5	118.1	+3.0	114.2	+3.2
Miscellaneous goods	131.0	+5.9	128.3	+5.3	127.4	+5.2	129.1	+5.5
Transport	148.8	+9.1	147.5	+9.0	145.9	+7.7	147.5	+8.7
Miscellaneous services	155.4	+12.3	150.7	+11.2	141.9	+9.2	149.5	+11.0
All items	146.2	+7.5	146.9	+8.1	151.0	+10.1	147.7	+8.4

Monthly consumer price indices are compiled on the basis of (a) expenditure patterns of relevant households and (b) prices collected currently in the month. The expenditure patterns underlying the 1989/90-based consumer price indices are based on those patterns derived from the 1989/90 Household Expenditure Survey. The CPI(A) is based on the expenditure pattern of about 50% of households in Hong Kong, which had an average monthly expenditure of \$2,500-\$9,999 in 1989/90. The CPI(B) is based on the expenditure pattern of the next 30% of households, which had an average monthly expenditure of \$10,000-\$17,499 in 1989/90. The Hang Seng CPI is based on the expenditure pattern of the next 10% of households, which had an average monthly expenditure of \$17,500-\$37,499 in 1989/90.

Whereas the CPI(A), CPI(B) and Hang Seng CPI are based on the expenditure patterns of groups of households with different magnitudes of household expenditure, the Composite CPI is compiled based on the expenditure pattern of all these households taken together. Thus, while the CPI(A), CPI(B) and Hang Seng CPI show the impact of consumer price changes on different groups of households, the Composite CPI shows the impact of consumer price changes on the household sector generally.

Table 2 Consumer Price Indices for January 1992 - June 1994
(Oct. 89 - Sep. 90 = 100)

<u>Year/month</u>	<u>CPI(A)</u>	<u>CPI(B)</u>	<u>Hang Seng CPI</u>	<u>Composite CPI</u>
1992				
January	119.7	119.3	119.4	119.5
February	121.8	121.2	121.0	121.4
March	122.5	121.9	121.8	122.1
April	124.0	123.4	122.9	123.5
May	124.0	123.8	124.2	124.0
June	125.3	125.1	125.2	125.2
July	125.5	125.4	125.4	125.4
August	125.6	125.9	125.8	125.8
September	128.3	127.9	127.5	128.0
October	128.4	128.4	128.6	128.5
November	128.5	129.0	129.9	129.0
December	129.3	129.8	130.0	129.7
1993				
January	131.8	131.6	131.5	131.7
February	132.4	132.2	132.0	132.2
March	132.0	132.2	133.1	132.4
April	133.5	133.9	134.5	133.9
May	134.5	134.8	136.3	135.1
June	136.0	135.9	137.1	136.3
July	135.8	136.1	136.9	136.2
August	136.3	136.6	137.4	136.7
September	138.4	138.3	139.2	138.6
October	140.0	139.6	140.7	140.0
November	139.4	139.9	142.2	140.3
December	140.4	140.9	143.3	141.3
1994				
January	140.0	140.7	143.4	141.1
February	142.7	142.9	144.9	143.3
March	142.5	143.0	145.3	143.4
April	143.8	144.8	147.9	145.2
May	145.0	146.1	150.0	146.7
June	146.2	146.9	151.0	147.7

/Chart 1

Chart 1 Year-on-year Rates of Increase
in CPI(A)

