



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

MONDAY, JULY 25, 1994

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MONDAY, JULY 25, 1994

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE GOVERNOR'S DOORSTEP INTERVIEW OUTSIDE FCO

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FOLLOWING IS THE TRANSCRIPT OF THE DOORSTEP INTERVIEW OF THE GOVERNOR OUTSIDE THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE ON JULY 25:

GOVERNOR: I HAVE HAD TWO VERY GOOD MEETINGS WITH THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, WITH MR GOODLAD AND SENIOR OFFICIALS AT WHICH WE HAVE REVIEWED A NUMBER OF ISSUES IN THE LIGHT OF THE SUCCESSFUL PASSAGE OF OUR BILL ON ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR 1994 AND 1995.

AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE, WE BELIEVE THAT THAT IS NOW DONE. WE HAVE DRAWN A LINE ON THE PAGE AND WE WANT TO GET ON AND SEE AS MUCH CO-OPERATION ACROSS THE BOARD IN THE INTERESTS OF HONG KONG AS POSSIBLE. WE, AND THE MINISTERS, WERE VERY PLEASED BY THE AGREEMENT ON DEFENCE LANDS WHICH REPRESENTED THE OUTCOME OF NEARLY SEVEN YEARS OF DIFFICULT DISCUSSION AND NEGOTIATION.

I HAVE BEEN TALKING TO THE FOREIGN SECRETARY AND MR GOODLAD ABOUT THE AIRPORT WHERE WE SEEM TO BE CLOSE TO AN AGREEMENT. THERE ARE STILL ONE OR TWO ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE CRACKED BUT THEY ARE PRETTY SMALL IN COMPARISON WITH SOME OF THE ISSUES ON WHICH I THINK WE HAVE AGREED. I HOPE THAT WE CAN GET AHEAD WITH THAT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

WE WANT TO MAKE PROGRESS ON THE CONTAINER TERMINAL BECAUSE WE ARE WORRIED ABOUT OUR PORT BECOMING TOO CROWDED. WE WANT TO SEE THE PORT DEVELOPED AS SUCCESSFULLY AS POSSIBLE AND THERE IS A RANGE OF JOINT LIAISON GROUP (JLG) ISSUES ON WHICH WE NEED TO MAKE AS RAPID PROGRESS AS POSSIBLE. THERE HAVE BEEN 29 MEETINGS OF THE JLG SO FAR. THERE ARE ONLY ABOUT NINE LEFT AND THERE IS A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF WORK TO DO. WE HAVE BEEN LOOKING AT THAT AS WELL.

I WILL BE SEEING THE PRIME MINISTER LATER ON THIS EVENING AND WILL BE TALKING TO HIM ABOUT A NUMBER OF THESE ISSUES. LATER IN THE WEEK, I AM SEEING THE LABOUR PARTY'S SPOKESMAN, JACK CUNNINGHAM. I AM SEEING PADDY ASHDOWN AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS FOREIGN AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE, SO I HAVE A PRETTY FULL PROGRAMME.

QUESTION: WOULD YOU NOMINATE DEMOCRATS INTO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO THANK THEM FOR SUPPORTING YOU?

GOVERNOR: SINCE THE AUTUMN OF 1992, I HAVE SAID THAT I THOUGHT IT WAS RIGHT TO SEPARATE THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AT THIS POINT IN HONG KONG'S POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT. I SAID ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS THAT THAT WAS THE DECISION THAT WE HAD TAKEN FOR THE TIME BEING. I ALSO SAID THAT COME THE AUTUMN OF NEXT YEAR I AM SURE THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY WOULD HAVE VIEWS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXCO AND LEGCO. I HAVE SAID THOSE THINGS ON MANY OCCASIONS AND THEY DO NOT REPRESENT ANY SHIFT IN POLICY.

QUESTION: ON THE AIRPORT FINANCIAL PACKAGE, REGARDING THE \$23 BILLION TO BE RAISED BY THE PAA OR ITS SUCCESSOR AND THE MTRC, WILL THE GOVERNMENT COMMIT IT IN BLACK AND WHITE TO ASSURE THE CHINESE THAT THE \$23 BILLION WILL NOT IN ANY WAY BECOME A GOVERNMENT LIABILITY?

/GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR: WE ARE DISCUSSING THE OVERALL FINANCING INCLUDING THE SIZE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S EQUITY INVESTMENT AND THE SIZE OF BORROWING WITH OUR CHINESE COLLEAGUES AT THE MOMENT, AND I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WHICH IS IN THE INTERESTS OF HONG KONG. IN THE MEANTIME, OF COURSE, THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HAS, I AM PLEASED TO SAY, GONE ON VOTING FUNDS FOR THE AIRPORT, SO THAT AIRPORT IS BEING BUILT VERY RAPIDLY, CERTAINLY IN COMPARISON WITH WHAT WOULD BE DONE IN OTHER COMMUNITIES.

WE HAVE COMPLETED ABOUT 60 PER CENT OF THE SITE FORMATION WHICH IS A CONSIDERABLE ACHIEVEMENT, BUT OBVIOUSLY IF WE COULD GET AN OVERALL AGREEMENT WITH CHINESE OFFICIALS INCORPORATING AGREEMENT ON EQUITY INVESTMENT AND BORROWING, THAT WOULD BE AN EXCELLENT OUTCOME. I DO NOT THINK YOU WOULD EXPECT ME TO DISCUSS OR NEGOTIATE THE DETAILED FIGURES PUBLICLY.

