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## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1994

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TRANSCRIPT OF 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 VISITING WAN CHAI DISTRICT THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON:-

QUESTION: MR PATTEN, WHAT'S YOUR RESPONSE TO MR LU'S COMMENT YESTERDAY THAT POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE IS NOT RIGHT FOR ACTUALLY MEETING HIM?

GOVERNOR: I DON'T HONESTLY THINK THAT PEOPLE IN HONG KONG WANT TO SEE, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, DIRECTOR LU AND ME ON TELEVISION EXCHANGING VIEWS ABOUT THE STATE OF THE WORLD. ALL I'D LIKE TO SAY IS THAT I THINK MOST PEOPLE IN HONG KONG WOULD LIKE US TO MEET AND I THINK A LOT OF PEOPLE IN HONG KONG INCLUDING QUITE A FEW MEMBERS, I UNDERSTAND, OF THE PWC THINK THAT IF THE ATMOSPHERE ISN'T RIGHT AT THE MOMENT, THE BEST WAY OF IMPROVING THE ATMOSPHERE IS FOR US TO TALK TOGETHER.

QUESTION: BUT, DO YOU AGREE WITH MR LU WHO SAID THAT YOU WERE NOT SO FRIENDLY TO PWC MEMBERS?

GOVERNOR: I AM FRIENDLY TO THE INTEREST OF HONG KONG.

QUESTION: DO YOU THINK AN ACTIVE ROLE TO CONTACT PWC MEMBERS OR TO MEET THEM...?

GOVERNOR: NO, WE HAVE AGREED, BETWEEN THE PRESENT SOVEREIGN POWER AND THE FUTURE SOVEREIGN POWER, CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATIONS WHICH WE'VE GOT TO SEE WORK. WE'VE GOT THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP. WE'VE GOT THE AIRPORT COMMITTEE. WE'VE GOT THE LAND COMMISSION. I WAS PLEASED WITH THE AGREEMENTS MADE IN THE LAND COMMISSION THE OTHER DAY. I LISTENED TO WHAT DIRECTOR LU HAD TO SAY YESTERDAY ABOUT THE AIRPORT FINANCING AND IF THAT SUGGESTS THAT WE ARE GOING TO BE ABLE TO RESOLVE THAT MATTER SOON, THEN, EVERYBODY WILL THROW THEIR HATS IN THE AIR. YOU KNOW, IT WILL OBVIOUSLY BE NICE IF WE'VE GOT MORE GOOD NEWS BY THE END OF THE WEEK.

QUESTION: MR PATTEN, WILL YOU SEND YOUR BEST REGARD AND WISHES TO MR LU'S SICKNESS AND USING THAT AS A CHANCE TO OPEN A DIALOGUE?

GOVERNOR: I AM SORRY TO HEAR THAT HE IS NOT WELL. I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT HE GETS BETTER SOON AND IS ABLE TO ENJOY THE FOOD AND THE COMFORTS OF BEING IN HONG KONG WHICH IS ONE OF THE BEST PLACES TO EAT IN THE WORLD. I AM SORRY IF SOMETHING HE ATE DISAGREED WITH HIM BUT I WISH HIM A VERY FULL RECOVERY.

QUESTION: WOULD YOU LIKE TO EXPLAIN WHY YOU MET COMMISSIONER OF POLICE THIS MORNING?

GOVERNOR: I QUITE REGULARLY MEET THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE.

QUESTION: ABOUT HIS EARLY RETIREMENT?

GOVERNOR: THERE IS NO QUESTION OF THE COMMISSIONER'S EARLY RETIREMENT.

QUESTION: HAVE YOU CONSIDERED TO EXTEND HIS WORKING PERIOD FOR ONE OR TWO YEARS?

/GOVERNOR: .....

GOVERNOR: WHEN WE'VE GOT AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO MAKE ABOUT THE COMMISSIONER AND THE SENIOR OFFICERS IN THE FORCE, WE WILL MAKE IT.

QUESTION: CAN YOU COMMENT ON, IS THERE ANY CONTROVERSY LEFT IN THE JLG DEFENCE LAND AGREEMENT?

GOVERNOR: THERE ARE ONE OR TWO DIFFICULT AND TOUGH ISSUES THAT WE HAVEN'T QUITE MANAGED TO RESOLVE YET. BUT I THINK WITH GOOD WILL ON BOTH SIDES, WITH SINCERITY ON BOTH SIDES, WE'LL BE ABLE TO CLEAR UP THOSE MATTERS PRETTY SWIFTLY. IT DOES SEEM TO ME THAT ACROSS THE BOARD, THERE ARE QUITE A LOT OF ISSUES THAT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO SETTLE SOON. THE DEFENCE LANDS QUESTION IS GOING TO BE ONE WHICH IS GOING TO BE QUITE VIGOROUSLY DEBATED IN HONG KONG. THERE ARE ISSUES WHICH PEOPLE ARE GOING TO REGARD AS CONTROVERSIAL BUT I THINK THAT THE DEAL WHICH I HOPE WE'LL BE ABLE TO COMMEND... I HOPE THAT THE DEAL WE'LL BE ABLE TO COMMEND TO THE COMMUNITY AND TO LEGCO WILL BE RECOGNISED BY EVERYBODY AS BEING IN THE BEST INTEREST OF HONG KONG.

QUESTION: IS THAT IT'LL BE DONE OR AGREED BY TWO SIDES, SIGNING AN AGREEMENT IN PEKING, OR IN WHAT FORM? WILL THERE BE A DIPLOMATIC NOTE OR EXCHANGE?

GOVERNOR: IT WILL BE DONE UNDER THE NORMAL AEGIS OF THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP BUT I THINK WE'D BETTER WAIT UNTIL THERE IS AN AGREEMENT BEFORE CALLING OVER ITS EXACT LEGAL DETAILS. BUT, IT'S AN IMPORTANT ISSUE. IT'S ONE WHICH AFFECTS OUR ABILITY TO REDEVELOP SITES IN HONG KONG. WE HAVE TO TAKE A VIEW ON THE BALANCE OF ADVANTAGE AND DISADVANTAGE IN WHATEVER OVERALL PACKAGE OF MEASURE IS AGREED BETWEEN THE SIDES BUT I HOPE WE'LL BE ABLE TO RESOLVE THAT SOON.

QUESTION: YESTERDAY, MR LU SAID THE AIRPORT COMMITTEE WILL BE RE-OPENED VERY SOON. BUT WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE BRITISH SIDE AND THE CHINESE SIDE?

GOVERNOR: I AM NOT REALLY SURE BECAUSE I THINK IT'S FAIR TO SAY THAT THE LATEST PROPOSALS THAT WE PUT FORWARD MET, IN OUR JUDGEMENT, ALL THE REQUIREMENTS WHICH THE CHINESE SIDE HAD PUT FORWARD LAST YEAR. SO, I HOPE THAT WILL ENABLE US TO REACH AN EARLY CONCLUSION BECAUSE, I THINK, PEOPLE ARE A BIT FED UP WITH THE FACT THAT WE HAVEN'T HAD AN AGREEMENT YET. MIND YOU, THEY CAN SEE THE AIRPORT BEING BUILT. THEY CAN SEE 40 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S DREDGING FLEET HELPING TO PRODUCE WHAT IS GOING TO BE THE WORLD'S GREATEST AIRPORT. BUT, THEY WOULD OBVIOUSLY LIKE TO SEE US MOVING EVEN FASTER. THERE ARE TWO SORTS OF SPEED SEEMS TO ME. THERE IS THE SPECTACULAR SPEED WE'VE MANAGED WITHOUT AN AGREEMENT. AND THERE IS THE EVEN MORE SPECTACULAR SPEED THAT WE MANAGE WITH AN AGREEMENT. WE'D OBVIOUSLY LIKE TO SEE THINGS GOING AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

QUESTION: MR PATTEN, YOU MENTIONED THAT PWC MEMBERS HAVE SAID THAT THEY WANT YOU AND MR LU BOTH TO MEET? HAVE ANY OF THEM EXPRESSED CONCERN TO YOU ABOUT THE FAILURE OF MR LU'S MEETING?

GOVERNOR: NO, BUT I HAVE NOTICED, I ALWAYS BELIEVE WHAT I SEE IN THE NEWSPAPERS. I'VE NOTICED THAT ONE OR TWO, I THINK, AT LEAST TWO OR MAY BE MORE HAVE BEEN QUOTED IN THE PRESS AS SAYING, THEY THINK, THAT WE SHOULD MEET, AND SAYING THAT THEY THINK THAT WILL BE THE BEST WAY OF ADDRESSING THE CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG, NOT LEAST ABOUT THE SORT OF LIVELIHOOD ISSUES THAT I'VE BEEN DISCUSSING WITH PEOPLE IN WAN CHAI TODAY. ONE MORE.

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QUESTION: THE AMERICAN, MICHAEL FAY, HIS SENTENCE HAS BEEN REDUCED BY TWO STROKES DUE TO AMERICAN'S INTERVENTION. ARE YOU GOING TO DO ANYTHING TO HELP THE HONG KONG BOY THAT'S FACING 12 STROKES?

GOVERNOR: AS I UNDERSTAND IT, HIS FAMILY ARE, AT PRESENT, PURSUING THE QUESTION OF APPEAL THROUGH THE NORMAL LEGAL PROCESSES. THEY HAVEN'T BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT. THOUGH I THINK IN THE EARLIER STAGE, THEY WERE IN TOUCH WITH, UNDERSTANDABLY, WITH THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION IN SINGAPORE BUT I THINK IT'S SENSIBLE FOR US TO ALLOW THE LEGAL PROCESSES TO GO FORWARD. I CERTAINLY WOULDN'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING WITHOUT THE FAMILY BEING INVOLVED. THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED.

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HK PEOPLE PREFER TO SEE LU PING AND GOVERNOR MEET  
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MOST PEOPLE IN HONG KONG WOULD LIKE DIRECTOR LU PING AND THE GOVERNOR TO MEET AND MANY THINK THAT IF THE ATMOSPHERE IS NOT RIGHT AT THE MOMENT, THE BEST WAY OF IMPROVING THE ATMOSPHERE IS FOR THEM TO TALK TOGETHER.

THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, SAID THIS WHEN HE RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE MEDIA AFTER HIS VISIT TO THE WAN CHAI DISTRICT THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON.

ON REPORTS ABOUT THE RE-OPENING OF THE AIRPORT COMMITTEE, MR PATTEN SAID: "I LISTENED TO WHAT DIRECTOR LU HAD TO SAY YESTERDAY ABOUT THE AIRPORT FINANCING AND IF THAT SUGGESTS THAT WE ARE GOING TO BE ABLE TO RESOLVE THAT MATTER SOON, THEN EVERYBODY WILL THROW THEIR HATS IN THE AIR.

"IT WILL OBVIOUSLY BE NICE IF WE'VE GOT MORE GOOD NEWS BY THE END OF THE WEEK.

"I THINK IT'S FAIR TO SAY THAT THE LATEST PROPOSALS THAT WE PUT FORWARD MET, IN OUR JUDGMENT, ALL THE REQUIREMENTS WHICH THE CHINESE SIDE HAD PUT FORWARD LAST YEAR.

"SO, I HOPE THAT WILL ENABLE US TO REACH AN EARLY CONCLUSION BECAUSE, I THINK, PEOPLE ARE A BIT FED UP WITH THE FACT THAT WE HAVEN'T HAD AN AGREEMENT YET."

IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT REPORTS THAT DIRECTOR LU PING HAD BEEN FEELING UNWELL, MR PATTEN SAID: "I AM SORRY TO HEAR THAT HE IS NOT WELL.

"I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT HE GETS BETTER SOON AND IS ABLE TO ENJOY THE FOOD AND THE COMFORTS OF BEING IN HONG KONG WHICH IS ONE OF THE BEST PLACES TO EAT IN THE WORLD."

HE WISHED DIRECTOR LU PING A VERY FULL RECOVERY.

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## HK STANDS RESOLUTE AGAINST CORRUPTION

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HONG KONG INTENDS TO DEFEND ITS REPUTATION, TO STAND FIRM FOR GOOD BUSINESS ETHICS AND TO STAND RESOLUTE AGAINST CORRUPTION.