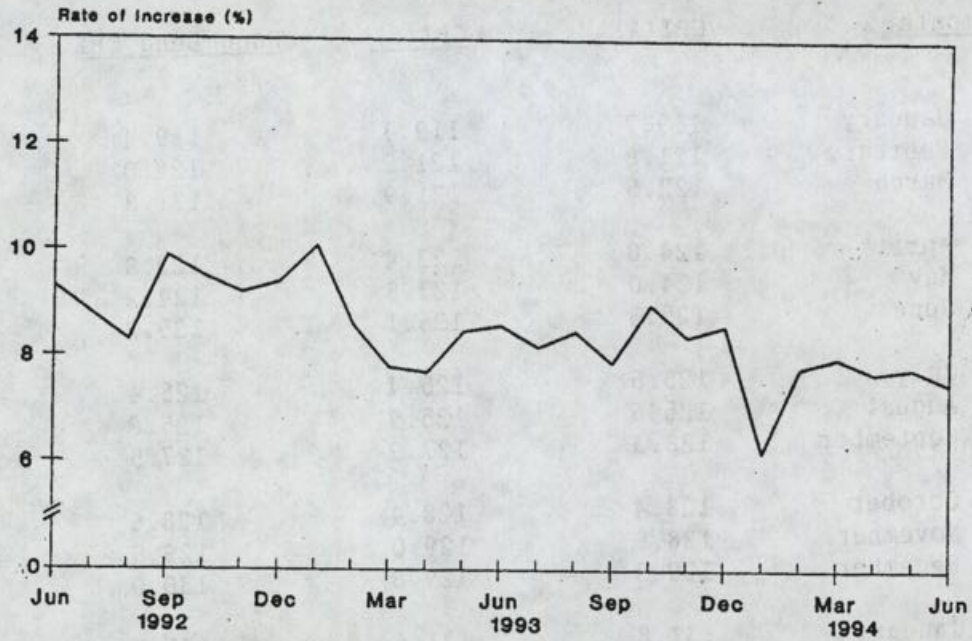
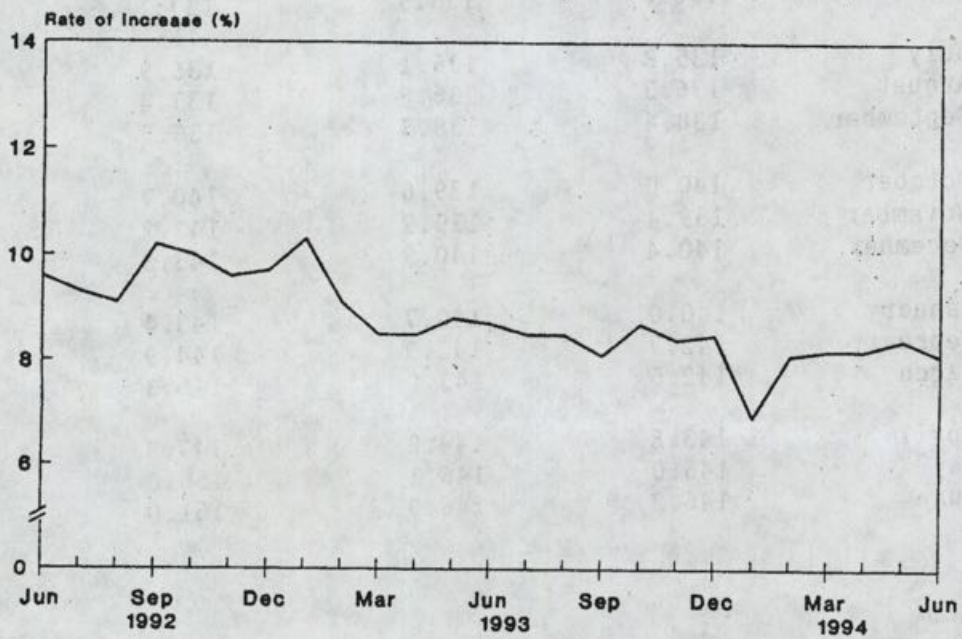


Chart 2 Year-on-year Rates of Increase
in CPI(B)