QUESTION: BUT GOVERNOR, DID YOU NOT ALSO DISCUSS TODAY SOME OF THE PERSPECTIVES WHICH SEEM TO HAVE ARISEN FROM MR GOODLAD'S VISIT TO CHINA RECENTLY, PARTICULARLY, APPARENTLY CHINESE RESERVATIONS ABOUT BEING ABLE TO SAY THAT THEY WOULD SEPARATE POLITICAL CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS ENTIRELY FROM THE PRACTICAL ISSUES?

GOVERNOR: IT IS FOR CHINESE OFFICIALS TO EXPLAIN WHAT THEY MEAN OR WHAT THEY WANT TO DO. WE ARE VERY CLEAR ABOUT WHAT WE WANT. WE WANT TO HAVE THE MAXIMUM CO-OPERATION BECAUSE WE THINK THAT THAT IS IN THE INTERESTS OF HONG KONG. CHINESE OFFICIALS HAVE OFTEN IN THE PAST TALKED ABOUT WANTING CO-OPERATION. THERE IS AN EXPRESSION IN ENGLISH AND A SIMILAR EXPRESSION IN CHINESE THAT "DEEDS ACT LOUDER THAN WORDS". I THINK THAT WHAT WE LOOK FOR IS AS MUCH CO-OPERATION AS POSSIBLE. WHERE WE CANNOT AGREE, WE HAVE TO PUT THAT ON ONE SIDE AND GET ON WITH ALL THE MATTERS WHERE THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WANT TO SEE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN BRITAIN AND CHINA.

QUESTION: WHEN YOU SEE MR MAJOR LATER TODAY AFTER YOU HAVE DISCUSSED THE VERY IMPORTANT BUSINESS OF HONG KONG, WILL YOU BE OFFERING HIM ANY WORDS OF ADVICE ABOUT FUTURE GOVERNMENT STRATEGY, PARTICULARLY AFTER THE WORST ELECTION RESULTS IN THE TORY PARTY'S HISTORY?

GOVERNOR: NO, I WOULD NOT BE OFFERING HIM ANY ADVICE ON THOSE MATTERS, I USED TO DO THAT IN A PREVIOUS OCCUPATION, IN A PREVIOUS JOB I HAD. I WAS OFTEN TOLD THAT THE OUTLOOK WAS DISASTROUS AND THAT THINGS WERE GOING TO GO FRIGHTFULLY BADLY, AND AS I RECALL, THOUGH IT IS A LONG TIME AGO SO MY MEMORY MAY BE FAILING ME, THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY WON THE LAST GENERAL ELECTION.

BUT THOSE ARE NOT MATTERS FOR ME TODAY. I WILL TALK TO THE PRIME MINISTER ABOUT HONG KONG - MAY BE CRICKET AS WELL - BUT HONG KONG CERTAINLY.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE GOVERNOR'S MEDIA SESSION
OUTSIDE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT OFFICE

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FOLLOWING IS THE TRANSCRIPT OF THE GOVERNOR SPEAKING TO REPORTERS OUTSIDE THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT OFFICE IN LONDON TODAY (MONDAY):

GOVERNOR: GOOD MORNING. I THINK YOU KNOW THAT I AM PROPOSING TO SAY A FEW WORDS TO YOU AFTER MY MEETINGS AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE THIS AFTERNOON, BUT I DID JUST WANT TO SAY A WORD ABOUT THE DISASTER AT SMITHFIELD ROAD.

I HAVE BEEN SPEAKING THIS MORNING TO THE CHIEF SECRETARY, WHO IS DEPUTY AND ACTING GOVERNOR, ABOUT THE DISASTER. I WOULD LIKE TO OFFER MY SINCERE CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THOSE WHO WERE KILLED, THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN INJURED AND THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN LOST IN THE DISASTER.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO COMMEND THE WORK DONE BY THE EMERGENCY SERVICES TO HELP DEAL WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE DISASTER. ANSON CHAN TOLD ME ON THE PHONE THAT OBVIOUSLY THE GOVERNMENT ARE REVIEWING AS A MATTER OF URGENCY THE WORK THAT HAS BEEN DONE ON THE DANGEROUS SLOPES AND WE MUST LEARN EVERY LESSON FROM THIS DISASTER AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE AND TRY TO PREVENT THE SAME SORT OF THING HAPPENING AGAIN.

OBVIOUSLY THE WEATHER CONDITIONS HAVE BEEN ALMOST UNIQUELY APPALLING WHICH MUST HAVE BEEN THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE DISASTER.

QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE AREAS AFFECTED?

GOVERNOR: IT IS SMITHFIELD ROAD, IN KENNEDY TOWN.

QUESTION: YOU DON'T KNOW IF THERE ARE ANY OTHER AREAS AFFECTED AT ALL?

GOVERNOR: NO. OBVIOUSLY THE GOVERNMENT IS REVIEWING ALL THE WORK THAT HAS BEEN DONE ON THE DANGEROUS SLOPE TO MAKE SURE THAT WE HAVE TAKEN ADEQUATE MEASURES. THE SECRETARY FOR WORKS IS OBVIOUSLY IN THE KEY POSITION TO DO THAT.

THANK YOU.

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SLOPE STABILISATION WORK IN HAND

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THE SECRETARY FOR WORKS, MR JAMES BLAKE, SAID TODAY (MONDAY) EMERGENCY WORK HAD BEEN UNDERTAKEN TO STEM THE WATER INFLOW AND STABILISE THE SURFACE OF THE SLOPE BEHIND A MASONRY WALL WHICH COLLAPSED AT KWUN LUNG LAU ESTATE LAST SATURDAY NIGHT.