THE MESSAGE WAS HIGHLIGHTED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, AT THE FIRST CONFERENCE IN HONG KONG DEVOTED SOLELY TO BUSINESS ETHICS.

MR PATTEN SAID HONG KONG WAS A GOOD PLACE TO DO BUSINESS IN, CRUCIALLY BECAUSE IT IS BY AND LARGE CORRUPTION-FREE, WITH A SOLID RULE OF LAW BACKED UP BY CLEAN, HONEST GOVERNMENT.

HOWEVER, TODAY HONG KONG IS THREATENED AGAIN BY A RISING TIDE OF CORRUPTION.

"THE ALARM BELLS, TINKLING FOR SOME TIME HAVE STARTED TO RING LOUD AND CLEAR IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS," HE SAID.

PRIVATE SECTOR ALLEGATIONS OF CORRUPTION ROSE BY 54 PER CENT BETWEEN 1992 AND 1993; THERE WAS A 26 PER CENT RISE IN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR COMPARED TO LAST.

"WE HAVE TO WAKE UP TO THE THREAT A RESURGENCE OF CORRUPTION WOULD POSE TO THE LONG-TERM PROSPERITY AND STABILITY OF HONG KONG," MR PATTEN SAID.

THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION (ICAC) HAS THE CENTRAL ROLE TO PLAY IN HELPING BUSINESS DEVELOP THE HIGHEST CODES OF ETHICAL PRACTICE, HE SAID.

MR PATTEN REPEATED THAT "THERE NEVER HAS BEEN - NOR WILL THERE BE - ANY POLITICISATION OF THE ICAC'S WORK.

"IT HAS ONE JOB, AND ONE JOB ALONE - AND THAT IS TO FIGHT CORRUPTION, STRICTLY WITHIN THE LAW," HE SAID.

IN RESPONSE TO THE GROWING ALARM AT CORRUPTION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, MR PATTEN SAID A \$12 MILLION INCREASE IN FUNDS FOR THE ICAC WAS ANNOUNCED LAST OCTOBER.

ALSO ANNOUNCED WAS A MAJOR NEW CAMPAIGN BY THE ICAC TO PROMOTE CODES OF CONDUCT TO MINIMISE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MALPRACTICE AMONG THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

THE ICAC INTENDS TO CONTACT ALL 480 LISTED COMPANIES BY THE END OF OCTOBER TO PERSUADE THEM TO ADOPT A CODE OF CONDUCT. SO FAR AMONG THE 182 CONTACTED, ONLY 20 HAVE DRAWN UP A CODE.

MR PATTEN URGED THOSE WHO HADN'T TO ACT QUICKLY TO SET UP CODE OF CONDUCT.

HE ADDED THAT A SELF-CONFIDENT LEGISLATURE AND A FREE PRESS THAT ARE FEARLESS AND INDEPENDENT WERE POWERFUL GUARDIANS OF INTEGRITY IN PUBLIC AND COMMERCIAL LIFE.

"ONE OF THE BEST TESTS OF THE PROPRIETY OF BUSINESS BEHAVIOUR IS, AT THE END OF THE DAY, WHETHER IT WOULD WITHSTAND DETAILED PUBLIC SCRUTINY," HE SAID.

BEC'S BOUNDARY REVIEW IS FAIR

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THE BOUNDARY AND ELECTION COMMISSION HAS STRUCK A FAIR BALANCE BETWEEN THE POPULATION CRITERION AND THE CONSIDERATIONS OF COMMUNITY IDENTITIES AND PRESERVATION OF LOCAL TIES IN ITS REVIEW OF CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES FOR THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL (MC) ELECTIONS IN MARCH NEXT YEAR.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE COMMISSION'S CHAIRMAN, MR JUSTICE WOO KWOK-HING, WHEN OUTLINING ITS LATEST RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE DELINEATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCIES FOR THE ELECTIONS.

THE THREE-VOLUME REPORT CONTAINING THE RECOMMENDATIONS WAS SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNOR LAST THURSDAY AND TABLED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), FOLLOWING A MONTH-LONG CONSULTATION EXERCISE ON THE PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS RELEASED IN MARCH.

THE NUMBER OF GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCIES OF THE URBAN COUNCIL (UC) IS 32 AND THAT FOR THE REGIONAL COUNCIL (RC) IS 27.

MR JUSTICE WOO SAID THERE WERE ALTOGETHER THREE RECOMMENDED MUNICIPAL CONSTITUENCIES, EACH OF WHICH HAD A POPULATION BEYOND THE 25 PER CENT RANGE OF THE POPULATION QUOTA.

THEY ARE:

- \* "CENTRAL" IN UC AREA WHICH HAS A POPULATION OF 133,527, BEING 33.66 PER CENT OVER THE UC POPULATION QUOTA;
- \* "MONG KOK" IN UC AREA WHICH HAS A POPULATION OF 136,035, BEING 36.17 PER CENT ABOVE THE QUOTA;
- \* "ISLANDS" IN RC AREA WHICH HAS A POPULATION OF 63,378, BEING 38.80 PER CENT BELOW THE RC POPULATION QUOTA.

THE CHAIRMAN SAID THE POPULATION DEVIATION, MAINLY AFFECTING THE YAU TSIM MONG, CENTRAL AND WESTERN, AND ISLANDS DISTRICTS, WAS TOLERABLE AND DESIRABLE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

"THE COMMISSION IS OF THE VIEW THAT IT IS DESIRABLE TO GO BEYOND THE RANGE IN THESE CASES FOR PAYING DUE REGARD TO THE CONSIDERATIONS OF COMMUNITY IDENTITIES AND PRESERVATION OF LOCAL TIES BY KEEPING MC CONSTITUENCIES WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF EACH INDIVIDUAL DISTRICT," HE SAID.

THE POPULATION QUOTA FOR AN UC CONSTITUENCY AREA IS 99,899 AND THAT FOR AN RC CONSTITUENCY AREA IS 103,564.

HE ALSO EXPRESSED GRATITUDE TO THE INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS THAT HAD GIVEN VIEWS TO HELP THE COMMISSION'S DELIBERATIONS.

DURING THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION BETWEEN MARCH 4 AND APRIL 2, THE COMMISSION RECEIVED A TOTAL OF 57 WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS AND HELD NINE MEETINGS WITH INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS TO RECEIVE THEIR REPRESENTATIONS. OF ALL THE WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS, 33 WERE ON TSUEN WAN.

"A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF THE REPRESENTATIONS EXPRESSED ACCEPTANCE OR APPROVAL OF OUR RECOMMENDATIONS, WHICH ENABLED THE COMMISSION TO HAVE AN OVERALL REVIEW OF THE SUBJECT MATTERS TO ARRIVE AT A BALANCED DECISION," MR JUSTICE WOO SAID.

APART FROM SOME GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE APPROPRIATENESS OR OTHERWISE OF NOT HAVING MUNICIPAL COUNCIL CONSTITUENCIES DEMARCATED ACROSS DISTRICT BOUNDARIES, SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUENCIES PROVISIONALLY DEMARCATED WERE MADE IN SEVEN DISTRICTS - YAU TSIM MONG, CENTRAL AND WESTERN, KWAI TSING, TSUEN WAN, WONG TAI SIN, KOWLOON CITY, AND TUEN MUN.

THERE WERE TWO MAIN OPPOSING ARGUMENTS PRESENTED:

- \* EMPHASIS SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE POPULATION CRITERION, AND IT WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY OR EVEN RELEVANT TO RESPECT DISTRICT BOUNDARIES IN THE DEMARCATION OF MC CONSTITUENCIES.
- \* DISTRICTS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN INTACT TO PRESERVE DISTRICT INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY IDENTITIES IN THE DEMARCATION OF MC CONSTITUENCIES.

"WHAT THE COMMISSION HAS DONE IS TO STRIKE A FAIR BALANCE BETWEEN THE TWO CONFLICTING CRITERIA OF ADHERING CLOSELY TO THE POPULATION QUOTA TO ACHIEVE SUBSTANTIAL EQUAL SUFFRAGE AND OF RESPECTING COMMUNITY IDENTITIES AND LOCAL TIES," MR JUSTICE WOO SAID.

THE CHAIRMAN SAID HAVING CONSIDERED ALL THE REPRESENTATIONS VERY CAREFULLY, THE COMMISSION FELT THAT ITS PRELIMINARY DECISION NOT TO STRADDLE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES SHOULD BE CONFIRMED.

"THE COMMISSION DOES NOT ACCEPT THE REPRESENTATIONS THAT COMMUNITY IDENTITIES AND PRESERVATION OF LOCAL TIES SHOULD PLAY NO PART IN THE DEMARCATION OF MC CONSTITUENCIES," HE SAID.

HE SAID THE COMMISSION MAINTAINED ITS VIEW THAT COMMUNITY SENSITIVITY ON THIS LARGER REGIONAL SCALE SHOULD GENERALLY BE BASED ON DISTRICTS.

ALSO PRESENT AT TODAY'S PRESS CONFERENCE WERE THE COMMISSION'S MEMBERS, PROFESSOR LEUNG CHI-KEUNG AND MR NORMAN LEUNG NAI-PANG.

COPIES OF THE REPORT WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION DURING OFFICE HOURS FROM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AT THE REGISTRATION AND ELECTORAL OFFICE, DISTRICT OFFICES AND THEIR SUB-OFFICES AND PUBLIC ENQUIRY SERVICE CENTRES.

FINANCE SCHEME BENEFITS MORE STUDENTS

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THE LOCAL STUDENT FINANCE SCHEME WILL BE EXTENDED TO STUDENTS STUDYING FULL-TIME, PRE-SERVICE, TWO OR THREE-YEAR COURSES IN THE GRANTHAM COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, THE NORTHCOTE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, THE SIR ROBERT BLACK COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND THE HONG KONG TECHNICAL TEACHERS' COLLEGE, FROM THE 1994/95 ACADEMIC YEAR.

AT PRESENT, THE MEANS-TESTED SCHEME PROVIDES FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE FORM OF A COMBINATION OF GRANTS AND LOANS TO NEEDY STUDENTS ATTENDING FULL-TIME COURSES AT 10 INSTITUTIONS.

THEY ARE THE CITY POLYTECHNIC OF HONG KONG, THE HONG KONG BAPTIST COLLEGE, THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC, THE LINGNAN COLLEGE, THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG, THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG, THE HONG KONG TECHNICAL COLLEGE (CHAI WAN), THE HONG KONG TECHNICAL COLLEGE (TSING YI) AND THE PRINCE PHILIP DENTAL HOSPITAL (FOR STUDENTS STUDYING THE COURSE LEADING TO DIPLOMA IN DENTAL TECHNOLOGY ONLY).

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AGENCY SAID APPLICANTS MUST EITHER HAVE THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG OR HAVE RESIDED, OR HAVE HAD THEIR HOME IN HONG KONG CONTINUOUSLY FOR AT LEAST THREE YEARS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE COURSES BEGIN.

CURRENT STUDENTS MAY OBTAIN APPLICATION FORMS FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE INSTITUTIONS.

PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS WHO SATISFY THE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS OF, AND HAVE APPLIED FOR ADMISSION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG MAY OBTAIN FORMS FROM THE INSTITUTION ON PRODUCTION OF THE RESULT SLIPS OF THEIR ADVANCED LEVEL EXAMINATION.

THEY SHOULD, HOWEVER, SUBMIT THEIR APPLICATIONS ONLY AFTER THEY HAVE BEEN OFFERED ADMISSION.

NEW STUDENTS ADMITTED BY THE CITY POLYTECHNIC OF HONG KONG, THE HONG KONG BAPTIST COLLEGE, THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC, LINGNAN COLLEGE, THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG, THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, THE HONG KONG TECHNICAL COLLEGE (CHAI WAN) AND THE HONG KONG TECHNICAL COLLEGE (TSING YI), THE PRINCE PHILIP DENTAL HOSPITAL AND THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION MAY OBTAIN APPLICATION FORMS FROM THE INSTITUTIONS CONCERNED AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION.