/Chart 3

Chart 3 Year-on-year Rates of Increase
in Hang Seng CPI

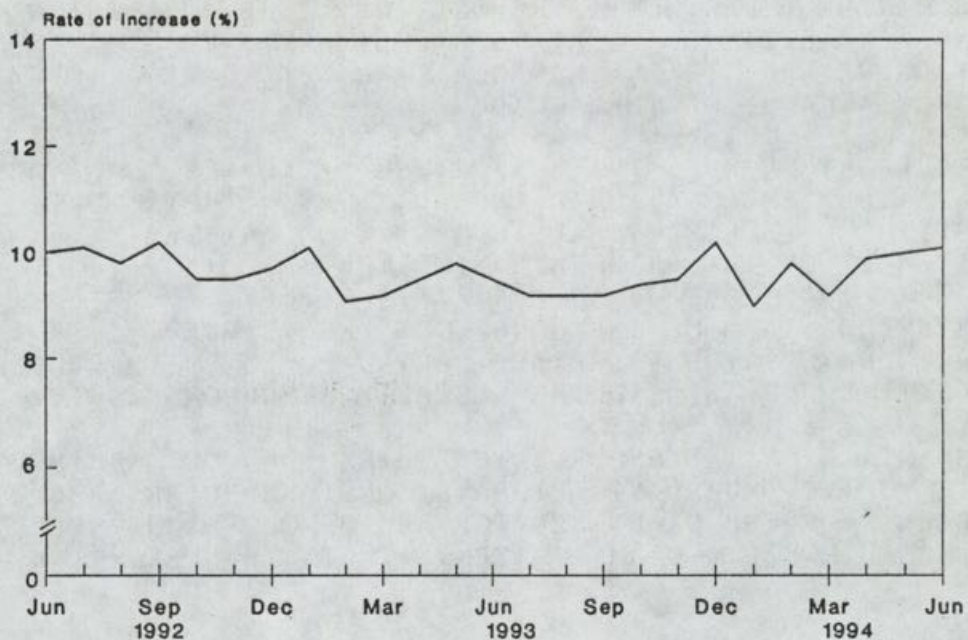
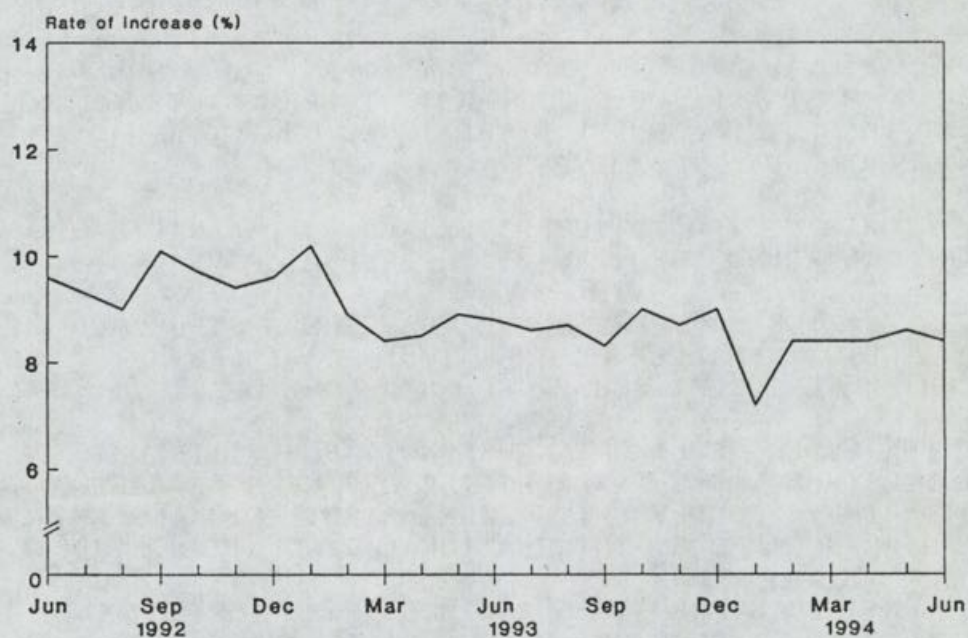


Chart 4 Year-on-year Rates of Increase
in Composite CPI



REPORT INTO COLLISION BETWEEN
A JETFOIL AND FLOATING PIPELINES PUBLISHED

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THE MARINE DEPARTMENT'S REPORT INTO THE COLLISION BETWEEN A JETFOIL AND A QUANTITY OF FLOATING PIPELINES TOWED BY A TUG OFF MACAU LAST JULY REVEALED THAT INADEQUATE LIGHTING TO ILLUMINATE THE PIPELINES WAS A CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT.