MR BLAKE SAID: "ENGINEERS FROM BOTH THE GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEERING OFFICE AND THE BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT ARE ON SITE ROUND THE CLOCK TO SUPERVISE THE EMERGENCY WORK BEING UNDERTAKEN BY CONTRACTORS HIRED BY THE GOVERNMENT."

/"WE HAVE

"WE HAVE SUCCEEDED IN DIVERTING SERVICE WATER FLOW FROM A BROKEN PIPE AWAY FROM THE SLOPE AND ARE IN THE PROCESS OF COVERING THE SLOPE FACE WITH PLASTIC SHEETS AND REMOVING DEBRIS. IT HAS BEEN CONFIRMED THAT THE MAJOR STRUCTURE OF THESE BLOCKS IS SUPPORTED BY DEEP CONCRETE COLUMNS.

"OUR ENGINEERS ARE ASSESSING THE SUPPORTING STRUCTURE OF AN ACCESS STAIRCASE NEAR BLOCK D WHICH HAS BEEN UNDERMINED," HE SAID.

MR BLAKE SAID WHILE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE WAS BEING DONE TO RESTABILISE THE SLOPE, MORE IN-DEPTH INVESTIGATION OF THE STRUCTURE OF BLOCKS C AND D WOULD BE REQUIRED BEFORE THE CLOSURE ORDER GRANTED BY COURT TODAY COULD BE RECONSIDERED.

ON SLOPE SAFETY IN GENERAL, MR BLAKE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD RECENTLY COMMISSIONED CONSULTANCIES TO REVIEW INFORMATION ON SLOPES INCLUDED IN THE GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEERING OFFICE'S CATALOGUE OF SLOPES.

HE SAID THE LIST OF SLOPES WOULD BE UPDATED AND WHERE NECESSARY IMMEDIATE WORK WOULD BE CARRIED OUT TO FURTHER MINIMISE POTENTIAL RISK THAT THESE SLOPES MIGHT POSE.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT SINCE THE LAUNCH OF THE SLOPE STABILISATION PROGRAMME IN 1976, THE GOVERNMENT HAD SPENT MORE THAN \$1 BILLION ON THESE WORKS.

"WE HAVE DEALT WITH ALL OF THE HIGH-RISK SLOPES AND IS NOW UNDERTAKING A PROGRAMME TO IMPROVE LOW-RISK SLOPES," HE SAID.

ON THE SAFETY OF PRIVATE SLOPES, MR BLAKE SAID: "APART FROM THE STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY OF DEVELOPERS AND OWNERS/OCCUPIERS TO SAFEGUARD THEIR OWN PRIVATE SLOPES, THE GOVERNMENT APPLIES STATUTORY MEANS TO MONITOR THESE SLOPES AND TO REQUIRE ACTION TO DEAL WITH ANY DEFECTS."

MR BLAKE SAID THE STATUTORY PROCEDURE AND MONITORING WOULD ENSURE THAT STANDARDS SET BY THE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE COMPROMISED.

HE NOTED THAT IN ADDITION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S OWN SLOPE IMPROVEMENT WORK, OVER 300 PRIVATE SLOPES HAD BEEN STABILISED FOLLOWING FORMAL NOTIFICATION TO PRIVATE DEVELOPERS AND OWNERS/OCCUPIERS.

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT SINCE 1992, THE GOVERNMENT HAD LAUNCHED REGULAR PUBLICITY CAMPAIGNS TO ALERT OWNERS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING SLOPES IN GOOD CONDITION.

"THE GOVERNMENT'S MAINTENANCE TEAMS ALSO REPORT ON ANY SLOPE OR SUPPORTING STRUCTURE DEFICIENCIES FOUND ON THEM FOR ACTION TO BE TAKEN," MR BLAKE SAID.

GOOD MARKET RESPONSE TO TENDER FOR EXCHANGE FUND NOTES

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THE HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY (HKMA) SAID THE MARKET RESPONSE TO THE TENDER TODAY (MONDAY) FOR THE FOURTH ISSUE OF \$500 MILLION THREE-YEAR EXCHANGE FUND NOTES, THE FIRST BATCH TO MATURE AFTER JULY 1, 1997, WAS GOOD.

THE NOTES, WHICH CARRIED A COUPON RATE OF 6.95 PER CENT, WERE ABOUT 4.5 TIMES OVER-SUBSCRIBED.

THE AVERAGE ACCEPTED PRICE WAS 100.43, GIVING AN ANNUALISED YIELD OF 6.9 PER CENT. THE YIELD WAS ABOUT 14 BASIS POINTS ABOVE THAT FOR THE THIRD ISSUE.

THE DIFFERENCE IN YIELDS BETWEEN THE THIRD AND SECOND ISSUE ALSO WAS ABOUT 14 BASIS POINTS, REFLECTING THAT THE MARKET DEMANDED NO ADDITIONAL PREMIUM FOR THE LATEST ISSUE.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF HKMA, MR JOSEPH YAM, SAID HE WAS PLEASED WITH THE RESULT OF THE TENDER.

"THE TENDER OF THE ISSUE WENT WELL, SHOWING THAT THE MARKET DEMANDED NO ADDITIONAL PREMIUM ON THE ISSUE EVEN THOUGH IT IS FOR REPAYMENT AFTER JULY 1, 1997," HE ADDED.

"THIS PROVIDES SOLID EVIDENCE THAT THE MARKET HAS GIVEN A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE MAINTENANCE OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT'S FINANCIAL STRENGTH BEYOND 1997."