STUDENTS SHOULD SUBMIT THEIR APPLICATIONS TO THE AGENCY VIA THEIR RESPECTIVE INSTITUTIONS EXCEPT FOR THOSE CURRENT STUDENTS WHOSE SIBLINGS ARE ALSO CURRENT STUDENTS AND WHO ARE APPLYING UNDER THE SCHEME.

FOR THIS CATEGORY OF CURRENT STUDENTS, THEIR APPLICATIONS, TOGETHER WITH THOSE OF THEIR SIBLINGS, SHOULD BE FORWARDED EITHER BY MAIL OR IN PERSON DIRECT TO THE AGENCY.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID APPLICANTS WHO WISH TO APPLY FOR STUDENT TRAVEL SUBSIDY SHOULD DO SO BY COMPLETING THE APPROPRIATE SECTION IN THE SAME APPLICATION FORM.

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE RETURNED TO THE APPLICANT'S INSTITUTION BEFORE THE DEADLINE AS SET OUT BELOW:

CURRENT STUDENTS

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MAY 9

(EXCEPT FOR COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDENTS; THE DEADLINES FOR FORM SUBMISSION WILL BE ANNOUNCED BY THEIR INSTITUTIONS IN DUE COURSE)

NEW STUDENTS

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HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SEPTEMBER 17

CITY POLYTECHNIC OF HONG KONG

OCTOBER 3

HONG KONG BAPTIST COLLEGE/  
HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC/  
LINGNAN COLLEGE

OCTOBER 7

PRINCE PHILIP DENTAL HOSPITAL

OCTOBER 18

CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG  
KONG

THE SECOND FRIDAY AFTER THE  
COMMENCEMENT OF THE FIRST  
SCHOOL TERM (1994/95)

UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

21 DAYS FROM DATE OF OFFER OF  
ADMISSION

HONG KONG TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
(CHAI WAN)/  
HONG KONG TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
(TSING YI)

2 WEEKS AFTER THE COMMENCEMENT  
OF THE FIRST SCHOOL TERM  
(1994/95)

GRANTHAM COLLEGE OF EDUCATION/  
NORTHCOTE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION/  
SIR ROBERT BLACK COLLEGE OF  
EDUCATION/  
HONG KONG TECHNICAL TEACHERS'  
COLLEGE

DEADLINE WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN  
DUE COURSE VIA THE RESPECTIVE  
INSTITUTION

"FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR APPLICANTS IS ASSESSED ON THE BASIS OF THEIR FAMILY INCOME LESS PERMITTED DEDUCTIONS TO ARRIVE AT THEIR ANNUAL DISPOSABLE INCOME WHICH WILL DETERMINE THEIR GRANT/LOAN ENTITLEMENTS.

"APPLICANTS WHO POSSESS FAMILY ASSETS IN EXCESS OF A SET LIMIT WILL HAVE THEIR ASSISTANCE REDUCED," HE SAID.

THE APPLICANT AND AN ADULT MEMBER OF HIS HOUSEHOLD WHO IS FULLY AWARE OF THE FAMILY'S CIRCUMSTANCES MAY BE INVITED TO ATTEND AN INTERVIEW AT THE AGENCY TO CLARIFY INFORMATION REPORTED IN THE APPLICATION.

THE SPOKESMAN SOUNDED A SPECIAL NOTE OF WARNING THAT INACCURATE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN APPLICATIONS NOT ONLY WOULD LEAD TO REJECTION OF THE APPLICATIONS BUT MIGHT ALSO GIVE RISE TO CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THE APPLICANTS.

ENQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE AGENCY ON NINTH FLOOR, NATIONAL MUTUAL CENTRE, 151 GLOUCESTER ROAD, WAN CHAI, HONG KONG (TEL 802 1666).

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FINANCIAL LIBERALISATION IS NOT WITHOUT RISKS

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NOTING THE IMPORTANCE OF FINANCIAL LIBERALISATION TO ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY, MR JOSEPH YAM, SOUNDED HOWEVER A NOTE OF CAUTION CONCERNING THE DOWNSIDE RISKS OF FINANCIAL LIBERALISATION.

SPEAKING AT THE 27TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (ADB) IN NICE, MR YAM SAID: "THE DOWNSIDE RISKS TO MONETARY AND FINANCIAL STABILITY ARE THERE, PARTICULARLY WHEN NOWADAYS THERE ARE HUGE FLOWS OF FUNDS INTO AND WITHIN THE REGION, AND THESE RISKS SHOULD BE PROPERLY MANAGED."

IN ORDER TO AVOID SUCH RISKS, HE SAID THAT A ROBUST MONETARY SYSTEM, AN EFFECTIVE MONETARY MANAGEMENT MECHANISM, AN ADEQUATE PRUDENTIAL SUPERVISORY SYSTEM, AND PROPER SEQUENCING IN FINANCIAL LIBERALISATION WERE ALL ESSENTIAL.

MR YAM NOTED THAT THE BANK SHOULD ENHANCE ITS ADVISORY ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF FINANCIAL SYSTEMS BY INCREASING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND FUNDS.

"I WOULD ALSO URGE THE BANK TO INCREASE ITS EFFORTS IN ENCOURAGING THE DEVELOPMENT AND DEEPENING OF THE DEBT MARKET IN THE REGION," MR YAM ADDED. CITING THAT THE ISSUE OF DRAGON BONDS BY THE BANK WAS A GOOD START, HE URGED THE BANK TO INTENSIFY ITS EFFORTS IN THIS AREA.

MR YAM CONGRATULATED THE BANK FOR ITS EFFORTS IN BRINGING TO A CLOSE THE NEGOTIATIONS OF THE FOURTH GENERAL CAPITAL INCREASE.

ON THE BANK'S LENDING PROGRAMME, WHILE NOTING THAT PROPER EMPHASIS NEEDS TO BE PLACED ON THE SO-CALLED CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES, SUCH AS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT, MR YAM EMPHASISED THAT "IT IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT THAT THE BANK SHOULD MAINTAIN AN APPROPRIATE POLICY DIALOGUE WITH EACH OF THE BORROWING COUNTRIES THEMSELVES IN ORDER TO APPRECIATE THEIR PRIORITIES AND CONSTRAINTS, AND WORK OUT WITH THEM REALISTIC AND EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT."

MR YAM IS CURRENTLY LEADING A HONG KONG DELEGATION TO ATTEND THE 27TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ADB IN NICE. OTHER HONG KONG DELEGATES ARE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (EXTERNAL) OF HKMA, MR JAMES H LAU JR AND HEAD, EXTERNAL RELATIONS DIVISION OF THE HKMA, MR EDDIE YUE. THE BANK WAS A GOOD START. HE URGED THE BANK TO INTENSIFY ITS EFFORTS IN THIS AREA.

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MR YAM CONGRATULATED THE BANK FOR ITS EFFORTS IN BR/10 ..... A

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1994

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GOVERNOR TOURS WAN CHAI DISTRICT

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, TOURED WAN CHAI DISTRICT IN A DOWNPOUR THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON.

MR PATTEN STARTED OFF HIS VISIT BY UNVEILING A PLAQUE FOR THE WAN CHAI GREEN TRAIL - THE FIRST URBAN NATURE TRAIL IN THE TERRITORY.

WHILE HIKING UP THE 1.5-KILOMETRE TRAIL WHICH RUNS ALONG WAN CHAI GAP ROAD, THE GOVERNOR WAS INTRODUCED TO THE NATURAL FEATURES IN THE NEARBY AREA.

HIS NEXT STOP WAS A CALL AT THE BAPTIST OI KWAN SOCIAL SERVICE CENTRE WHERE HE WATCHED CHILDREN AT PLAY.

THE GOVERNOR THEN EXPERIENCED THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE OF THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF RESIDENTS WHEN HE STROLLED ALONG THE BOWRINGTON ROAD MARKET BEFORE ARRIVING AT TIMES SQUARE.

FROM THE 44TH FLOOR OF THE TALLEST BUILDING IN CAUSEWAY BAY, THE GOVERNOR HAD A PANORAMIC VIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE DISTRICT, INCLUDING THE WATERFRONT RECLAMATION.

BEFORE CONCLUDING HIS VISIT, THE GOVERNOR ATTENDED A TEA RECEPTION HOSTED BY DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS.

MR PATTEN WAS ACCOMPANIED ON THE VISIT BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR HONG KONG AND KOWLOON, MISS CHRISTINE CHOW, WAN CHAI DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMAN, MRS PEGGY LAM AND WAN CHAI DISTRICT OFFICER, MR PETER MANN.

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NEW STAMPS PAY TRIBUTE TO POLICE

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THE POST OFFICE HAS ISSUED A SET OF SIX SPECIAL STAMPS TO COMMEMORATE THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE FORCE WHICH WAS FOUNDED ON MAY 1, 1844.

AT A CEREMONY AT THE GENERAL POST OFFICE THIS (WEDNESDAY) MORNING TO LAUNCH THE STAMPS, THE POSTMASTER GENERAL MR MIKE PAGLIARI PRESENTED THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, MR LI KWAN-HA, WITH A FRAMED OFFICIAL FIRST DAY COVER BEARING THE SET OF SPECIAL STAMPS AND THE FIRST DAY CANCELLATION.

THE CEREMONY WAS ATTENDED BY SENIOR OFFICERS OF THE POST OFFICE AND THE POLICE.

MR PAGLIARI PRAISED THE FORCE FOR ITS LONG AND DISTINGUISHED HISTORY.

HE DESCRIBED THE ISSUE OF THE STAMPS AS A TRIBUTE TO THE POLICE FOR ITS OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF THE COMMUNITY OVER THE PAST ONE AND A HALF CENTURIES.

/THIS WAS .....

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THIS WAS THE SECOND TIME THE POST OFFICE ISSUED A SET OF STAMPS TO COMMEMORATE THE ANNIVERSARY OF A GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT.

IN 1991 A SET OF STAMPS WAS RELEASED TO MARK THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE POST OFFICE ITSELF.

THE POLICE STAMPS SHOW POLICE OFFICERS IN PAST AND PRESENT UNIFORMS AGAINST OLD AND MODERN POLICE BUILDINGS.

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TWO LOTS TO LET BY TENDER  
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THE LANDS DEPARTMENT IS INVITING TENDERS FOR THE SHORT-TERM TENANCIES OF TWO LOTS OF GOVERNMENT LAND IN KOWLOON.

BOTH LOTS ARE LOCATED ON A RECLAMATION AREA IN LAI CHI KOK, WITH AN AREA OF ABOUT 1.14 AND 1.33 HECTARES RESPECTIVELY FOR STORAGE OF CONTAINERS.

THE TENANCIES ARE FOR ONE YEAR, RENEWABLE QUARTERLY AFTERWARDS.

CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF TENDERS IS NOON ON MAY 20.

FORMS OF TENDER, TENDER NOTICE AND CONDITIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, KWAI TSING; THE LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD AND THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES, KOWLOON, 10TH FLOOR, YAU MA TEI CAR PARK BUILDING, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, KOWLOON.

TENDER PLANS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICES.

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CLOSURE OF CHEUNG SHA WAN UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURE SOUGHT  
\* \* \* \* \*

THE BUILDING AUTHORITY IS SEEKING TO CLOSE AN UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURE IN CHEUNG SHA WAN SO THAT IT CAN BE DEMOLISHED WITHOUT CAUSING DANGER TO OCCUPANTS AND THE PUBLIC.

THE SINGLE-STOREY RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE IS LOCATED ON THE ROOFTOP OF A BUILDING AT 11-13A CHEUNG WAH STREET.

