



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1991

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GOVERNOR COMMENTS ON AIRPORT TALKS

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THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY) THAT HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT THE TALKS IN PEKING ON THE NEW AIRPORT PROJECT HAD CONCLUDED WITHOUT AGREEMENT.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER OPENING THE HONG KONG PARK, SIR DAVID SAID: "THEY'VE HAD FIVE DAYS OF VERY INTENSIVE TALKS AND A LOT OF HARD WORK DONE BY BOTH SIDES.

"FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, WHAT WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO DO IS TO GET AN AGREEMENT IN A PRACTICAL, PRAGMATIC WAY WHICH WOULD ENABLE US TO GO AHEAD WITH THE AIRPORT PROJECT," HE SAID.

"WITH A PROJECT OF THIS SORT, IF YOU'RE GOING TO DO IT AND DO IT EFFICIENTLY AND COST-EFFECTIVELY; AND IF YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE THE PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVED, YOU'VE GOT TO BE CERTAIN THAT YOU HAVE THE ABILITY AND THE DECISION-TAKING ABILITY TO GO AHEAD WITH IT, TAKE THE DECISIONS QUICKLY IN A PRACTICAL WAY," SIR DAVID SAID.

"AT THE SAME TIME, WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO MEET CHINESE CONCERNS WHERE THAT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE. SO THAT HAS BEEN OUR OBJECTIVE," HE ADDED.

THE GOVERNOR SAID HE WOULD BE BRIEFED ON THE TALKS BY THE LEADER OF THE BRITISH TEAM, MR ANDREW BURNS, AND TO CONSULT THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, ADDING: "AT THAT STAGE WE WILL START THINKING ABOUT WHERE WE GO FROM HERE.

"I DON'T WANT TO TAKE ANY SNAP DECISIONS. THESE ARE VERY IMPORTANT MATTERS. IT'S A TIME WHEN WE WANT TO THINK VERY CAREFULLY ABOUT WHAT THE TWO SIDES HAVE DISCUSSED; WHAT THE AREAS ARE WHERE WE FAILED TO REACH AGREEMENT SO FAR; WHAT THE IMPLICATIONS OF THAT ARE; AND WHERE WE GO NEXT," HE SAID.

"BUT IT REQUIRES DEEP THINKING AND COOL THINKING, RATHER THAN SUDDEN SNAP DECISIONS," SIR DAVID ADDED.

THE GOVERNOR SAID BOTH SIDES HAD PUT FORWARD PROPOSALS, BUT THEY HAD NOT MATCH UP: "WE HAVE PUT A PROPOSAL OURSELVES ON THE TABLE, WHICH WE THOUGHT WAS A VERY PRACTICAL WAY OF GETTING AHEAD WITH THIS IN A SENSIBLE MANNER."

ASKED WHY HE FELT DISAPPOINTED, SIR DAVID SAID: "BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN WORKING VERY HARD INDEED IN ORDER TO TRY TO GET AN AGREEMENT. WE'VE BEEN WORKING VERY HARD OVER A LONGISH PERIOD OF TIME. WE WANTED TO GET AGREEMENT; WE WERE MOVING IN A PRAGMATIC WAY IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THAT; AND SO FAR THAT AGREEMENT HAS ELUDED US; AND THAT I FIND DISAPPOINTING."

REPLYING TO A QUESTION ON WHETHER THERE WOULD BE ANY DELAY IN THE TENDER EXERCISE FOR THE LANTAU FIXED CROSSING WITHOUT AN AGREEMENT, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "THE AIM WAS TO PUT OUT TENDERS DURING JUNE AND IF WE CAN'T REACH AGREEMENT, THEN THAT HAS CERTAIN VERY OBVIOUS CONSEQUENCES."

/COMMENTING ON

COMMENTING ON A QUESTION ABOUT HONG KONG'S CONFIDENCE BEING AFFECTED BY THE LATEST SITUATION, SIR DAVID SAID: "I DON'T BELIEVE THAT CONFIDENCE DEPENDS ON ONE SINGLE FACTOR. WE'RE A MUCH MORE MATURE SOCIETY THAN THAT.

"OF COURSE IF YOU'RE TRYING FOR AN AGREEMENT AND THAT AGREEMENT HAS ELUDED YOU; PEOPLE, LIKE ME, FEEL DISAPPOINTED, AND THAT AFFECTS THEM BUT HONG KONG IS MUCH BIGGER THAN A FIVE-DAY DISCUSSION," HE ADDED.