MR YAM ADDED THAT THE FACT THAT HKMA HAD SECURED THE AGREEMENT FROM THE CHINESE SIDE TO RUN THE EXCHANGE FUND BILLS AND NOTES PROGRAMMES ON A CONTINUING BASIS EVEN IF THE MONEY BORROWED WAS FOR REPAYMENT AFTER JULY 1, 1997 HAD CONTRIBUTED TO THE CONFIDENCE OF THE MARKET.

IN VIEW OF THE GOOD MARKET RESPONSE TO THE LATEST THREE-YEAR EXCHANGE FUND NOTES, HKMA SAID IT WOULD ACTIVELY CONSIDER THE ISSUE OF FIVE-YEAR EXCHANGE FUND NOTES LATER THIS YEAR.

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WORK ARRANGEMENTS DURING RAINSTORMS URGED

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PRIOR AGREEMENT BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES WITH REGARD TO WORK ARRANGEMENTS AND CONTINGENCY MEASURES IN TIMES OF RAINSTORMS ARE IMPORTANT IN AVOIDING UNNECESSARY MISUNDERSTANDING AND DISPUTES.

IN RESPONSE TO PRESS ENQUIRIES, THE ACTING CHIEF LABOUR OFFICER (LABOUR RELATIONS), MR WILLIAM SIU, SAID TODAY (MONDAY) THAT STATUTORY REGULATIONS OF WORK ARRANGEMENTS IN TIMES OF RAINSTORMS WOULD NOT BE PRACTICABLE BECAUSE OF THE DIVERSITY IN NATURE AND REQUIREMENTS OF JOB IN VARIOUS TRADES AND INDUSTRIES.

"EMPLOYERS ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO ADOPT A FLEXIBLE APPROACH IN DRAWING UP WORK ARRANGEMENTS DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER," MR SIU SAID.

/"DUE CONSIDERATION

"DUE CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO EMPLOYEES' SAFETY IN WORK PLACE AS WELL AS THEIR JOURNEY TO AND FROM WORK," HE SAID.

MR SIU POINTED OUT THAT THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HAD PUBLISHED A BILINGUAL BOOKLET ENTITLED "CODE OF PRACTICE IN TIMES OF TYPHOONS AND RAINSTORMS" WHICH SERVED AS A REFERENCE GUIDE TO FACILITATE EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES TO MAKE EARLY WORK ARRANGEMENTS DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER.

"BRIEFLY SPEAKING, AN AGREEMENT ON WORK ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD COVER RULES REGARDING REPORT OF DUTY, RELEASE FROM WORK, RESUMPTION OF WORK AND WAGES CALCULATION," HE SAID.

"THE AGREEMENT TO BE MADE BETWEEN THE EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES SHOULD STATE CLEARLY THE COLOUR CODE OF RAINSTORM UNDER WHICH EMPLOYEES ARE NOT REQUIRED TO WORK AND THE TIME OF ISSUE OF SUCH SIGNALS WHEN THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO REPORT FOR DUTY."

NOTING THAT SOME INDUSTRIES MAY REQUIRE EMPLOYEES TO WORK UNDER THE BLACK RAINSTORM WARNING, MR SIU SAID SUCH A REQUIREMENT SHOULD BE CLEARLY STATED BEFORE THE EMPLOYMENT COMMENCES OR SUFFICIENT NOTICE SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE EMPLOYEES.

"THE WORK ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE RELEASE OF EMPLOYEES WHEN RAINSTORM SIGNALS ARE IN FORCE DURING WORKING HOURS," MR SIU SAID.

"EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES SHOULD ALSO MAKE PRIOR AGREEMENTS ON CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH EMPLOYEES SHOULD RETURN TO WORK WHEN RAINSTORM WARNINGS ARE LOWERED DURING WORKING HOURS."

MR SIU ALSO URGED EMPLOYERS TO ADOPT A FLEXIBLE APPROACH IF EMPLOYEES HAD GENUINE DIFFICULTIES IN RETURNING TO WORK.

"AS RAINSTORMS ARE NATURAL CALAMITIES, DUE CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO EMPLOYEES WHO ARE ABSENT FROM OR LATE FOR WORK SO THAT EMPLOYEES' EARNINGS, INCLUDING ATTENDANCE BONUS, ARE NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED," HE SAID.

TO BETTER PROTECT WORKERS, MR SIU SAID THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ORDINANCE HAD BEEN AMENDED TO PROVIDE COMPENSATION TO WORKERS WHO WERE INJURED WHILE TRAVELLING BETWEEN THEIR PLACE OF RESIDENCE AND THEIR PLACE OF WORK WHEN TYPHOON SIGNAL NO. 8 OR ABOVE, OR RED OR BLACK RAINSTORM WARNING SIGNAL WAS ISSUED.

HE SAID EMPLOYEES WHO REQUIRED ASSISTANCE COULD APPROACH THE NEAREST LABOUR RELATIONS SERVICE BRANCH OFFICE.

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NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR
DB ELECTIONS TO START NEXT MONDAY

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NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR THE SEPTEMBER DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS WILL START NEXT MONDAY (AUGUST 1) AND LAST UNTIL AUGUST 15.

NOMINATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION FROM TODAY (MONDAY) AT THE REGISTRATION AND ELECTORAL OFFICE, 10TH FLOOR, HARBOUR CENTRE, WAN CHAI AND ALL DISTRICT OFFICES.