THE REPORT SHOWED THAT IF THE PIPELINES HAD BEEN LIT AS REQUIRED BY THE INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS, THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN DETECTED BY THE VESSEL'S VISUAL AUGMENTATION SYSTEM (VAS) AND ALSO SIGHTED VISUALLY BY THE BRIDGE TEAM OF THE JETFOIL.

THE BRIDGE TEAM OF THE HONG KONG REGISTERED JETFOIL "URZELA" WAS UNABLE TO DETECT THE PIPELINES BEING TOWED BY THE TUG "HANG FENG 901" OR IDENTIFY HER AS A TOWING VESSEL, THE REPORT SAID.

COMMENTING ON THE REPORT, THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE, MR ALLAN PYRKE, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY): "I HAVE CONSIDERED THE ADEQUACY OF THE SAFETY ELEMENTS OF THE NIGHT SERVICE REGIME OF HIGH SPEED CRAFT ON HONG KONG-MACAU ROUTE AND AM CONTENT THAT THE EXISTING SYSTEM IS SOUND.

"I CONSIDER THE NIGHT SERVICES SHOULD CONTINUE BUT MITIGATING MEASURES RECOMMENDED BY THE INVESTIGATION WILL BE IMPLEMENTED TO HELP PREVENT A REPETITION OF INCIDENTS OF THIS NATURE," MR PYRKE SAID.

THE MARINE DEPARTMENT WOULD ISSUE NOTICE TO REQUEST MASTERS OF VESSELS TO TAKE EXTRA CARE AT THE APPROACHES TO MACAU HARBOUR WHEN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MACAU AIRPORT WAS IN PROGRESS, HE SAID.

INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS REQUIRE AN ALL ROUND WHITE LIGHT VISIBLE FOR A DISTANCE OF AT LEAST THREE NAUTICAL MILES TO BE DISPLAYED AT THE EXTREME ENDS OF THE TOWED OBJECT AND ONE IN BETWEEN AS THE LENGTH EXCEEDED 100 METRES.

THE LIGHTS FITTED TO THE PIPES WERE APPARENTLY NOT WORKING AT THE TIME THE TOW APPROACHED MACAU, THE REPORT REVEALED.

INVESTIGATION HOWEVER SHOWED THAT THE MASTER OF THE TUG HAD USED FLOOD LIGHTS INSTALLED ON THE TUG TO ILLUMINATE THE FLOATING PIPELINES WHICH WERE SEMI-SUBMERGED WHILE ON TOW.

BUT THE LEVEL OF LIGHTING WAS NOT ABLE TO ILLUMINATE THE PIPES ADEQUATELY FOR THEM TO BE SEEN BY THE OFFICERS OF JETFOIL "URZELA", NEITHER DID THEY COMPLY WITH THE LIGHT SIGNALS FOR ATTRACTING ATTENTION AS PRESCRIBED BY INTERNATIONAL REGULATION, THE REPORT NOTED.

THE TUG, REGISTERED IN GUANGZHOU, WAS TOWING TWO LENGTHS OF LARGE FLOATING PIPELINES EACH MEASURED 110 METRES FROM GUANGZHOU TO THE MACAU AIRPORT WORKS SITE.

MR PYRKE SAID STEPS WOULD BE TAKEN TO ESTABLISH CLOSE LIAISON WITH GUANGDONG HARBOUR SUPERINTENDENCY, ZHUHAI AUTHORITY AND MACAU MARINE DEPARTMENT TO FIND WAYS TO PREVENT FURTHER INCIDENTS OF THIS NATURE.

THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED SHORTLY AFTER 8 PM ON JULY 11, 1993 WHEN THE HONG KONG-BOUND JETFOIL WITH 264 PASSENGERS ON BOARD COLLIDED WITH THE LARGE FLOATING PIPELINES TOWED BY THE TUG ABOUT FOUR NAUTICAL MILES OFF MACAU.

FORTY-NINE PASSENGERS ON BOARD THE JETFOIL WERE INJURED. THE JETFOIL SUSTAINED CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE AND THREE SECTIONS OF THE FLOATIG PIPELINES WERE DAMAGED BEYOND REPAIRS.