A NOTICE OF INTENTION APPLYING FOR A CLOSURE ORDER FROM THE HONG KONG DISTRICT COURT UNDER THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE ON AUGUST 3 WAS POSTED ON THE PREMISES TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

DEMOLITION WORK IS EXPECTED TO START AS SOON AS THE CLOSURE ORDER IS ISSUED.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1994

- 12 -

HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY  
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

\* \* \* \* \*

	\$ MILLION	TIME (HOURS)	CUMULATIVE CHANGE (\$ MILLION)
	-----	-----	-----
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,723	0930	+813
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	2,396	1000	+813
CHANGE ATTRIBUTABLE TO :		1100	+973
MONEY MARKET ACTIVITY	+973	1200	+973
LAF TODAY	-300	1500	+973
		1600	+973
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER		TWI 124.2 *-0.2*	4.5.94

HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY

EF BILLS		EF NOTES/HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS				
TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.88	19 MONTHS	2511	4.15	97.72	5.79
1 MONTH	3.48	22 MONTHS	2602	4.40	97.40	6.04
3 MONTHS	3.98	30 MONTHS	3610	4.20	94.92	6.55
6 MONTHS	4.45	33 MONTHS	3701	4.60	95.22	6.64
12 MONTHS	5.07	36 MONTHS	3704	6.15	98.75	6.73

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 32,615 MN

CLOSED 4 MAY 1994

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# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1994

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ACHIEVEMENTS MADE AFTER THE JOINT DECLARATION  
\* \* \* \* \*

THROUGH SUSTAINED EFFORTS AND CO-OPERATION BY BOTH THE BRITISH AND CHINESE SIDES, MUCH HAD BEEN DONE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JOINT DECLARATION SINCE 1984, THE SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS, MR NICHOLAS NG, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"AT THIS TIME WHEN IT IS FASHIONABLE TO MOAN ABOUT OUR DISAGREEMENTS WITH THE FUTURE SOVEREIGN POWER, IT IS SOMETIMES EASY TO FORGET WHERE WE HAVE MANAGED TO WORK THINGS OUT SENSIBLY AND SUCCESSFULLY IN THE PAST," MR NG SAID DURING A MOTION DEBATE ON THE SINO-BRITISH JOINT DECLARATION IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS MR NG QUOTED ARE:

- \* HONG KONG HAS BECOME A FULL-FLEDGED MEMBER OF THE GENERAL AGREEMENT OF TARIFFS AND TRADE (GATT) AND HOPEFULLY A MEMBER OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION;
- \* THE GOVERNMENT HAS PUT INTO EFFECT TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR VIRTUALLY ALL EXISTING TRAVEL DOCUMENTS USED BY HONG KONG PEOPLE;
- \* HONG KONG HAS ITS OWN SHIPPING REGISTER; AND
- \* THE LAND COMMISSION HAS RECORDED AGREEMENT EVERY YEAR ON A LAND DISPOSAL PROGRAMME WHICH EXCEEDED THE 50-HECTARE LIMIT.

"I HOPE THAT THE SPIRIT OF CO-OPERATION CAN BE SUSTAINED IN FUTURE YEARS, DESPITE OUR DISAGREEMENT OVER CERTAIN ISSUES," MR NG SAID.

MR NG SAID HE WAS NOT UNAWARE OF THE CRITICISMS THAT HAD BEEN LEVELLED AGAINST BOTH THE CHINESE AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS IN THIS GREAT ENDEAVOUR TO IMPLEMENT THE JOINT DECLARATION.

IN RESPONSE TO CRITICISMS ABOUT THE PACE OF DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS AN ELECTED LEGISLATURE, MR NG SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD STRUCK A BALANCE IN SATISFYING THE DESIRES OF THE COMMUNITY WHILE SETTING UP A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT THAT WAS CAPABLE OF TRANSCENDING 1997.

ON THE COURT OF FINAL APPEAL, MR NG SAID IT WAS MOST IMPORTANT TO HAVE A SYSTEM SET UP AND RUNNING BY JULY 1, 1997.

MR NG SAID THE ADMINISTRATION REJECTED AS "PLAINLY UNTRUE" THE IMPLICATION THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD FAILED TO ABIDE BY THE JOINT DECLARATION, OR FAILED TO PURSUE THE LAUDABLE OBJECTIVES OF FULFILLING "ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS" AND "HONG KONG PEOPLE RULING HONG KONG WITH A HIGH DEGREE OF AUTONOMY".

PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT VITAL TO URBAN RENEWAL PROGRESS

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GIVEN THE CONTINUING NEED FOR URBAN IMPROVEMENT ON SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUNDS AND THE LIMITED CAPACITY OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (LDC), MAINTAINING THE VIABILITY OF REDEVELOPMENT SCHEMES AND PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT IS VITAL TO PROGRESS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, DURING A MOTION DEBATE ON URBAN RENEWAL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON.

HOWEVER, MR EASON STRESSED THAT A BALANCE HAD TO BE FOUND BETWEEN FACILITATING REDEVELOPMENT AND MINIMISING DISLOCATION OF AFFECTED RESIDENTS.

"URBAN RENEWAL, ALTHOUGH CARRIED OUT FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, SHOULD NOT PENALISE THOSE AFFECT," HE SAID.

MR EASON SAID REMARKS OF MEMBERS IN THE RECENT BUDGET DEBATE AND ELSEWHERE HAD INDICATED SUPPORT IN PRINCIPLE FOR THE USE OF RESUMPTION POWER TO ASSIST WORTHY REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS.

"THIS REQUIRES GREAT CARE AND CLEAR RULES TO PROTECT THE INTEREST OF OWNERS AND RESIDENTS AND GUIDE CONSIDERATION OF ANY SUCH PROPOSALS."

MR EASON SAID THE GUIDELINES WOULD PROBABLY INCLUDE:

- \* A MINIMUM PERCENTAGE OF THE AMOUNT OF PROPERTY A DEVELOPER WOULD HAVE TO ACQUIRE FIRST - FOR EXAMPLE, 85 PER CENT OR MORE OF THE INTEREST INVOLVED;
- \* COMPENSATION TO OWNERS NOT LESS THAN ALREADY OFFERED IN NEGOTIATION OR WHAT THE LDC OR GOVERNMENT WOULD PAY UPON RESUMPTION; AND
- \* A RELOCATION PACKAGE FOR TENANTS, AT THE DEVELOPERS' COST, USING THE SAME ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND TO THE SAME STANDARDS AS THE LDC OR GOVERNMENT.

MR EASON SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S THINKING WAS THAT ANY PROJECT FOR WHICH RESUMPTION WAS REQUESTED WOULD HAVE TO ACHIEVE CLEAR PLANNING GAINS AND DEMONSTRABLE COMMUNITY BENEFIT, INCLUDING HOUSING PRODUCTION.

"I MUST REFUTE VERY FIRMLY THE SUGGESTION THAT THERE IS COLLUSION BETWEEN DEVELOPERS AND GOVERNMENT. THE AIM IS TO DRAW UPON AVAILABLE RESOURCES USING THE DEVELOPERS RATHER THAN THE TAXPAYERS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE."

HE SAID THIS TYPE OF RESUMPTION WOULD CONTINUE TO REQUIRE THE APPROVAL OF THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL AS NOW.

/MR EASON .....

MR EASON STRESSED THAT THESE WERE ONLY SOME OF THE ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN THE GOVERNMENT'S OVERALL REVIEW OF URBAN RENEWAL AND REDEVELOPMENT PROCESS, AND SOME OF THE THINKING TOWARDS THEIR RESOLUTION.

"THE OVERALL REVIEW COVERS THE ROLE OF ALL THE VARIOUS IMPLEMENTATION AGENTS INVOLVED, INCLUDING PRIVATE DEVELOPERS.

"IT IS A HIGHLY COMPLEX SUBJECT WITH MAJOR IMPLICATIONS IN TERMS OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT, LAND, PLANNING AND HOUSING POLICIES AND RESOURCES."

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD DO ITS BEST TO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS ON THE REVIEW WITHIN THREE MONTHS, THAT IS, BY EARLY AUGUST.

MR EASON SAID STAFF OF THE ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING HIMSELF, WERE NO LESS SENSITIVE THAN LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS TO THE DIFFICULTIES THAT PEOPLE AFFECTED BY URBAN RENEWAL AND URBAN REDEVELOPMENT MIGHT EXPERIENCE.

"THE FACT THAT WE CAN SEE THE SENSITIVITIES AND THE PROBLEMS DOES NOT MAKE THE PRODUCTION OF THE SOLUTION ANY EASIER, IN FACT, OF COURSE, IT MAKES IT MORE DIFFICULT," HE SAID.

AS REGARDS REVENUE THAT WERE PRODUCED, MR EASON SAID THEY WERE THE COMMUNITY'S REVENUE AND THEY WERE AVAILABLE FOR THE COMMUNITY'S PROGRAMME.

"THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT'S REVENUES AND THE COMMUNITY'S FUND," HE SAID.

MR EASON SAID THERE WAS NO SUCH THING AS A GOVERNMENT HIGH LAND PRICES POLICY BECAUSE PRICES WERE SET BY THE MARKET.

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#### LAW TO BETTER PROTECT INJURED EMPLOYEES

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS TO IMPROVE THE ENTITLEMENT OF COMPENSATION OF INJURED EMPLOYEES.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1994 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR W K LAM, SAID ONE OF THE PROPOSALS WAS TO ENLARGE THE SCOPE OF PROTECTION OF AN EMPLOYEE WHO SUSTAINED INJURY WHILE TRAVELLING TO OR FROM HIS PLACE OF WORK.

UNDER THE PROPOSED BILL, COMPENSATION WILL BE PROVIDED TO AN EMPLOYEE WHO SUFFERS INJURY BY ACCIDENTS WHILE:

- \* TRAVELLING BETWEEN HIS HOME AND WORK PLACE WHEN TYPHOON SIGNAL NO. 8 OR ABOVE, OR A RED OR BLACK RAINSTORM WARNING SIGNAL, IS ISSUED;

- \* DRIVING OR OPERATING ANY MEANS OF TRANSPORT PROVIDED BY HIS EMPLOYER BETWEEN HIS HOME AND WORKPLACE TO ATTEND TO OR AFTER ATTENDING TO HIS DUTIES; AND
- \* TRAVELLING BETWEEN HONG KONG AND HIS WORKPLACE ABROAD BY ANY MEANS OF TRANSPORT AGREED BY HIS EMPLOYER.

THE BILL ALSO SEEKS TO EXPAND THE DEFINITION OF "MEDICAL EXPENSES" SO THAT THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR MAY PROCESS A CLAIM FROM AN EMPLOYEE INJURED AT WORK OUTSIDE HONG KONG FOR MEDICAL EXPENSES INCURRED OUTSIDE HONG KONG.

ANOTHER PROPOSAL IS TO ENHANCE THE INTEREST OF AN INJURED EMPLOYEE WHO HAS BEEN ON PROLONG SICK LEAVE BY CATERING FOR WAGE INCREASE IN COMPUTING THE AMOUNT OF COMPENSATION.

"WE PROPOSE THAT FOR THE PURPOSE OF CALCULATING THE COMPENSATION PAYABLE TO AN EMPLOYEE AT THE END OF A 12-MONTH OR 24-MONTH PERIOD FOLLOWING HIS ACCIDENT, HIS EARNING SHOULD BE SUITABLY ADJUSTED WITH REFERENCE TO THE AVERAGE RATE OF WAGE INCREASE OF OTHER PERSONS EMPLOYED BY HIS EMPLOYER IN SIMILAR EMPLOYMENT, OR WHERE NO OTHER PERSONS ARE EMPLOYED BY HIS EMPLOYER IN SIMILAR EMPLOYMENT, TO THE RATE OF INFLATION, FOR THE PRECEDING 12 OR 24 MONTHS AS APPROPRIATE," MR LAM SAID.

"WE ALSO PROPOSE THAT THE COURT BE PROVIDED WITH A DISCRETIONARY POWER TO EXTEND THE MAXIMUM PERIOD OF 24 MONTHS OF TEMPORARY INCAPACITY BY UP TO 12 MONTHS IN DESERVING CASES.

"THIS EXTENSION ALLOWS MORE TIME FOR THE CONDITION OF THE INJURED EMPLOYEE TO STABILISE AND TO BE READY FOR ASSESSMENT OF PERMANENT INCAPACITY," HE ADDED.

THE COURT WILL ALSO BE ALLOWED TO AWARD COMPENSATION TO MEET THE COST OF ATTENDING TO AN EMPLOYEE WHO SUFFERS SERIOUS PERMANENT INCAPACITY AND TO REMOVE REQUIREMENT FOR SUCH ATTENTION TO BE "CONSTANT".