OTHER FORMS WHICH CANDIDATES WILL NEED ARE ALSO AVAILABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION, FOR EXAMPLE, NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDATURE, NOTICES OF APPOINTMENT OF ELECTION AGENT, ELECTION EXPENSE AGENT AND AUTHORISATION TO INCUR ELECTION EXPENSES, DECLARATION OF ELECTION ADVERTISEMENTS, CONSENT OF SUPPORT, STANDARD FORM OF RECEIPT FOR DONATIONS, ADVANCE RETURN OF DONATIONS, AND RETURN AND DECLARATION OF ELECTION EXPENSES AND DONATIONS.

THERE WILL BE A TOTAL OF 346 DISTRICT BOARD CONSTITUENCIES OPEN FOR CONTEST. THE CONSTITUENCIES WILL GENERALLY BE SMALLER THAN BEFORE, EACH WITH AN AVERAGE OF 7,000 ELECTORS.

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PROPOSALS TO AMEND LABOUR LAWS DISCUSSED

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A NUMBER OF PROPOSALS TO AMEND EXISTING LABOUR LEGISLATION WERE DISCUSSED AT A LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD (LAB) MEETING HELD AT THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS THIS (MONDAY) AFTERNOON.

DURING THE MEETING CHAIRED BY THE ACTING COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, MR YIU YAN-NANG, BOARD MEMBERS AGREED TO REVISE THE LEVELS OF MAXIMUM FINES FOR OFFENCES UNDER THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ORDINANCE (ECO) WHICH WOULD BE CATEGORISED AS "MINOR", "SERIOUS" AND "VERY SERIOUS".

IT WAS PROPOSED THAT THE EXISTING MAXIMUM FINES, RANGING FROM \$5,000 TO \$20,000, SHOULD BE RAISED TO BETWEEN \$10,000 AND \$100,000.

ALSO ON EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION, LAB MEMBERS AGREED ON A PROPOSAL TO ADOPT A SINGLE CERTIFICATION SYSTEM FOR PAYMENT OF EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION. AS A RESULT, THE PAYMENT OF EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION WILL BE SPED UP.

ON EMPLOYMENT MATTERS, BOARD MEMBERS ACCEPTED A PROPOSAL TO STANDARDISE THE MAXIMUM FINE FOR ALL MINOR OFFENCES UNDER PART XII OF THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE (EO) AND THE EMPLOYMENT AGENCY REGULATIONS AT \$10,000.

THEY ALSO AGREED TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM FINE FOR SERIOUS OFFENCES FROM \$20,000 TO \$50,000.

A PROPOSAL TO REVISE THE LICENCE FEE OF EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES UNDER THE EMPLOYMENT AGENCY REGULATIONS WAS ALSO ENDORSED BY THE MEMBERS.

/THEY AGREED

THEY AGREED THAT THE FEE FOR ISSUE AND RENEWAL OF AN EMPLOYMENT AGENCY LICENCE BE REVISED FROM \$1,000 TO \$1,400 WHILE THE FEE FOR ISSUE OF A DUPLICATE LICENCE FOR OPERATING A BRANCH OFFICE FROM \$200 TO \$280.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD AGREED IN THE PRINCIPLE AND THE DIRECTION ON A PROPOSAL, SUBMITTED BY SIX EMPLOYEES' REPRESENTATIVES, TO INTRODUCE THE GENERAL DUTIES OF EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES AT WORK PLACES TO NON-INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS, BUT SHOULD PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY.

THEY SUGGESTED THAT A TRIPARTITE COMMITTEE SHOULD BE SET UP TO STUDY THE ISSUE.

MR YIU TOLD MEMBERS THAT THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WOULD CONSIDER SERIOUSLY THE PROPOSAL BUT HAD TO KEEP IN VIEW THE PRIORITY FOR THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR WHICH WAS MUCH MORE HAZARDOUS.

"AS REGARDS THIS SPECIFIC PROPOSAL, WE NEED TO CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS CAREFULLY IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR BROADER REVIEW TO EXTEND THE SAFETY AND HEALTH LAWS TO NON-INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS," MR YIU ADDED.

MEMBERS WERE INFORMED THAT THE ISSUE CONCERNING THE REMOVAL OF \$180,000 CEILING FOR SEVERANCE PAYMENT AND LONG SERVICE PAYMENT WOULD BE DISCUSSED AT A SPECIAL LAB MEETING TO BE HELD IN MID-AUGUST.

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PROVISIONAL RESULTS OF RETAIL SALES SURVEY FOR MAY 1994

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THE VALUE OF TOTAL RETAIL SALES IN MAY 1994, ESTIMATED AT \$16.4 BILLION, INCREASED BY 10% WHEN COMPARED WITH MAY 1993, ACCORDING TO THE STATISTICS RELEASED TODAY (MONDAY) BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

AFTER DISCOUNTING THE EFFECT OF PRICE CHANGES OVER THE PERIOD, TOTAL RETAIL SALES ROSE BY 3% IN VOLUME TERMS IN MAY 1994 OVER A YEAR EARLIER.

WHEN COMPARED WITH APRIL, BUT BEARING IN MIND THAT THIS COMPARISON MAY BE AFFECTED BY SEASONAL FACTORS, TOTAL RETAIL SALES SHOWED A NOTABLE INCREASE IN MAY, BY 8% IN VALUE TERMS OR 6% IN VOLUME TERMS.

