



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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CONSULTANTS APPOINTED TO CARRY OUT
FEASIBILITY STUDY ON OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME

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THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (SATURDAY) THE APPOINTMENT OF THE WYATT COMPANY (HK) LTD, ACTUARIES AND CONSULTANTS, TO UNDERTAKE THE FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE PROPOSED CONTRIBUTORY OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME (OPS).

THE CONSULTANTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT ON FEASIBLE OPTIONS FOR FINANCING AND ADMINISTERING THE OPS, COMMENSURATE WITH THREE GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- * THE OPS SHOULD PROVIDE REGULAR PENSION BENEFITS FOR THE AGED WHO SATISFY ESTABLISHED ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (SUCH AS AGE, RESIDENCE);
- * PENSION PAYOUTS UNDER THE OPS MUST BE FINANCED IN FULL BY CONTRIBUTIONS COLLECTIBLE FROM EMPLOYERS, EMPLOYEES, THOSE PERSONS IN RECEIPT OF REGULAR INCOME ALBEIT NOT FROM ENGAGEMENT AS EMPLOYEES, FOR EXAMPLE THE SELF-EMPLOYED, TOGETHER WITH THE AMOUNTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL PLOUGH BACK AFTER SUBSUMING THE OLD AGE ALLOWANCE, THE HIGHER OLD AGE ALLOWANCE AND THOSE BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE SCHEME PRESENTLY PAYABLE TO THE AGED; AND
- * ADMINISTRATION OF THE OPS MUST BE AS SIMPLE AND USER-FRIENDLY AS POSSIBLE.

"IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE GET THE SCHEME RIGHT," A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN STRESSED, ADDING THAT THE CONSULTANTS WOULD BE OFFERING ADVICE AND SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS ON A NUMBER OF KEY AREAS. THESE INCLUDE:

- * HOW SUCH A SCHEME COULD BE ESTABLISHED IN PRACTICE, INCLUDING THE MACHINERY REQUIRED TO ADMINISTER AND ENFORCE THE OPS, AND THE MECHANISM FOR COLLECTING CONTRIBUTIONS AND MAKING PAYMENTS. SPECIFIC ADVICE IS REQUIRED AS TO HOW THE SELF-EMPLOYED AND THOSE PERSONS IN RECEIPT OF REGULAR INCOME BUT WHO ARE CURRENTLY OUTSIDE THE TAX NET CAN BE BROUGHT INTO THE OPS AS CONTRIBUTORS;
- * RESIDENCE QUALIFICATIONS FOR POTENTIAL OPS CONTRIBUTORS AND BENEFICIARIES. THIS ADVICE WOULD ALSO CONSIDER WHETHER MIGRANT WORKERS, FOR EXAMPLE, THOSE EMPLOYED IN HONG KONG UNDER THE IMPORTED LABOUR SCHEME, OR FOREIGN DOMESTIC HELPERS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE SCHEME;
- * WHETHER PENSIONS SHOULD BE PAID TO PERSONS WHO HAVE EMIGRATED, INCLUDING THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO SETTLE IN MAINLAND CHINA AFTER RETIREMENT;

- * ARRANGEMENTS WHERE A CONTRIBUTOR DIES BEFORE COLLECTING HIS PENSION, AND WHERE A PENSIONER DIES LEAVING DEPENDANTS;
- * WHETHER POTENTIAL BENEFICIARIES WHO ARE NON-CONTRIBUTORS TO THE OPS SHOULD HAVE TO COMPLETE AN INCOME DECLARATION OR MEANS TEST BEFORE QUALIFYING FOR PENSION BENEFITS;
- * HOW THE SCHEME WOULD REPLACE THE EXISTING BENEFITS UNDER THE OLD AGE ALLOWANCE AND HIGHER OLD AGE ALLOWANCE, AND RELATE TO BENEFITS PROVIDED UNDER THE COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE SCHEME AND THE DISABILITY ALLOWANCE;
- * THE NECESSARY CONTRIBUTION LEVEL, AND THE TYPE OF INCOME THAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED FOR THE PURPOSE OF CALCULATING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SCHEME;
- * THE COST OF THE SCHEME TO TAXPAYERS WHERE THE GOVERNMENT IS REQUIRED TO CONTRIBUTE;
- * THE IMPLICATIONS OF SETTING A MINIMUM INCOME LEVEL FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONTRIBUTING TO THE OPS, AND OF SETTING A CEILING ON THE AMOUNT THAT NEEDS TO BE CONTRIBUTED; AND
- * THE IMPLICATIONS ON PARTICIPANTS IN VOLUNTARY AND STATUTORY RETIREMENT SCHEMES;