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DFCC MEMBERS VISIT SUPREME COURT

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THE JUDICIARY TODAY (THURSDAY) COMMENCED A PROGRAMME OF VISITS TO THE SUPREME COURT FOR DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN A BID TO FOSTER LINKS WITH THE COMMUNITY AND TO HELP ENHANCE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE COURTS.

MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE WERE MET BY THE JUDICIARY ADMINISTRATOR, MS ALICE TAI, THIS MORNING AND TOURED THE SUPREME COURT BUILDING.

THE GROUP WERE BRIEFED BY THE PRINCIPAL JUDICIAL CLERK, MR LIU TIN-LUK, ON COURT PROCEDURES AND ATTENDED A COURT HEARING ON A CRIMINAL CASE TO GET A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE COURT.

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GRADING OF BEACH WATER QUALITY

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

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

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID THE GRADING WOULD BE ANNOUNCED BI-WEEKLY DURING THE BATHING SEASON TO COINCIDE WITH THE FREQUENCY AT WHICH BEACH WATERS WERE USUALLY SAMPLED.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE SYSTEM FOR GRADING BEACH WATER QUALITY IS AS FOLLOWS:

- * GRADE "1" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS GOOD. THE E COLI COUNT IS NO MORE THAN 24 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED RISK OF MINOR ILLNESS TO SWIMMERS IS UNDETECTABLE.
- * GRADE "2" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS FAIR. THE E COLI COUNT IS NO MORE THAN 180 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED HEALTH RISK IS NO MORE THAN 10 CASES OF MINOR ILLNESS PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.
- * GRADE "3" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS POOR. THE E COLI COUNT IS NO MORE THAN 610 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED HEALTH RISK IS NO MORE THAN 15 CASES OF MINOR ILLNESS PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.
- * GRADE "4" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS VERY POOR. THE E COLI COUNT IS MORE THAN 610 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED HEALTH RISK IS MORE THAN 15 CASES OF MINOR ILLNESS PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.

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

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

AT PRESENT, FOUR GAZETTED BEACHES, NAMELY ANGLERS', CASTLE PEAK, OLD CAFETERIA, AND ROCKY BAY, ARE CLOSED TO SWIMMERS.

THE DECISION TO CLOSE THE BEACHES HAS BEEN MADE BY THE REGIONAL AND URBAN COUNCILS ON THE BASIS OF RECENT BEACH WATER QUALITY MONITORING DATA.

THE PUBLIC ARE ADVISED NOT TO SWIM AT THESE BEACHES. THEY ARE IDENTIFIED BY AN "X" IN THE FOLLOWING LIST.

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

BEACH -----	PREVIOUS GRADING ----- (AS AT 8.7.94)	PRESENT GRADING ----- (AS AT 21.7.94)
HONG KONG SOUTH -----		
BIG WAVE BAY	2	2
CHUNG HOM KOK	2	2
DEEP WATER BAY	2	2
HAIRPIN	1	2
MIDDLE BAY	1	2
REPULSE BAY	1	1
SHEK O	2	2
SOUTH BAY	1	1
ST. STEPHEN'S	1	1
TURTLE COVE	2	2
STANLEY MAIN	2	2
ROCKY BAY	X	X
TO TEI WAN*	2	3
TUEN MUN DISTRICT -----		
OLD CAFETERIA	X	X
NEW CAFETERIA	2	3
CASTLE PEAK	X	X
KADOORIE	3	3
BUTTERFLY	4	4
SAI KUNG DISTRICT -----		
CAMPERS	1	1
CLEAR WATER BAY 1ST BEACH	2	2
CLEAR WATER BAY 2ND BEACH	2	2
HAP MUN BAY	1	1
KIU TSUI	1	1
PAK SHA CHAU	1	1
SILVERSTRAND	2	3
TRIO (HEBE HAVEN)	1	2

/ISLANDS DISTRICT

ISLANDS DISTRICT

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

TSUEN WAN DISTRICT

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

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

THE FOLLOWING BEACHES HAVE CHANGED GRADING ON THIS OCCASION:

HAIRPIN, MIDDLE BAY, HUNG SHING YEH, TONG FUK, TUNG WAN, CHEUNG CHAU AND TRIO (HEBE HAVEN) FROM "1" TO "2"; TO TEI WAN, SILVERMINE BAY, SILVERSTRAND AND NEW CAFETERIA FROM "2" TO "3"; AND APPROACH FROM "3" TO "4".