IN ADDITION, IT IS PROPOSED TO SET UP A MECHANISM FOR THE PROSTHESIS AND SURGICAL APPLIANCE BOARD TO DETERMINE THE NECESSITY AND THE COST OF AN APPLIANCE SUPPLIED AND FITTED TO AN EMPLOYEE OUTSIDE HONG KONG.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

BILL SETTING OUT STANDARD SCALE FOR FINES INTRODUCED  
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A BILL SETTING OUT A STANDARD SCALE FOR FINES NOT EXCEEDING \$100,000 WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1994, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, SAID THE PROPOSED STANDARD SCALE WOULD ENABLE THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF FINES TO BE INCREASED FROM TIME TO TIME BY A SINGLE ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL IN ORDER TO REFLECT THE EFFECT OF INFLATION.

HE SAID AT PRESENT, THE PROCESS OF INCREASING THE FINES IN LEGISLATION WAS COMPLICATED, TIME-CONSUMING AND WASTEFUL OF RESOURCES, SINCE THE INCREASES WERE DONE ON A FINE BY FINE BASIS.

HE SAID: "EACH PROVISION THAT NEEDS TO BE REVISED HAS TO BE IDENTIFIED; THE DATE OF THE LAST ADJUSTMENT TO THE FINE HAS TO BE ASCERTAINED; THE EXTENT OF INFLATION SINCE THAT DATE HAS TO BE DETERMINED; AND AN APPROPRIATE INCREASE IN THE FINE DECIDED UPON.

"A LEGISLATIVE INSTRUMENT SPECIFYING THE AMENDMENT TO THAT PARTICULAR FINE THEN HAS TO BE PREPARED AND FORMALLY APPROVED," HE ADDED.

MR MATHEWS SAID THE PROPOSED STANDARD SCALE, WHICH COMPRISED SIX LEVELS AND RANGED FROM \$2,000 AT LEVEL 1 TO \$100,000 AT LEVEL 6, WOULD GREATLY SIMPLIFY THE PROCESS.

HE SAID: "ALL FINES NOT EXCEEDING \$100,000 WILL BE CONVERTED INTO THE APPROPRIATE LEVELS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS IN THE BILL AND THE VALUES OF THE LEVELS WILL BECOME THE MAXIMUM AMOUNTS OF THESE FINES.

"THESE MAXIMUM AMOUNTS CAN BE INCREASED FROM TIME TO TIME TO REFLECT THE EFFECT OF INFLATION SIMPLY BY AN ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL," HE SAID.

MR MATHEWS ALSO STRESSED THAT ADJUSTMENT BY THIS METHOD WAS ONLY POSSIBLE TO CATER FOR INFLATION.

OTHER ADJUSTMENTS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE DONE BY MEANS OF SPECIFIC AMENDING LEGISLATION AND WOULD HAVE TO BE JUSTIFIED ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS, HE SAID.

HE ALSO ADDED THAT FINES EXCEEDING \$100,000, WHICH WERE COMPARATIVELY RARE, WOULD NOT BE COVERED BY THE STANDARD SCALE, BUT WOULD CONTINUE TO BE REVIEWED INDIVIDUALLY.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

TRAFFIC AT AIRPORT BEING CLOSELY MONITORED

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THE QUEUING TIME OF ARRIVING PASSENGERS USING AIRPORT BUS AND TAXI SERVICES IS MONITORED AND REVIEWED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT EVERY SIX MONTHS TO SEE IF SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD BE MADE.

SPOT CHECKS ARE ALSO HELD IN BETWEEN, FOR EXAMPLE, DURING BUSY HOLIDAYS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN A REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HOWARD YOUNG.

ON AIRPORT BUS SERVICES, THERE ARE CURRENTLY FOUR BUS ROUTES OPERATED BY KOWLOON MOTOR BUS WHICH RUN AT FREQUENCIES BETWEEN 12 TO 15 MINUTES.

ON AVERAGE, ABOUT 5,000 PASSENGERS BOARD THESE BUSES AT THE AIRPORT EACH DAY.

MR BARMA SAID: "THIS MEETS EXISTING PASSENGER DEMAND AND THERE IS NO PROBLEM OF QUEUING."

HE SAID THREE NEW ROUTES WERE BEING PLANNED FOR INTRODUCTION LATER THIS YEAR WHICH WOULD PROVIDE BETTER NETWORK OF BUS SERVICES TO AND FROM THE AIRPORT.

AS REGARDS THE TAXI SERVICES, MR BARMA SAID, THE TWO AIRPORT TAXI STANDS WERE EXTENDED IN OCTOBER 1992 AND, AS A RESULT, THE AVERAGE HOURLY TAXI THROUGHPUT HAD BEEN INCREASED TO 467.

THE AVERAGE PASSENGER WAITING TIME DURING PEAK HOURS IS ABOUT FIVE MINUTES.

THE CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT WILL DIRECTLY CONTACT TAXI ASSOCIATIONS AND TAXI RADIO SERVICE CENTRES TO REQUEST ADDITIONAL TAXIS SHOULD QUEUES BUILD UP.

MR BARMA ADDED THAT HOTELS AND TRAVEL AGENCIES ALSO ARRANGED FOR COACHES, MINIBUSES AND LIMOUSINES TO PICK UP TOURISTS AND OTHER PASSENGERS ARRIVING AT THE AIRPORT.

HE SAID: "ALTHOUGH THAT SECTION OF THE ROAD IMMEDIATELY OUTSIDE THE ARRIVALS HALL IS A RESTRICTED ZONE, WHICH ONLY ALLOWS VEHICLES ISSUED WITH PERMITS TO PICK UP OR SET DOWN PASSENGERS, MANY COACH OPERATORS HAVE TENDED TO CONGREGATE THERE TO AWAIT ARRIVING TOUR GROUPS CAUSING BOTH CONFUSION AND CONGESTION.

"IN MARCH THIS YEAR, THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY COUNCIL HAS TAKEN THE INITIATIVE TO IMPLEMENT A SPECIAL SCHEME USING RADIO TELEPHONES TO CALL COACH OPERATORS TO COME AND PICK UP WAITING PASSENGERS WHO HAVE JUST ARRIVED.

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"THIS HAS SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCED TRAFFIC THROUGHPUT AND TRAFFIC FLOW.

"ALTHOUGH THERE ARE INDEED OCCASIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, DURING ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS WHEN ARRIVING PASSENGERS MAY EXPERIENCE LONGER WAITING PERIODS FOR LAND TRANSPORT, THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR AND THE AVAILABILITY OF LAND TRANSPORT SERVICES AT THE AIRPORT ARE SATISFACTORY."

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GOVT'S POLICY IS TO PROMOTE OFF-ROAD DRIVING TRAINING

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THE MAIN PURPOSE OF ADOPTING DIFFERENT DRIVING TEST APPOINTMENT SYSTEMS FOR STUDENTS OF DRIVING SCHOOLS AND THOSE OF PRIVATE DRIVING INSTRUCTORS IS TO PROMOTE OFF-ROAD DRIVING TRAINING, WHICH IS CONSIDERED TO BE IN THE WIDER INTERESTS OF ALL ROAD USERS, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON LAU CHIN-SHEK IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR BARMA SAID IT WAS THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY AND PRACTICE TO ENCOURAGE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF OFF-STREET DRIVING SCHOOLS SINCE THESE PROVIDED LEARNER DRIVERS WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACQUIRE BASIC DRIVING SKILLS IN A SAFE AND CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT.

"THIS ALSO REDUCES THE INCONVENIENCE TO OTHER MOTORISTS THAT WOULD OTHERWISE RESULT BY A LARGE NUMBER OF LEARNER DRIVERS USING PUBLIC ROADS," HE SAID.

HE NOTED THAT PRIVATE DRIVING INSTRUCTORS WERE NEVERTHELESS FREE TO OPERATE AND OFFER THEIR SERVICES TO THOSE WHO WISH TO LEARN TO DRIVE.

THE AVERAGE WAITING TIME FOR PRIVATE CAR DRIVING TESTS IN THE PAST 24 MONTHS WAS 174 DAYS FOR STUDENTS OF OFF-ROAD DRIVING SCHOOLS, COMPARED WITH 218 DAYS FOR THOSE USING PRIVATE INSTRUCTORS.

"WE DO NOT CONSIDER THAT THE PRESENT PRACTICE IS UNFAIR TO THOSE LEARNERS USING PRIVATE INSTRUCTORS, SINCE POTENTIAL LEARNERS ARE FREE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN OFF-ROAD DRIVING SCHOOLS AND PRIVATE INSTRUCTORS AND THEY SHOULD KNOW WHAT THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR TESTS ARE," MR BARMA SAID.

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PROBLEMS IN COMPULSORY EDUCATION ADDRESSED

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AN IN-DEPTH STUDY BY THE EDUCATION COMMISSION HAS IDENTIFIED A NUMBER OF PROBLEM AREAS IN THE PROVISION OF NINE-YEAR COMPULSORY FREE EDUCATION, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR W K LAM, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON CONRAD LAM, MR LAM SAID THESE PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE USE OF COMMON-CORE CURRICULUM FOR STUDENTS OF DIFFERING ABILITIES AND DISPOSITION, THE NEED TO IMPROVE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE AND THE DELIVERY OF THE CURRICULUM THROUGH A MIX OF LANGUAGES.

HE SAID THE COMMON-CORE CURRICULUM WAS CONSIDERED UNSUITABLE FOR STUDENTS AT EITHER END OF THE ABILITY SPECTRUM.

"TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM, A MORE FLEXIBLE CURRICULUM NEEDS TO BE DEVELOPED AND THIS IS BEING ACHIEVED THROUGH THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE ESTABLISHED IN 1992," HE SAID.

ALSO A RANGE OF REMEDIAL AND SUPPORT SERVICES, INCLUDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PRACTICAL SCHOOLS AND SKILLS OPPORTUNITIES SCHOOLS, HAS BEEN OR IS BEING DEVELOPED TO HELP UNMOTIVATED STUDENTS AND LOW ACHIEVERS.

AT THE SAME TIME A DEDICATED CENTRE FOR THE GIFTED CHILDREN IS BEING PLANNED.

ON THE NEED TO IMPROVE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE, MR LAM SAID THE EDUCATION COMMISSION HAD RECOMMENDED THE USE OF OBJECTIVE CRITERIA AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUITABLE CURRICULUM MATERIALS.

"THAT IS BEING TACKLED BY THE PLANNED INTRODUCTION OF TARGET-ORIENTED CURRICULUM IN 1995," HE SAID.

WITH REGARD TO THE PROBLEM OF USING MIXED LANGUAGES IN TEACHING AND TO FACILITATE THE USE OF MOTHER TONGUE IN EDUCATION, MR LAM SAID VARIOUS MEASURES HAD ALREADY BEEN OR WERE BEING IMPLEMENTED TO TACKLE IT.

"THEY INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF EXTRA LANGUAGE TEACHERS TO SCHOOLS AND THE PROVISION TO PARENTS OF INFORMATION ON THEIR CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TO ENABLE THEM TO CHOOSE SECONDARY SCHOOLS BEST SUITED TO THEIR CHILDREN.

"IN ADDITION, THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAS ADVISED SCHOOLS TO ADOPT A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION SUITABLE TO THE LANGUAGE ABILITY OF THEIR STUDENT INTAKE. MOTHER-TONGUE TEACHING IS ALSO ENCOURAGED," HE SAID.

MR LAM POINTED OUT THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE AND OTHER MEASURES WOULD IN TIME FURTHER ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL EDUCATION.

NO TAIWANESE REFUSED ENTRY VISAS

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THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT NO TAIWANESE HAD BEEN REFUSED ENTRY VISAS TO VISIT HONG KONG DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON FREDERICK FUNG, MR ASPREY SAID ALL VISITORS FROM TAIWAN, INCLUDING TAIWANESE OFFICIALS, VISITED HONG KONG IN THEIR PRIVATE CAPACITY.

HE SAID THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FOR VISIT PERMITS FROM TAIWANESE OFFICIALS WAS 723 IN 1991, 580 IN 1992, 802 IN 1993 AND 177 IN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF 1994. NONE WERE REFUSED.

MR ASPREY NOTED THAT ALL TAIWANESE VISITORS COULD ENTER HONG KONG ON MULTIPLE VISIT PERMITS VALID FOR ONE OR TWO YEARS.