ON A YEAR-ON-YEAR COMPARISON, THE INCREASE IN MAY 94 WAS MAINLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO GROWTH IN SALES OF CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR (23% IN VALUE AND 13% IN VOLUME); OTHER FOODSTUFFS (11% IN VALUE AND 9% IN VOLUME); AND MOTOR VEHICLES (10% IN VALUE AND 3% IN VOLUME).

MODERATE INCREASES WERE RECORDED FOR SALES IN SUPERMARKETS, OF 8% IN VALUE (BUT VIRTUALLY NO CHANGE IN VOLUME); AND SALES OF FUELS, OF 6% IN VALUE AND 3% IN VOLUME.

SALES OF JEWELLERY AND WATCHES AND SALES IN DEPARTMENT STORES BOTH INCREASED BY 5% IN VALUE, BUT DROPPED BY 1% AND 3% IN VOLUME RESPECTIVELY.

ON THE OTHER HAND, SALES OF CONSUMER DURABLE GOODS OTHER THAN MOTOR VEHICLES DECREASED BY 1% IN VALUE AND 4% IN VOLUME.

COMPARING THE PERIOD FROM JANUARY TO MAY 1994 WITH THE SAME PERIOD IN 1993, TOTAL RETAIL SALES ROSE BY 16% IN VALUE AND 9% IN VOLUME.

THE VOLUME OF RETAIL SALES IS DERIVED FROM THE VALUE OF RETAIL SALES AFTER ADJUSTING FOR PRICE CHANGES. THE RELEVANT COMPONENTS OF THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX ARE USED AS DEFLATORS.

TABLE 1 PRESENTS THE REVISED TOTAL RETAIL SALES FIGURE FOR APRIL 1994 AND THE PROVISIONAL FIGURE FOR MAY 1994.

TABLE 2 SHOWS THE VALUE AND VOLUME INDICES OF RETAIL SALES IN APRIL AND MAY 1994 FOR ALL RETAIL OUTLETS AND BY TYPE OF RETAIL OUTLET, WITH AVERAGE RETAIL SALES FROM OCTOBER 1989 TO SEPTEMBER 1990 TAKEN AS 100.

COMPARISONS OF THE MAY 1994 RESULTS WITH THOSE FOR APRIL 1994 AND THOSE FOR MAY 1993, AS WELL AS COMPARISONS OF RETAIL SALES IN THE PERIOD FROM JANUARY TO MAY OF 1994 WITH THE SAME PERIOD IN 1993 ARE ALSO GIVEN.

THE REPORT CONTAINING THE ANALYSIS OF THE MAY 1994 RESULTS IS NOW ON SALE AT \$3 PER COPY AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, CONNAUGHT PLACE, CENTRAL; AND THE PUBLICATIONS SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT, 19TH FLOOR, WANCHAI TOWER, WAN CHAI.

ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE SURVEY RESULTS MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE STATISTICS SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ON TEL 802 1258.

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/TABLE 1

TABLE 1 : TOTAL RETAIL SALES

Total Retail Sales for May 1994 (Provisional Figure) = HK\$16,370.4 million
for April 1994 (Revised Figure) = HK\$15,198.7 million

TABLE 2 : VALUE AND VOLUME INDICES OF RETAIL SALES FOR APRIL 1994 AND MAY 1994

(Monthly average of Oct. 89 - Sept. 90 = 100)

Type of Outlet	Index of Retail Sales	April 1994	May 1994	May 1994 compared with April 1994		May 1994 compared with May 1993		Jan.-May 1994 compared with Jan.-May 1993		
		(Revised figures)	(Provisional figures)	(Points)	(%)	(Points)	(%)	(Points)	(%)	
(A) FOR ALL RETAIL OUTLETS										
	Value	161.8	174.3	+12.5	+7.7	+15.2	+9.5	+23.0	+15.5	
	Volume	129.0	137.2	+8.2	+6.3	+4.4	+3.3	+11.8	+9.3	
(B) BY TYPE OF RETAIL OUTLET										
Foodstuffs, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (other than supermarkets)	Value	128.6	130.4	+1.7	+1.3	+13.2	+11.2	+10.5	+8.8	
	Volume	102.4	103.1	+0.7	+0.7	+8.8	+9.4	+6.0	+6.2	
Supermarkets ϕ	Value	141.9	150.7	+8.8	+6.2	+11.3	+8.1	+18.2	+13.5	
	Volume	102.4	107.6	+5.2	+5.1	+0.2	+0.2	+7.0	+6.6	
Fuels	Value	146.9	152.7	+5.8	+3.9	+8.7	+6.1	+2.8	+2.1	
	Volume	105.6	108.0	+2.4	+2.2	+3.0	+2.8	-0.6	-0.6	
Clothing, footwear and allied products	Value	234.9	265.5	+30.7	+13.1	+49.9	+23.2	+58.1	+31.0	
	Volume	165.3	181.1	+15.8	+9.6	+20.8	+13.0	+32.8	+22.0	
Consumer durable goods	Value	169.7	179.4	+9.7	+5.7	+4.9	+2.8	+15.2	+9.1	
	Volume	144.5	150.3	+5.7	+4.0	-2.8	-1.8	+7.4	+5.1	
- Motor vehicles and parts	Value	147.0	175.2	+28.2	+19.2	+15.2	+9.5	+7.2	+4.1	
	Volume	108.6	128.5	+19.9	+18.3	+3.6	+2.8	-4.7	-3.4	
- Consumer durable goods other than motor vehicles and parts	Value	186.2	182.5	-3.7	-2.0	-2.5	-1.4	+21.0	+13.0	
	Volume	170.5	166.1	-4.5	-2.6	-7.3	-4.2	+16.2	+10.7	
Department stores	Value	134.7	150.1	+15.4	+11.4	+6.4	+4.5	+15.2	+11.0	
	Volume	99.4	107.5	+8.2	+8.2	-3.1	-2.8	+5.2	+4.6	
Jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts	Value	156.1	177.9	+21.8	+14.0	+8.3	+4.9	+25.7	+17.4	
	Volume	148.1	169.7	+21.6	+14.6	-2.0	-1.2	+10.5	+6.7	
Other consumer goods not elsewhere classified	Value	179.3	182.4	+3.1	+1.7	+25.4	+16.2	+33.4	+22.5	
	Volume	143.1	144.7	+1.6	+1.1	+15.7	+12.2	+23.0	+18.6	