"THE CONSULTANTS ARE EXPECTED TO SUBMIT THEIR REPORT IN MAY AND THE MAIN POINTS IN THE REPORT WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE SUMMER," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"THIS WILL GIVE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME," HE ADDED.

THE WYATT COMPANY (HK) LTD HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR OVER 20 YEARS AND IS THE LARGEST ACTUARIAL CONSULTANCY FIRM BOTH IN HONG KONG AND IN ASIA.

THE SENIOR CONSULTANTS IN WYATT HAVE ALL WORKED IN HONG KONG FOR A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME AND ARE THUS FULLY CONVERSANT WITH THE HISTORY OF THE LOCAL RETIREMENT BENEFIT AND PENSION DEBATE.

THE FIRM HAS ALSO CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE IN WORKING WITH OVERSEAS GOVERNMENTS ON RETIREMENT BENEFIT ISSUES, AND IS ABLE TO GAIN ACCESS TO A WIDE NETWORK OF OFFICES IN MAJOR CITIES IN THE WORLD.

GRADUATES FROM CHINA TO FILL VACANCIES

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THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL TO ALLOW 1,000 GRADUATES FROM ACCREDITED UNIVERSITIES IN CHINA TO WORK IN HONG KONG IS TO MEET THE URGENT NEED FOR MANAGERIAL AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE IN THE TERRITORY, MONG KOK DISTRICT OFFICER, MR BART IRELAND, SAID TODAY (SATURDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE MONG KOK DISTRICT JOINT SCHOOL VARIETY SHOW, MR IRELAND POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE CURRENTLY 6,000 VACANCIES IN THESE POSITIONS.

STRESSING THAT THIS ARRANGEMENT WAS NOT PART OF THE LABOUR IMPORTATION SCHEME, MR IRELAND SAID IT WOULD BE TIGHTLY MONITORED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

"THE SCHEME MIGHT CONTINUE AFTER A ONE-YEAR EXPERIMENTAL PERIOD. IF IT IS EFFECTIVE, SUCCESSFUL AND WELCOMED, THEN WE WILL CONTINUE WITH IT," HE ADDED.

TURNING TO EDUCATION, MR IRELAND HIGHLIGHTED THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S PROPOSAL TO INCREASE RECURRENT EXPENDITURE BY 6.5 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS FOR THE COMING YEAR, WHICH MEANS AN ADDITIONAL 980 GRADUATE TEACHERS AND AN EXTRA 672 SECONDARY SIX PLACES IN SEPTEMBER.

"WE WILL ALSO IMPROVE THE KINDERGARTEN FEE REMISSION SCHEME THREE YEARS EARLIER THAN WE PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED," HE SAID.

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SURVEY ON OPERATIONS OF NT TAXIS

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT WILL CONDUCT A SURVEY ON THE OPERATIONS AND FINANCE OF NEW TERRITORIES TAXIS IN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY (SATURDAY) THAT THE SURVEY WAS AN ANNUAL EXERCISE WHICH COMPRISED A QUESTIONNAIRE AND A METER-READING SURVEY.

QUESTIONNAIRES AND SKETCHES SHOWING THE LOCATIONS OF THE METER-READING CENTRES HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO TAXI OPERATORS SELECTED FOR THE SURVEY.

FOR THE METER-READING SURVEY, TAXI OWNERS SHOULD SEND THEIR VEHICLES TO THE METER-READING CENTRES FROM MARCH 14 TO 18 AND FROM MARCH 21 TO 25 BETWEEN 9.30 AM AND 12.30 PM OR BETWEEN 2 PM AND 4.30 PM FOR METER READING.