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

THE GENERAL DETERIORATION OF BEACH WATER QUALITY IS PROBABLY BECAUSE OF THE RECENT HEAVY RAINFALL WHICH WOULD HAVE CAUSED THE POLLUTANTS IN THE BEACH HINTERLAND TO BE FLUSHED INTO THE SEA WATER.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT ACTING PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OFFICER MR K F TANG ON TEL 835 1234.

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ANNUAL REPORT ON HONG KONG ENERGY STATISTICS ON SALE
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THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT HAS PUBLISHED THE HONG KONG ENERGY STATISTICS ANNUAL REPORT, 1993 WHICH DESCRIBES THE SITUATION OF ENERGY SUPPLY AND DEMAND IN HONG KONG.

THE REPORT CONTAINS COMPREHENSIVE STATISTICAL INFORMATION RELATING TO DIFFERENT FORMS OF ENERGY, INCLUDING OIL PRODUCTS, COAL PRODUCTS, ELECTRICITY AND TOWN GAS.

IT ALSO INCLUDES AN OVERALL ENERGY BALANCE WHICH SUMMARISES THE SOURCES AND USES OF DIFFERENT FORMS OF ENERGY, AND DEPICTS THEIR RELATIONSHIPS IN THE ENERGY TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES.

REGARDING VARIOUS OIL PRODUCTS, STATISTICS ON LIST PRICES, STORAGE CAPACITY, TANK STOCK, IMPORTS, RE-EXPORTS, RETAINED IMPORTS, AVERAGE UNIT VALUES OF IMPORTS, AND QUANTITY OF SALES BY TYPE OF USER ARE PRESENTED IN THE REPORT.

FIGURES ON IMPORTS, RE-EXPORTS, RETAINED IMPORTS AND AVERAGE UNIT VALUES OF IMPORTS OF SELECTED COAL PRODUCTS ARE GIVEN.

FOR ELECTRICITY AND TOWN GAS, THE REPORT SHOWS FIGURES ON TARIFF CHARGES, GENERATING CAPACITY, PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION BY TYPE OF USER.

ANNUAL FIGURES FOR THE YEARS 1983 TO 1993 ARE PROVIDED WITH RESPECT TO MOST OF THESE STATISTICS. IN ADDITION, QUARTERLY FIGURES FOR 1992 AND 1993 ARE PRESENTED FOR SELECTED ITEMS.

THE REPORT, AT \$28 PER COPY, IS NOW ON SALE AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, CENTRAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, GROUND FLOOR, CONNAUGHT PLACE, CENTRAL, AND THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT, PUBLICATIONS SECTION, 19TH FLOOR, WANCHAI TOWER, 12 HARBOUR ROAD, WANCHAI.

ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE ENERGY STATISTICS PUBLISHED IN THE REPORT CAN BE MADE TO THE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION STATISTICS SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ON TEL 839 3246.

THURSDAY, JULY 21, 1994

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HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION	TIME (HOURS)	CUMULATIVE CHANGE (\$ MILLION)
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OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,429	0930	-50
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,659	1000	-50
CHANGE ATTRIBUTABLE TO :		1100	-50
MONEY MARKET ACTIVITY	-50	1200	-50
LAF TODAY	+280	1500	-50
		1600	-50
LAF RATE 2.50 BID/4.50 OFFER		TWI 122.7 *-0.1*	21.7.94

HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY

EF BILLS

EF NOTES/HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS

TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	4.15	16 MONTHS	2511	4.15	98.10	5.72
1 MONTH	4.10	22 MONTHS	2605	6.35	100.45	6.17
3 MONTHS	4.34	27 MONTHS	3610	4.20	95.36	6.53
6 MONTHS	4.69	30 MONTHS	3701	4.60	95.49	6.68
12 MONTHS	5.36	33 MONTHS	3704	6.15	98.56	6.84

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 15,805 MN

CLOSED 21 JULY 1994

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