THE PROCESSING TIME FOR FIRST APPLICATION WAS NORMALLY NO MORE THAN SEVEN WORKING DAYS, AND FOR APPLICATIONS FOR RENEWAL TWO WORKING DAYS.

THE PRESENT PROCEDURES, WHICH ALLOW FOR THE ISSUE OF MULTIPLE VISIT PERMITS, WERE INTRODUCED IN 1990.

"THEY HAVE BEEN WELL-RECEIVED AND ARE WORKING WELL. WE KEEP THEM UNDER REGULAR REVIEW, BUT HAVE NO PLANS AT PRESENT TO CHANGE THEM," MR ASPREY SAID.

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HELP TO CHINESE IMMIGRANT CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

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THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WILL SOON ISSUE A CIRCULAR TO ADVISE SCHOOL HEADS AND TEACHERS ON ASSISTING CHINESE IMMIGRANT CHILDREN JOINING LOCAL SCHOOLS.

IN THE CIRCULAR, SCHOOLS WILL BE ADVISED TO ENCOURAGE TEACHERS TO LIAISE CLOSELY WITH THE PARENTS OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN, TO ASSIGN SENIOR PUPILS TO HELP LOOK AFTER THEM, AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO INTEGRATE SOCIALLY THROUGH EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR W K LAM, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON CHEUNG MAN-KWONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR LAM SAID: "THE DEPARTMENT ALREADY PROVIDES PERSONAL ASSISTANCE TO PARENTS IN THE EARLY PLACEMENT OF ALL SCHOOL-AGE IMMIGRANT CHILDREN.

"DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICERS HELP THOSE PARENTS WHO NEED SUCH ASSISTANCE TO CHOOSE SCHOOLS FOR THEIR CHILDREN, INCLUDING ARRANGING SCHOOL INTERVIEWS.

/"SCHOOLS THEN .....

"SCHOOLS THEN ASSESS THE CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC STANDARD BEFORE PLACING THEM TO CLASSES AT SUITABLE LEVELS," HE ADDED.

FEEDBACKS OBTAINED BY THE DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICES SHOWED THAT, APART FROM THEIR STANDARD OF ENGLISH, MOST IMMIGRANT CHILDREN DO NOT ENCOUNTER SERIOUS LEARNING OR ADJUSTMENT DIFFICULTIES.

TO HELP THEM TACKLE THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM, SCHOOLS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ORGANISE COUNSELLING CLASSES WHILE THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ALSO RUNS SPECIAL CLASSES.

"FOR THOSE IMMIGRANT CHILDREN WHO HAVE SPECIAL ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS, THEY ARE GIVEN COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE BY STUDENT GUIDANCE OFFICERS OR SCHOOL WORKERS," MR LAM SAID.

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USE OF PAVING BLOCKS WILL NOT LEAD TO RAT PROBLEM

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NOTHING FROM THE AVAILABLE TECHNICAL EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT THE USE OF PAVING BLOCK CONSTRUCTION, WHICH IS USED IN MANY COUNTRIES, WILL LEAD TO RAT PROBLEMS, THE SECRETARY FOR WORKS, MR JAMES BLAKE, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM DR THE HON LAM KUI-CHUN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR BLAKE SAID GIVEN THE EXTENSIVE USE OF BLOCK PAVEMENTS IN HONG KONG AND THE FEW INSTANCES OF POSSIBLE DAMAGE DUE TO THE ACTIVITIES OF BURROWING BY RATS, IT WAS CLEARLY NOT A SERIOUS PROBLEM.

THERE WERE FOUR CASES OF PEDESTRIAN PAVEMENT DAMAGE SUSPECTED TO HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY THE ACTIVITIES OF RATS DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS.

ONLY ONE OF THESE RELATED TO RATS BURROWING INTO THE SAND LAYER BENEATH THE PAVEMENT BLOCKS, THE OTHERS ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY RATS UNDERMINING THE DEEPER UNDERLYING SOIL STRATA.

MR BLAKE SAID AS THERE WAS NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT ANY RELATIONSHIP EXISTED BETWEEN THE ACTIVITIES OF RATS AND THE USE OF PAVING BLOCK, THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT (USD) AND THE REGIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT (RSD) WERE THEREFORE NOT CONSULTED BY THE HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT WHEN DECIDING TO ADOPT BLOCK PAVEMENTS ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR OTHER VERY IMPORTANT BENEFITS.

HE SAID THERE SHOULD BE VERY LITTLE CHANCE FOR RATS TO BURROW FOR PAVEMENTS WHICH WERE PROPERLY LAID, WHETHER BY USING TRADITIONAL IN SITU CONCRETE OR BY USING CONCRETE BLOCKS AND WITH CONCRETE EDGING STRIPS.

THERE IS HOWEVER ALWAYS THE POSSIBILITY THAT DAMAGE TO THE PAVED SURFACE, WHICH COULD BE CAUSED BY THE WHEEL LOADING OF ILLEGALLY PARKED VEHICLES FOR EXAMPLE, OR ANY DAMAGE CAUSING AN OPENING IN THE VICINITY OF THE PAVEMENT MIGHT RESULT IN RATS REACHING THE UNDERLYING BEDDING LAYER AND STARTS BURROWING ACTIVITIES, MR BLAKE SAID.

"THE HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT WILL ENSURE THAT PAVING BLOCK PAVEMENTS ARE LAID WITH DUE REGARD TO THIS POTENTIAL PROBLEM, AND THAT ANY DEFECTS IN ANY TYPE OF PAVING WILL BE REPAIRED PROMPTLY TO AVOID RAT INFESTATION.

"USD AND RSD HAVE ALSO INSTRUCTED THEIR BEAT SWEEPERS AND PEST CONTROL STAFF TO REPORT DEFECTIVE PAVEMENTS TO THE HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT," HE ADDED.

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#### CROSS BORDER BUS AND COACH SERVICES

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CROSS BORDER BUS AND COACH SERVICES WERE SUBJECT TO QUOTAS JOINTLY AGREED AND ADMINISTERED BY THE HONG KONG AND CHINESE GOVERNMENTS, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HOWARD YOUNG, MR BARMA SAID: "THERE ARE AT PRESENT 471 SUCH QUOTAS, EACH OF WHICH ALLOWS ONE ROUND TRIP A DAY AND THESE ARE SUFFICIENT TO MEET NORMAL DEMAND.

"ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY QUOTAS ARE ALLOCATED FOR PERIODS OF EXCEPTIONAL DEMAND, FOR EXAMPLE, ON CERTAIN PUBLIC HOLIDAYS AND FESTIVE DAYS."

IN THE PAST THREE YEARS, 11 APPLICATIONS FOR QUOTAS TO OPERATE CROSS BORDER BUS AND COACH SERVICES HAVE BEEN TURNED DOWN DUE TO VARIOUS REASONS.

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#### CLINICS TREAT 4.6M PATIENTS

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A TOTAL OF 4,659,678 PATIENTS ATTENDED THE 59 GENERAL OUT-PATIENT CLINICS OPERATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN 1993, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN HER WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HUANG CHEN-YA, MRS WONG SAID OF THESE PATIENTS, 3,942,437 WERE FOR MEDICAL CONSULTATION AND THE REST FOR NURSING SERVICES, THAT IS, INJECTIONS AND DRESSINGS.

"ABOUT 40 PER CENT OF THE MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS COMPRISED PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC DISEASES REQUIRING REGULAR FOLLOW-UP. THE REST WERE PATIENTS WITH ACUTE AILMENTS SEEKING PRIMARY MEDICAL CARE," SHE SAID.

ALSO 93,971 PATIENTS ATTENDING GENERAL OUT-PATIENT CLINICS WERE REFERRED TO SPECIALIST CLINICS AND 29,209 TO ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY SERVICE OF HOSPITALS UNDER THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY.

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"THIS CONSTITUTES 2.38 PER CENT AND 0.74 PER CENT OF ALL MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS RESPECTIVELY," MRS WONG ADDED.

OF THE 59 GENERAL OUT-PATIENT CLINICS RUN BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, 54 WERE FULL-TIME CLINICS AND FIVE PART-TIME.

FULL-TIME CLINICS OPERATE 11 SESSIONS A WEEK WITH A TOTAL OF 39 HOURS.

PART-TIME CLINICS RUN BETWEEN THREE TO FIVE SESSIONS PER WEEK AND THE TOTAL OPERATING HOURS RANGE FROM SIX TO 12 HOURS PER WEEK.

IN ADDITION, EVENING CLINIC AND SUNDAY AND PUBLIC HOLIDAY CLINIC SERVICES OPERATE FROM 18 AND EIGHT OF THE FULL-TIME CLINICS RESPECTIVELY.

IN TERMS OF GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION, MRS WONG SAID 11 OF THE GENERAL OUT-PATIENT CLINICS WERE ON HONG KONG ISLAND, 18 IN KOWLOON, 17 IN THE NEW TERRITORIES EAST AND 13 IN THE NEW TERRITORIES WEST.

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'NO CONVICTION' CONDITION TO DISAPPEAR FROM JOB AD

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL DELETE FROM ITS FUTURE RECRUITMENT NOTICES THE CONDITION THAT APPLICATIONS FROM CANDIDATES WITH CRIMINAL RECORD WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED, THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR MICHAEL SZE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MICHAEL HO, MR SZE SAID THIS FOLLOWED A REVIEW BY THE CIVIL SERVICE BRANCH AND WOULD BETTER IMPLEMENT THE GOVERNMENT'S OVERALL POLICY ON EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH PREVIOUS CONVICTION RECORDS.

"IT IS OUR GENERAL POLICY THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE A LEAD IN EMPLOYING EX-PRISONERS AND PERSONS CONVICTED OF CRIMINAL OFFENCES AND SHOULD DO SO WHERE THIS IS NOT INCONSISTENT WITH THE PUBLIC INTEREST," HE SAID.

"THE AIM IS TO RE-INTEGRATE THESE PEOPLE INTO THE COMMUNITY," HE ADDED.

MR SZE NOTED THAT APPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ON THE MERITS OF INDIVIDUAL CASES.

THESE INCLUDE THE GENERAL CHARACTER AND EXPERIENCE OF THE CANDIDATE, HIS RECORD BEFORE AND AFTER THE OFFENCE FOR WHICH HE WAS CONVICTED AND WHETHER THE OFFENCE IS OF A KIND THAT WOULD MAKE HIM UNSUITABLE FOR THE DUTIES OF THE POST INVOLVED.

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PROPOSALS ON CHILDREN GIVING EVIDENCE  
BEING FORMULATED

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LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES AIMING AT IMPROVING THE SYSTEM REGULATING THE GIVING OF EVIDENCE BY CHILDREN IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS ARE BEING FORMULATED, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MRS PEGGY LAM, MR MATHEWS SAID HE HOPED TO PRESENT THE NECESSARY LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN THE 1994/95 SESSION.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SAID HE SET UP A COMMITTEE IN JULY 1993 TO LOOK AT WAYS AND MEANS TO IMPROVE THE SYSTEM REGULATING THE GIVING OF EVIDENCE BY CHILDREN IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS.

THE COMMITTEE WAS CHAIRED BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS AND COMPRISED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BAR ASSOCIATION, THE LAW SOCIETY, THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AID, THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, AND THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE.