NOTE : ϕ Not including supermarkets operating in department stores.

CNTA OFFERING TEMPORARY SHELTERS

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THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION HAS NOW OPENED 34 TEMPORARY SHELTERS FOR PEOPLE IN NEED OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION.

BEFORE MIDNIGHT TODAY (MONDAY), 380 PEOPLE ARE STAYING IN THESE SHELTERS, WITH 336 IN CENTRAL AND WESTERN, 15 IN WAN CHAI, THREE IN SOUTHERN DISTRICT, THREE IN EASTERN, EIGHT IN YUEN LONG, FIVE IN NORTH DISTRICT, 10 IN SHA TIN.

A TOTAL OF 59 PEOPLE FROM 11 HOUSEHOLDS HAVE BEEN EVACUATED FOLLOWING A WALL COLLAPSE AT 6 KENNEDY STREET, WAN CHAI, THIS AFTERNOON.

THEY ARE NOW TEMPORARILY STAYING AT THE NEARBY HENNESSY ROAD GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOL.

WAN CHAI DISTRICT OFFICE STAFF ARE CONTINUING TO OFFER ASSISTANCE AND A SPECIAL HOTLINE - 835 1996 - HAS BEEN SET UP TO DEAL WITH ENQUIRIES RELATED TO THIS INCIDENT.

MEANWHILE, 356 FAMILIES OF BLOCKS C AND D OF KWUN LUNG LAU IN KENNEDY TOWN RETURNED HOME TO COLLECT THEIR BELONGINGS UP TO 7.30 PM.

CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT STAFF WILL CONTINUE TO ASSIST THE HOUSING SOCIETY AND THE POLICE WITH THIS OPERATION TOMORROW (TUESDAY) MORNING.

A CNTA SPOKESMAN REMINDED THE PUBLIC THAT TWO HOTLINES - 852 3477 AND 858 0433 - ARE OPERATING AND THEY MAY USE THEM TO MAKE URGENT ENQUIRIES ON THE KWUN LUNG LAU LANDSLIDE.

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SEA TURTLE SPECTACLE FRAMES SEIZED

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THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT (AFD) SEIZED MORE THAN 70 PAIRS OF SUSPECTED SEA TURTLE SPECTACLE FRAMES DURING AN OPERATION THIS (MONDAY) MORNING.

ACTING SENIOR CONSERVATION OFFICER OF AFD MR CHAN PING-KWONG SAID SEA TURTLES WERE HIGHLY ENDANGERED SPECIES.

THE POSSESSION, IMPORT AND EXPORT OF THEM AND THEIR PRODUCTS WERE PROHIBITED UNDER THE ANIMALS AND PLANTS (PROTECTION OF ENDANGERED SPECIES) ORDINANCE.

THE OPERATION, INVOLVING SOME 40 AFD OFFICERS, TOOK PLACE AROUND 11 AM THIS MORNING.

IN SEARCHES CONDUCTED ON 10 RETAIL OUTLETS OF A SPECTACLE CHAIN STORE, AFD OFFICERS SEIZED 71 PAIRS OF SUSPECTED SEA TURTLE SPECTACLE FRAMES.

"THIS IS THE LARGEST SEIZURE OF SUCH ITEMS MADE BY AFD SINCE THE CONTROL CAME INTO EFFECT IN 1976," MR CHAN SAID.

THE SEIZED ITEMS WOULD HAVE A MARKET VALUE OF ABOUT \$1.6 MILLION.

FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS ON THE CASE ARE STILL IN PROGRESS. PROSECUTION WILL BE INITIATED WHEN INVESTIGATIONS ARE COMPLETED.

MR CHAN SAID THERE WERE A TOTAL OF 273 SEIZURES IN CONNECTION WITH ILLEGAL IMPORT, EXPORT AND POSSESSION OF ENDANGERED SPECIES IN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THIS YEAR. OF THEM, 29 WERE RELATED TO SEA TURTLES.

OFFENDERS ARE LIABLE TO A MAXIMUM FINE OF \$25,000 ON FIRST CONVICTION AND \$50,000 PLUS SIX MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT FOR A REPEATED OFFENCE.

MR CHAN URGED MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON ANY SUCH ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES TO THE DEPARTMENT BY CALLING 733 2117.

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THREE CAS VOLUNTEERS ATTEND UK MOUNTAIN RESCUE COURSE

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THREE CIVIL AID SERVICES MOUNTAIN RESCUE UNIT (MRU) VOLUNTEERS LEFT FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM TODAY (MONDAY) TO ATTEND INTENSIVE MOUNTAIN RESCUE/LEADERSHIP TRAININGS AND ATTACHMENTS FOR EIGHT WEEKS.