QUESTIONNAIRES SHOULD BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT BEFORE MARCH 23.

/THE SPOKESMAN

THE SPOKESMAN URGED OWNERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY TO HELP THE DEPARTMENT ASSESS THE OPERATING CONDITIONS OF NEW TERRITORIES TAXIS.

HE SAID THE INFORMATION COLLECTED WOULD BE TREATED CONFIDENTIALLY AND USED FOR STATISTICAL ANALYSIS ONLY.

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LABOUR DEPARTMENT PROVIDES A VARIETY OF FREE SERVICES

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THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING AN EFFICIENT, COURTEOUS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC, NO MATTER THEY ARE WORKERS OR EMPLOYERS, IN A CLEAN AND FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT.

TO FACILITATE THE GENERAL PUBLIC TO HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE WIDE RANGE OF FREE SERVICES AVAILABLE, A NEWLY REVISED BILINGUAL BOOKLET ENTITLED "THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT OFFERS YOU ITS SERVICES" HAS RECENTLY BEEN PUBLISHED.

IT OUTLINES THE DEPARTMENT'S MAIN SERVICES AND THE ACCESS TO THEM.

THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HAS NINE MAJOR DIVISIONS - CAREERS ADVISORY AND EXTERNAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION, EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, FACTORY INSPECTORATE, LABOUR INSPECTION, LABOUR RELATIONS, OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, PRESSURE EQUIPMENT AND SELECTIVE PLACEMENT.

THE CAREERS ADVISORY AND EXTERNAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICES DIVISION PROMOTES CAREERS EDUCATION THROUGH PROVIDING INFORMATION TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE CHOOSE A CAREER BEST SUITED TO THEIR TALENTS, INTERESTS AND ABILITIES.

IT ALSO CONTROLS THE OPERATION OF EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES AND ATTESTS CONTRACTS FOR EMPLOYEES WHO ARE EMPLOYED BY FOREIGN EMPLOYERS TO WORK OUTSIDE HONG KONG.

TO PROMOTE AND MAINTAIN HARMONIOUS LABOUR RELATIONS, THE LABOUR RELATIONS DIVISION GIVES ADVICE TO BOTH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES ON MANY ISSUES, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE, SETTING UP JOINT CONSULTATIVE BODIES IN INDIVIDUAL ESTABLISHMENTS AND GOOD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.

WHEN THERE IS A LABOUR DISPUTE, THE DIVISION ACTS AS A CONCILIATOR TO ASSIST THE PARTIES INVOLVED IN COMING TO AMICABLE TERMS OF SETTLEMENT.

IT ALSO HELPS EMPLOYEES WHO ARE OWED WAGES AND OTHER RELATED BENEFITS BY AN INSOLVENT EMPLOYER TO APPLY FOR EX-GRATIA PAYMENT FROM THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY FUND.

THE PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT AND REST DAY ARRANGEMENTS FOR WOMEN AND YOUNG PERSONS IN INDUSTRY ARE MONITORED BY THE LABOUR INSPECTION DIVISION, WHICH ALSO ENFORCES LAWS GOVERNING THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN IN ALL ECONOMIC SECTORS.

LABOUR INSPECTORS FROM THE DIVISION VISIT ESTABLISHMENTS TO ENSURE THAT EMPLOYEES RECEIVE THEIR STATUTORY BENEFITS.

THE FACTORY INSPECTORATE AND THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DIVISIONS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROTECTING THE SAFETY AND HEALTH OF WORKERS AND ASSIST PROPRIETORS AND WORKERS OF INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS IN COMPLYING WITH STATUTORY SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.

FACTORY INSPECTORS ALSO PROVIDE SAFETY TRAINING FOR INDUSTRIAL PERSONNEL AND ORGANISE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE SAFETY AT WORK.

WHEN A WORK ACCIDENT OCCURS, THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION DIVISION HELPS THE INJURED WORKER OBTAIN COMPENSATION FROM THE EMPLOYERS AND ADVISES BOTH THE EMPLOYEE AND EMPLOYER ON THEIR RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS UNDER RELEVANT LEGISLATION.