MR MATHEWS SAID THE COMMITTEE SUBMITTED ITS REPORT IN JANUARY 1994 AND AMONG OTHERS, RECOMMENDED THE FOLLOWING :-

- \* CHILDREN OUGHT, IN CERTAIN DEFINED CIRCUMSTANCES, TO BE ALLOWED TO GIVE EVIDENCE THROUGH A TELEVISION VIDEO LINK, FROM A ROOM, IF NOT ADJACENT TO THE COURT, THEN IN THE COURT BUILDING. THIS WOULD APPLY TO CHILD WITNESSES GIVING EVIDENCE IN RELATION TO OFFENCES INVOLVING THE SEXUAL ABUSE OF A CHILD, THE PHYSICAL ABUSE OF A CHILD, OR CRUELTY TO A CHILD. THIS PROPOSAL WOULD AVOID THE STRESS PLACED UPON A CHILD OF GIVING EVIDENCE IN THE OPEN, AND SOMETIMES INTIMIDATING COURT ENVIRONMENT;
- \* THE PRIMARY EVIDENCE OF THE CHILD WITNESS, IN RELATION TO OFFENCES WITHIN THE THREE CLASSES MENTIONED, OUGHT TO BE VIDEO RECORDED AT AN EARLY STAGE BY TRAINED PERSONNEL OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND POLICE;
- \* THE REQUIREMENT IN SECTION 4 OF THE EVIDENCE ORDINANCE AS TO CORROBORATION OF THE EVIDENCE OF THE CHILD SHOULD BE ABOLISHED. IT SHOULD, IN ADDITION, NO LONGER BE INCUMBENT UPON THE COURTS TO GIVE WARNINGS AS TO THE DANGERS INHERENT IN CONVICTING AN ACCUSED ON THE UNCORROBORATED EVIDENCE OF A CHILD; AND
- \* ALL CHILDREN SHOULD GIVE THEIR EVIDENCE UNSWORN, ANY PRESUMPTION AS TO A CHILD'S INCOMPETENCE TO TESTIFY SHOULD CEASE, AND CHILDREN SHOULD BE TREATED IN THE SAME WAY AS ADULTS. IF A CHILD IS AVAILABLE TO GIVE RELEVANT UNDERSTANDABLE EVIDENCE, THE CHILD SHOULD BE HEARD. THE COURT WILL THEN EVALUATE THAT EVIDENCE AND DECIDE HOW MUCH RELIANCE TO PLACE UPON IT.

/MR MATHEWS .....

MR MATHEWS SAID HE HAD ACCEPTED THESE RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES WERE BEING FORMULATED TO GIVE EFFECT TO THEM.

MR MATHEWS ADDED THAT AT PRESENT, UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE EVIDENCE ORDINANCE, A WITNESS, AND THIS INCLUDES THE VICTIM, WHO IS TOO YOUNG AND DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF THE OATH, CAN GIVE UNSWORN EVIDENCE IF IN THE OPINION OF THE COURT HE OR SHE UNDERSTANDS THE DUTY TO SPEAK THE TRUTH.

HE SAID: "THIS CATEGORY GENERALLY EMBRACES CHILDREN BETWEEN SEVEN TO 14 YEARS OF AGE. CORROBORATION OF THE EVIDENCE OF SUCH A WITNESS IS REQUIRED.

"AS FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF SEVEN YEARS, THEY CAN, BY VIRTUE OF SECTION 3 OF THE EVIDENCE ORDINANCE, GIVE UNSWORN EVIDENCE IF THEY APPEAR CAPABLE OF RECEIVING JUST IMPRESSIONS OF THE FACTS," HE SAID.

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REGULATIONS ON TAXATION AND ACCOUNTING SERVICES SUFFICIENT  
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THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM THAT MIGHT REQUIRE THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW REGULATORY FRAMEWORK OR SPECIFIC STATUTORY MEASURES IN RESPECT OF ACCOUNTING AND TAXATION SERVICES, THE SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, MR MICHAEL CARTLAND, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ALBERT CHAN, MR CARTLAND SAID THERE WERE NO PARTICULAR ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING TAXATION AND ACCOUNTING SERVICES COMPANIES UNLESS THEY WERE FIRMS OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS OR PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS.

IN WHICH CASE THEY WOULD NEED TO BE REGISTERED WITH THE HONG KONG SOCIETY OF ACCOUNTANTS (HKSA) AND WOULD BE SUBJECT TO ITS REGULATIONS.

OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE HKSA HAD RECORDED ONLY THREE COMPLAINTS FROM THE PUBLIC AGAINST ACCOUNTING FIRMS WHICH WERE NOT FIRMS OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS.

A FIRM REGISTERED WITH THE HKSA WOULD USUALLY HAVE THE DESIGNATION "CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS" OR "PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS" IN ITS NAME OR ON ITS LETTERHEAD, WHEREAS AN INDIVIDUAL WOULD DESIGNATE HIMSELF AS A "CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT", "PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT" OR A "PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANT".

"IF THERE IS ANY DOUBT, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY DURING OFFICE HOURS CHECK THE REGISTER OF INDIVIDUALS AND FIRMS WHICH, UNDER THE PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS ORDINANCE, THE HKSA IS REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN AND MAKE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION, WITHOUT CHARGE," MR CARTLAND SAID.

"THE LEGISLATION ALSO REQUIRES THAT A PERSON OR A FIRM REGISTERED WITH THE HKSA BE ISSUED WITH A CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION.

"IF A PERSON OR FIRM IS CLAIMING TO BE AN HKSA MEMBER, THEREFORE, A PROSPECTIVE CLIENT MAY ASK TO SEE THE RELEVANT CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION," HE ADDED.

WHILE IT IS PERMISSIBLE FOR A FIRM TO OFFER TAXATION OR ACCOUNTING (EXCLUDING AUDITING) SERVICES WITHOUT BEING REGISTERED, IT IS AN OFFENCE UPON CONVICTION BY A FINE OF UP TO \$20,000 AND 12 MONTHS IMPRISONMENT FOR A PERSON TO PRACTISE AS, OR TO CLAIM TO BE QUALIFIED TO PRACTISE AS A CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT OR A PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT, OR TO CLAIM TO BE QUALIFIED TO BE REGISTERED AS A PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANT, WHEN HE IS NOT QUALIFIED TO DO SO.

"IF THE HKSA SUSPECTS THAT AN OFFENCE MAY BE BEING COMMITTED, IT WILL FOLLOW UP WITH THE PERSON OR FIRM CONCERNED AND IF NO SATISFACTORY ACTION IS TAKEN TO EXPLAIN OR DESIST FROM THE CONDUCT ON QUESTION, THE MATTER WILL BE REFERRED TO THE POLICE," MR CARTLAND SAID.

HE STRESSED THAT THE PUBLIC COULD EASILY CONFIRM WHETHER AN INDIVIDUAL OR A FIRM WAS REGISTERED WITH THE HKSA.

MR CARTLAND NOTED THAT IF THE PUBLIC WERE IN ANY DOUBT ABOUT THE CREDENTIALS OF A TAXATION AND ACCOUNTING SERVICES FIRM OR THE INTEGRITY OF PERSONS CONCERNED, THEY SHOULD CONSIDER DEALING INSTEAD WITH THOSE REGISTERED WITH THE HKSA, WHICH WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES ISSUED.

IF ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC HAS A COMPLAINT ABOUT THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY A TAXATION AND ACCOUNTING SERVICES COMPANY THAT IS NOT REGISTERED WITH THE HKSA, AND WHICH IS NOT CLAIMING TO BE REGISTERED OR TO OFFER SERVICES REQUIRING IT TO BE REGISTERED, AND IF THE PERSON CONCERNED IS UNABLE TO OBTAIN SATISFACTION FROM THE COMPANY DIRECT, HE OR SHE SHOULD CONSIDER SEEKING THE ASSISTANCE OF THE CONSUMER COUNCIL, OR IN CASES OF POSSIBLE FRAUD, OF THE POLICE, HE ADDED.

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PERSONS DETAINED UNDER IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE

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A TOTAL OF 161 PERSONS WERE DETAINED UNDER THE IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE IN THE PAST THREE YEARS, OF WHICH 151 WERE FROM CHINA, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHRISTINE LOH IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR ASPREY SAID AN APPLICATION FOR A DETENTION AUTHORISATION WAS NOT MORE THAN 28 DAYS.

THIS IS APPLICABLE WHERE A DETAINEE IS A PROSECUTION WITNESS IN A CRIMINAL TRIAL, OR IS BELIEVED TO BE ABLE TO HELP ENQUIRIES INTO AN OFFENCE OR SUSPECTED OFFENCE, AND WHERE HE OR SHE IS ABOUT TO BE REMOVED FROM HONG KONG.

/HOWEVER, AN .....

HOWEVER, AN APPLICATION TO COURT FOR A DETENTION ORDER IS NEEDED IF THE ENQUIRIES HAVE NOT BEEN COMPLETED WITHIN THE 28-DAY PERIOD, OR IF THE WITNESS HAS NOT YET GIVEN OR COMPLETED HIS EVIDENCE AND HIS PRESENCE IS STILL REQUIRED.

"THE DETAINEE IS GIVEN ADVANCE NOTICE OF THE APPLICATION; HE ATTENDS THE HEARING AND IS GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD ON EACH APPLICATION. OCCASIONALLY, THE DETAINEE IS LEGALLY REPRESENTED," MR ASPREY SAID.

THERE ARE NO REQUIREMENTS TO EXPLAIN TO A DETAINEE HIS LEGAL POSITION AND/OR TO INFORM HIM ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY OF LEGAL ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE, NOR IS HE INFORMED OF THIS WHEN APPLICATIONS FOR DETENTION ARE MADE.

THERE ARE PROVISIONS UNDER THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE ORDINANCE FOR THE ADMISSION OF WRITTEN STATEMENTS IN LIEU OF ORAL EVIDENCE.

HOWEVER, OBJECTIONS CAN BE MADE TO THESE WRITTEN STATEMENTS BY ANY OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED, INCLUDING THE DEFENDANT.

"NEVERTHELESS, IF THE DEFENDANT AGREES TO THE WRITTEN STATEMENT, THEN THE WITNESS WILL NO LONGER BE DETAINED AND CAN BE RELEASED AND REMOVED," MR ASPREY SAID.

RECOGNISANCE IS AN ALTERNATIVE TO DETENTION. IN DECIDING WHETHER TO GRANT RECOGNISANCE OR NOT, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACTOR TO BE CONSIDERED IS THE LIKELIHOOD OF THE WITNESS ABSCONDING.

THOSE WITH CLOSE RELATIVES IN HONG KONG, SUCH AS WIVES AND CHILDREN, WERE USUALLY RELEASED ON RECOGNIZANCE, HE ADDED.

FOR CASES INVOLVING IMMIGRATION OFFENCES, A TOTAL OF NINE PERSONS WERE DETAINED IN ORDER TO GIVE EVIDENCE IN FIVE CASES.

MR ASPREY SAID OF THESE NINE PERSONS, FIVE WERE ALSO CHARGED WITH RELATED OFFENCES WHILE FOUR WERE GRANTED IMMUNITY.

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SAFETY OF HOLIDAY BUNGALOWS REGULATED BY LAW

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THE FIRE SAFETY OF HOLIDAY BUNGALOWS IS REGULATED BY THE HOTEL AND GUESTHOUSE ACCOMMODATION ORDINANCE, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SUEN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ALBERT CHAN WAI-YIP, MR SUEN SAID ALTHOUGH BARBECUE ACTIVITIES IN OPEN AREAS WERE NOT CLASSIFIED AS "FIRE HAZARDS", THE POLICE MIGHT TAKE ACTION IF THEY CAUSED OBSTRUCTION OR ENDANGERED PEOPLE IN A PUBLIC PLACE.

PROSECUTION MIGHT ALSO BE INITIATED AGAINST BARBECUE ACTIVITIES ON PAVEMENTS PURSUANT TO THE PUBLIC CLEANSING AND PREVENTION OF NUISANCES (REGIONAL COUNCIL) BY-LAWS IF SUCH ACTIVITIES LED TO LITTERING IN PUBLIC PLACES, HE ADDED.

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STRANDED SEAMEN WILL GET QUICK HELP

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL AIM TO SPEEDILY IDENTIFY INDIVIDUAL CASES AND DEAL EXPEDITIOUSLY AND SYMPATHETICALLY WITH WELFARE AND REPATRIATION MATTERS FOR FOREIGN SEAMEN STRANDED IN HONG KONG.

THIS WAS EXPLAINED BY THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MR GORDON SIU, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MARTIN BARROW IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

WHEN FOREIGN SEAMEN ARE STRANDED IN THE TERRITORY, THE INITIAL ONUS IS ON THE SHIPOWNER OR HIS AGENT IN HONG KONG TO TAKE CARE OF THEM.

WHERE THIS PROVES NOT TO BE POSSIBLE, IT FALLS TO THE GOVERNMENT TO SPEEDILY APPROACH THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS TO THE FLAG STATE CONCERNED TO MAKE ANY NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THEIR WELFARE.