THEY ARE MOUNTAIN RESCUE OFFICERS, MR JOSEPH TANG KING-KUM AND MR CATDUL LEUNG KWOK-WAH, AND THEIR TEAM LEADER, MR KWONG SHAN-MAN.

THE COMMANDER OF THE MRU, MR FONG CHEUNG-KEE, SAID THE OVERSEAS TRAINING WOULD ENABLE THE CAS TO HAVE MORE WELL-TRAINED STAFF TO BETTER SERVE THE COMMUNITY.

HE SAID THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF MRU'S OVERSEAS TRAINING PROGRAMME WAS TO REINFORCE KEY MOUNTAIN RESCUERS IN MOUNTAIN CRAFT AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS.

THE TRAINING WOULD ALSO ENHANCE MRU'S MOUNTAIN SEARCH AND RESCUE KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNIQUES, HE ADDED.

THE TRAINING PROGRAMME INCLUDES THE MOUNTAIN LEADER TRAINING (SUMMER AWARD) AT THE GLENMORE LODGE SCOTTISH NATIONAL SPORTS CENTRE, THE ROYAL AIR FORCE (RAF) MOUNTAIN RESCUE SERVICE SUMMER COURSE AND ADVANCE COURSE AT THE BRITISH FORCES JOINT SCHOOL FOR ADVENTUROUS TRAINING IN NORTH WALES.

DURING THEIR STAY IN THE UK, THE THREE CAS MEMBERS WILL ALSO JOIN THE RAF MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAMS FOR ATTACHMENT TRAININGS.

UPON THE COMPLETION OF THEIR TRAINING AND RETURN TO HONG KONG, THE THREE WILL BE TASKED THE RESPONSIBILITY OF TRAINING NEW RECRUITS IN THE CAS MOUNTAIN RESCUE UNIT'S INDUCTION TRAINING COURSES. THEY WILL ALSO ASSIST IN THE EVALUATION AND DESIGN OF THE UNIT'S ADVANCED TRAINING PROGRAMMES.

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MAIL DELIVERY RESUMES NORMAL

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THE POSTMASTER GENERAL, MR MIKE PAGLIARI, ANNOUNCED TODAY (MONDAY) THAT MAIL DELIVERY WHICH HAD BEEN INTERRUPTED BY THE TORRENTIAL RAIN OVER THE WEEKEND WAS EXPECTED TO RETURN TO NORMAL TOMORROW (TUESDAY).

HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF ROAD CONDITIONS IN CERTAIN PARTS OF THE TERRITORY MAINLY SAI KUNG DISTRICT AND LANTAU ISLAND, MAIL DELIVERY MAY STILL BE SUBJECT TO SOME DELAY.

ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE DELIVERY STATUS TO INDIVIDUAL AREAS MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE POST OFFICE ENQUIRY BUREAU ON TEL 9221 2222.

MR PAGLIARI SAID: "DELIVERY WORK TO BLOCKS C AND D OF KWUN LUN LAU IN KENNEDY TOWN HAS BEEN SUSPENDED BUT ARRANGEMENTS ARE NOW BEING MADE WITH THE HONG KONG HOUSING SOCIETY TO RESUME DELIVERY OF MAIL TO THE RESIDENTS WHO ARE NOW STAYING AT THE TEMPORARY SHELTER AT SHEK TONG TSUI."

HE ADDED THAT OFFICERS OF THE POST OFFICE WOULD VISIT THE TEMPORARY SHELTER TOMORROW TO ASSIST THE RESIDENTS IN SECURING THE DELIVERY OF MAIL ADDRESSED TO THEIR FORMER ADDRESSES AT THE AFFECTED BLOCKS.

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WATER STORAGE FIGURE

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STORAGE IN HONG KONG'S RESERVOIRS AT 9 AM TODAY (MONDAY) STOOD AT 88.7 PER CENT OF CAPACITY OR 519.978 MILLION CUBIC METRES.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR THE RESERVOIRS CONTAINED 433.050 MILLION CUBIC METRES OF WATER, REPRESENTING 73.9 PER CENT OF CAPACITY.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
TENDER RESULTS

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TENDER DATE	25 JULY 94
PAPER ON OFFER	EF NOTES
ISSUE NUMBER	3707
AMOUNT APPLIED	HK\$2,760 MN
AMOUNT ALLOTTED	HK\$500 MN
AVERAGE PRICE (YIELD) ACCEPTED	100.43 (6.90 PCT)
LOWEST PRICE (YIELD) ACCEPTED	100.42 (6.91 PCT)
PRO RATA RATIO	ABOUT 40 PCT
AVERAGE TENDER PRICE (YIELD)	100.33 (6.91 PCT)

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MONDAY, JULY 25, 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	1,856	0930	-78
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,660	1000	+7
CHANGE ATTRIBUTABLE TO :		1100	-358
MONEY MARKET ACTIVITY	-313	1200	-312
LAF TODAY	+117	1500	-313
		1600	-313
LAF RATE 2.50 BID/4.50 OFFER	TWI 122.8	*-0.2*	25.7.94

HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY

EF BILLS

EF NOTES/HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS

TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	4.06	16 MONTHS	2511	4.15	98.10	5.73
1 MONTH	4.07	22 MONTHS	2605	6.35	100.50	6.14
3 MONTHS	4.27	27 MONTHS	3610	4.20	95.46	6.49
6 MONTHS	4.64	30 MONTHS	3701	4.60	95.55	6.66
12 MONTHS	5.35	33 MONTHS	3704	6.15	98.68	6.79

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 14,134 MN

CLOSED 25 JULY 1994

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