IN ADDITION, THE DIVISION ASSISTS PNEUMOCONIOTICS OR THEIR DEPENDANTS IN OBTAINING COMPENSATION FROM THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION FUND.

OTHER ESSENTIAL SERVICES INCLUDE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR EMPLOYERS AND JOB-SEEKERS OFFERED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES DIVISION, JOB PLACEMENT SERVICE FOR THE DISABLED PROVIDED BY THE SELECTIVE PLACEMENT DIVISION AND CONTROLS ON THE SAFE OPERATION OF PRESSURE EQUIPMENT THROUGH THE PRESSURE EQUIPMENT DIVISION.

APART FROM GIVING A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THESE SERVICES, THE BOOKLET DETAILS THE ADDRESSES OF BRANCH OFFICES OF VARIOUS DIVISIONS WHERE ADVICE AND FURTHER INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED.

IT ALSO CONTAINS A LIST OF PUBLICATIONS PRODUCED BY THE DEPARTMENT ON VARIOUS LABOUR SUBJECTS AS WELL AS LEGISLATION IT ADMINISTERS.

WITH AN EXQUISITE DESIGN PRODUCED BY THE CREATIVE SUB-DIVISION OF THE INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE BOOKLET IS A USEFUL HANDBOOK FOR BOTH THE EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES.

IT IS NOW OBTAINABLE FREE FROM ALL OFFICES OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT AND FROM PUBLIC ENQUIRY SERVICE CENTRES OF THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION.

HK PEOPLE TO BENEFIT FROM BUDGET

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THE NEWLY RELEASED 1994/95 BUDGET WILL ENABLE HONG KONG PEOPLE TO SHARE THE WEALTH BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE CONTINUED ECONOMIC GROWTH OF THE TERRITORY, THE ISLANDS DISTRICT OFFICER, MR CHRISTOPHER WONG KWOK-BUN, SAID TODAY (SATURDAY).

OFFICIATING AT THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE OF CHEUNG CHAU CHILDREN'S CHOIR, MR WONG ATTRIBUTED THIS TO THE GENEROUS TAX CONCESSIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO WELFARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES.

TURNING TO EDUCATION, MR WONG POINTED OUT THAT RECURRENT EXPENDITURE WOULD BE INCREASED TO \$26 BILLION IN THE COMING YEAR, WHICH WAS 20.9 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL RECURRENT PUBLIC SPENDING.

THIS WILL PRODUCE AN ADDITIONAL 980 GRADUATE TEACHERS FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, WITH IMPROVEMENT TO THE KINDERGARTEN FEE REMISSION SCHEME THREE YEARS EARLIER THAN PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED, HE SAID.

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SEAFOOD FESTIVAL IN SAI KUNG

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TENS OF THOUSANDS OF TOURISTS AND LOCAL RESIDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO FLOCK TO SAI KUNG FOR A SEAFOOD FESTIVAL WHICH WILL BEGIN TOMORROW (SUNDAY).

THE MONTH-LONG CULINARY FAIR IS AIMED AT PROMOTING TOURISM IN THE AREA.

THERE WILL BE 36 PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS AND SEAFOOD STALLS PROVIDING EXCLUSIVE SEAFOOD MENUS AT BARGAIN PRICES.

THE FESTIVAL IS BEING ORGANISED BY THE 1994 SAI KUNG DISTRICT SEAFOOD FESTIVAL PREPARATORY COMMITTEE WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT OFFICE, THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT BOARD, THE HONG KONG TOURIST ASSOCIATION AND LOCAL TRADE BODIES.

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ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

THE CHAIRMAN OF REGIONAL COUNCIL, MR CHEUNG YAN-LUNG, THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, DR LAWRENCE LEE AND THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT OFFICER, MR PARRISH NG, WILL OFFICIATE AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT SEAFOOD FESTIVAL.

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE CEREMONY WHICH WILL BEGIN AT 11 AM TOMORROW (SUNDAY) AT HOI PONG STREET, SAI KUNG.

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SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 1994

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS
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	\$ MILLION -----
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	2,174
REVERSAL OF LAF	+500
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	2,674
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-350
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	2,324
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	TWI 125.4 **0.0* 12.3.94

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