MR SIU SAID IN THE LIGHT OF INCREASING PREVALENCE OF THE STRANDING OF FOREIGN SEAFARERS IN HONG KONG, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD:

- \* BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF THE FLAG STATES CONCERNED THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT OWNERS OF VESSELS REGISTERED WITH THEM ARE FULLY AWARE OF THEIR OBLIGATIONS AND TO INSTITUTE CLEAR GUIDELINES FOR ACTION BY THEIR LOCAL CONSULATES;
- \* DETERMINE HOW BEST TO CO-ORDINATE THE PROVISION OF CONTINGENCY RELIEF FOR STRANDED SEAFARERS PENDING THEIR REPATRIATION.

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INFILL SITES IDENTIFIED TO INCREASE PUBLIC HOUSING PRODUCTION

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THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT IS LOOKING INTO THE FEASIBILITY OF BUILDING ADDITIONAL BLOCKS IN EXISTING HOUSING ESTATES AS PART OF THE MEASURES TO INCREASE PUBLIC HOUSING PRODUCTION TO MEET HOUSING DEMANDS IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON TANG SIU-TONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SAID THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT HAD IDENTIFIED 31 POSSIBLE "INFILL" SITES IN EXISTING ESTATES WHICH HAD POTENTIAL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARD BLOCKS OR SPECIAL BLOCKS FOR SMALL HOUSEHOLDS.

MR EASON SAID THE FEASIBILITY OF USING THESE SITES WAS DEPENDENT ON THE IMPACT ON INFRASTRUCTURAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES BEING ACCEPTABLE, ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRAFFIC CONSTRAINTS BEING OVERCOME AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION.

"IF EVERYTHING GOES WELL, FLATS ON THE SITES CAN BE COMPLETED BETWEEN 1996/97 AND 1998/99," HE SAID.

PRELIMINARY STUDY BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT OF 12 OF THE 31 SITES INDICATED THAT EIGHT OF THEM COULD BE DEVELOPED TO PROVIDE SOME 5,200 FLATS, MR EASON SAID, ADDING THAT CONSTRUCTION WORK ON SOME OF THEM MIGHT START BY THE END OF 1994 OR EARLY 1995.

RESULTS OF THE CURRENT STUDY ON THE REMAINING 19 SITES WERE EXPECTED IN TWO MONTHS, HE SAID.

MR EASON NOTED THAT THE SITES IDENTIFIED WERE IN ESTATES WHERE THE ACTUAL POPULATION WAS LESS THAN THE ORIGINAL PLANNED TARGET.

"EVEN AFTER BUILDING THE ADDITIONAL HOUSING BLOCKS, THE ESTATE POPULATION WILL BE WITHIN THE PLANNED CAPACITY FOR WHICH ITS INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES WERE DESIGNED AND PROVIDED.

"IN PLANNING ADDITIONAL BUILDINGS ON THESE SITES, THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT NOT ONLY ATTEMPTS TO OPTIMISE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL BUT ALSO TO UPGRADE AND IMPROVE, WHERE POSSIBLE, FACILITIES TO MEET THE LATEST STANDARDS," HE SAID.

THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT WOULD CONSULT RELEVANT DISTRICT BOARDS AND MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES IN THE HOUSING ESTATES AFFECTED BEFORE FINALISING THE PLANS, HE ADDED.

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INVESTIGATION INTO SHORTAGE OF UNLEADED PETROL CONDUCTED

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THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT (EPD), IN RESPONSE TO REPORTS OF FAILURE TO SUPPLY UNLEADED PETROL IN SOME PETROL STATIONS, CARRIED OUT AN INVESTIGATION INVOLVING VISITS TO A NUMBER OF PETROL STATIONS ON MARCH 2, 3 AND 4, 1994.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON EMILY LAU IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR EASON SAID ON TWO OCCASIONS ON MARCH 3, THERE WAS A FAILURE TO SUPPLY UNLEADED PETROL ON REQUEST.

HOWEVER, THE SITUATION SEEMED TO HAVE RETURNED TO NORMAL BY MARCH 4 AND UNLEADED PETROL WAS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST AT ALL STATIONS VISITED, HE NOTED.

"EPD IS CURRENTLY GATHERING MORE INFORMATION AND CONSULTING THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS AS TO WHETHER PROSECUTION ACTION UNDER THE RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF THE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL ORDINANCE CAN AND SHOULD PROCEED," MR EASON SAID.

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## AVERAGE DAILY STOCK MARKET TURNOVER FIGURES

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THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT CONSIDER IT APPROPRIATE OR PRACTICAL TO REQUIRE THE SAME "AVERAGE DAILY STOCK MARKET TURNOVER" TO BE USED FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE BUDGETS OF THE GOVERNMENT, THE SECURITIES AND FUTURES COMMISSION (SFC) AND THE STOCK EXCHANGE OF HONG KONG LIMITED (SEHK), THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY, MR DONALD TSANG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN PREPARING THE 1994/95 BUDGETS FOR THE SFC AND THE SEHK, THE AVERAGE DAILY TURNOVER ON THE STOCK MARKET WAS ASSUMED TO BE \$4.5 BILLION, MR TSANG SAID.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTIMATING THE STAMP DUTY REVENUE FROM STOCK TRANSACTIONS FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S 1994/95 BUDGET, THE ADMINISTRATION HAD ASSUMED AN AVERAGE DAILY VALUE OF STOCK TRANSACTIONS (INCLUDING TRANSFERS ON THE STOCK EXCHANGE AND PRIVATE TRANSFERS OF ABOUT \$5 BILLION).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ERIC LI, MR TSANG SAID THE DIFFERENT TURNOVER FIGURES REPRESENTED THE BEST JUDGEMENT AT THE TIME OF THOSE INVOLVED IN THE PREPARATION OF THE RESPECTIVE BUDGETS IN THE LIGHT OF THE LATEST MARKET SITUATION.

"WE ARE NOT, SO FAR, AWARE OF ANY PUBLIC CONCERN THAT THE DIFFERENT ESTIMATED TURNOVER FIGURES ARE A SOURCE OF CONFUSION," HE SAID.

THE FINANCIAL YEAR FOR THE SEHK STARTS FROM JULY 1 WHILE THAT FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND SFC COMMENCES ON APRIL 1.

THE DIFFERENCE IN TIMING IN PREPARING THE BUDGETS MEANS THAT THE ESTIMATES ON MARKET TURNOVER MAY BE VASTLY DIFFERENT.

"IN ADDITION, IN FORECASTING THE AVERAGE DAILY TURNOVER FIGURE FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S BUDGET THE ADMINISTRATION HAS INCLUDED IN IT THE VALUE OF PRIVATE TRANSFERS," MR TSANG.

HE ADDED THAT THESE TURNOVER FIGURES WERE NO MORE THAN ESTIMATES BASED ON THE BEST ASSESSMENT AT THE TIME THEY WERE PRODUCED.

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## GOVT TO COMPILE ACCRUAL-BASED ACCOUNTS

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL COMPILE THE ACCRUAL-BASED SUPPLEMENTARY ACCOUNTS ON A PILOT BASIS IN SELECTED DEPARTMENTS DURING 1994/95, THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY, MR DONALD TSANG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON JIMMY MCGREGOR, MR TSANG SAID THE PUBLISHED ACCOUNTS OF THE GOVERNMENT WERE PREPARED ON A CASH BASIS.

/MR TSANG .....

MR TSANG SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD PRODUCED ACCRUAL-BASED ACCOUNTS IN ADDITION TO THE CASH-BASED ACCOUNTS IN RECOGNITION OF ITS RELEVANCE FOR CERTAIN QUASI-COMMERCIAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS.

THESE INCLUDE WATER SUPPLIES, THE AIRPORT AND THE POST OFFICE.

"ALSO, GOVERNMENT SERVICES OPERATED AS TRADING FUNDS, SUCH AS THE RECENTLY ESTABLISHED LAND AND COMPANIES REGISTRY TRADING FUNDS ARE REQUIRED, UNDER THE TRADING FUND ORDINANCE, TO PREPARE FULL ACCRUAL-BASED ACCOUNTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH GENERALLY ACCEPTED ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES," HE SAID.

A WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW FINANCIAL REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING SERVICES LAST YEAR.

COMPRISING ACCOUNTING PROFESSION BOTH FROM WITHIN GOVERNMENT AND FROM PRIVATE SECTOR, THE WORKING GROUP CONCLUDES THAT:

- \* AS GOVERNMENT IS UNIQUE IN ITS OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES AND FINANCING, IT IS INAPPROPRIATE TO ASSUME THAT PRIVATE SECTOR FINANCIAL REPORTING MODEL MUST BE FULLY APPLICABLE TO THE GOVERNMENT;
- \* THE PAYMENTS MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT ARE LIMITED UNDER THE PUBLIC FINANCE ORDINANCE AND THE APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE, SO THE GOVERNMENT'S PUBLISHED ACCOUNTS ARE PREPARED ESSENTIALLY ON A CASH BASIS SO AS TO DEMONSTRATE AND DISCHARGE THIS STATUTORY ACCOUNTABILITY; AND
- \* THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PREPARE ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS, SUPPLEMENTARY ACCOUNTS SHOWING THE FULL COST (ON AN ACCRUAL BASIS) OF SELECTED ACTIVITIES WITH A VIEW TO FORMING A JUDGMENT ON THE MERITS (AND COSTS) OF PROVIDING SUCH FINANCIAL INFORMATION ABOUT GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES AS A WHOLE.

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#### 257 DETENTION ORDERS ISSUED FOR ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT MOTHERS

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A TOTAL OF 257 DETENTION ORDERS AFTER THE SERVING OF REMOVAL ORDERS IN RESPECT OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT MOTHERS AND YOUNG CHILDREN FROM CHINA WERE ISSUED IN 1993/94.

THE FIGURE WAS RELEASED BY THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, IN HIS WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHRISTINE LOH IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE AVERAGE PERIOD OF DETENTION WAS A FEW DAYS. THE SHORTEST PERIOD OF DETENTION WAS ONE DAY, AND THE LONGEST TWO WEEKS.

"HOWEVER, MOST ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT MOTHERS AND CHILDREN ARE RELEASED ON RECOGNISANCE," HE SAID.

IN 1993/94, 239 OF THEM WERE RELEASED ON RECOGNISANCE.

THE REMAINING 18 WERE NOT SO RELEASED, EITHER BECAUSE THERE WAS FEAR THAT THEY WOULD ABSCOND OR BECAUSE THE DATE OF THEIR REMOVAL WAS IMMINENT, MR ASPREY SAID.

HE ADDED THAT ALL 239 WHO WERE RELEASED ON RECOGNISANCE WERE ALLOWED TO STAY TEMPORARILY WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN HONG KONG.

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MOTION ON JOINT DECLARATION PASSED

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A MOTION MOVED BY THE HON MARTIN LEE URGING THE CHINESE AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS TO COMPLY STRICTLY WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE JOINT DECLARATION WAS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AFTER A TWO-HOUR DEBATE DURING THE COUNCIL SITTING TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS, MR NICHOLAS NG, REPLIED FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

A MOTION PROPOSED BY THE HON JAMES TO ON THE URBAN RENEWAL PROCESS WAS PASSED AFTER HAVING BEEN DEBATED FOR TWO HOURS. THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, GAVE THE CONCLUDING SPEECH TO THE DEBATE.

ALSO PASSED WAS A MOTION MOVED BY THE HON MRS MIRIAM LAU TO AMEND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS UNDER THE HONG KONG ROYAL INSTRUCTIONS 1917 TO 1993 IN RESPECT OF DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS.

IN ADDITION, A MOTION MOVED BY THE SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, MR MICHAEL CARTLAND, UNDER THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE WAS PASSED.

TWO BILLS, THE SECURITIES (INSIDER DEALING) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1994 AND THE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 1993, WERE PASSED DURING THE SITTING, THE LATTER WITH AMENDMENTS.

TWO OTHER BILLS, THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1994 AND THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1994, WERE INTRODUCED INTO THE COUNCIL FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS. DEBATES ON THEM WERE ADJOURNED.

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