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HONG KONG PARK AN EXAMPLE OF MODERNISING HONG KONG

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THE HONG KONG PARK PROJECT IS AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF THE MODERNISATION OF HONG KONG, WHICH SAW AN INCREASING NUMBER OF PUBLIC AMENITIES IN THE PAST FEW DECADES, THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

OFFICIATING AT A SPECIAL CEREMONY TO MARK THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE \$390 MILLION PARK, A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN THE URBAN COUNCIL AND THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB, SIR DAVID SAID HE TOOK GREAT ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THE PROJECT.

"IT IS ANOTHER EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF THE WAY WE ARE SUCCEEDING AS A COMMUNITY IN TRANSFORMING THE CROWDED, UTILITARIAN HONG KONG OF THE 1960'S AND 70'S INTO AN IMPRESSIVE MODERN CITY, WITH A GOOD SUPPLY OF PUBLIC AMENITIES.

"THERE IS A GREAT DEAL STILL TO BE DONE. BUT WE ARE MAKING GOOD PROGRESS," HE SAID.

SIR DAVID PAID TRIBUTE TO THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB AND THE URBAN COUNCIL FOR HAVING PLAYED KEY PARTS IN THIS PROGRESS.

"THEY HAVE COMPLETED MANY PROJECTS OF IMAGINATION AND QUALITY AND HAVE PLANS FOR MORE. I CONGRATULATE THEM," HE ADDED.

OTHER OFFICIATING GUESTS AT THE OPENING CEREMONY WERE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE URBAN COUNCIL, MR GERRY FORSGATE; THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB, MR GORDON MACWHINNIE; THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HONG KONG PARK PROJECT BOARD, SIR SIDNEY GORDON; THE CHAIRMAN OF THE URBAN COUNCIL'S RECREATION SELECT COMMITTEE, MR PETER CHAN; THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB, MAJOR-GENERAL GUY WATKINS; AND THE DIRECTOR OF URBAN SERVICES, MR JAMES SO.

THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB DONATED \$170 MILLION TOWARDS THE CONSTRUCTION COST OF THE HONG KONG PARK AS WELL AS PROVIDING PROJECT MANAGEMENT.

THE GOVERNOR NOTED THAT THE PARK OFFERED A WIDE VARIETY OF FACILITIES INCLUDING A WALK-THROUGH AVIARY, A PATH THROUGH THE ROCK FACE BEHIND A 40-FOOT WATERFALL, AN IMAGINATIVE PLAYGROUND FOR CHILDREN AND SHADED WALKS.

/"THIS PARK

"THIS PARK WILL BE A PLACE OF RECREATION, RELAXATION AND EDUCATION. IT HAS SOMETHING FOR THE OLD, THE YOUNG, THE BUSY AND THE TOURISTS," SIR DAVID ADDED.

ALSO SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB, MR GORDON MACWHINNIE, SAID THE STEWARDS OF THE JOCKEY CLUB WERE DELIGHTED TO HAVE ALLOCATED \$170 MILLION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HONG KONG PARK, WHICH TOOK A LITTLE MORE THAN TWO YEARS TO COMPLETE.

"CONSTRUCTED ON THE SITE OF THE FORMER VICTORIA BARRACKS, THE NEW HONG KONG PARK HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO BE NOT ONLY A PLACE OF RECREATION, BOTH FOR ADULTS AND FOR CHILDREN, BUT ALSO A PLACE OF NATURAL BEAUTY WITH A WIDE RANGE OF RARE BIRDS IN THE AVIARY, AND EXOTIC PLANTS IN THE SPECIALISED GREEN HOUSES.

"I AM SURE THAT, WITH ITS EASY ACCESSIBILITY, ITS IDEAL LOCATION IN THE TOWN CENTRE AND WITH ITS PLEASANT ENVIRONMENT, HONG KONG PARK WILL SOON BECOME ONE OF OUR MOST POPULAR PARKS," MR MACWHINNIE SAID.

IN HIS SPEECH OF WELCOME, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE URBAN COUNCIL, MR GERRY FORSGATE, DESCRIBED THE HONG KONG PARK AS A REFLECTION OF THE CHARACTER OF HONG KONG.

"THE MANY FEATURES WITHIN THE PARK WILL PROVIDE ENJOYMENT AND PLEASURE TO PEOPLE OF ALL AGES. I HOPE THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES BEING PLANNED WILL PROVIDE UNDERSTANDING AND A WIDER KNOWLEDGE OF THE PLANTS AND BIRDS OF THE REGION," MR FORSGATE SAID.

DURING THE CEREMONY, MR FORSGATE PRESENTED PRIZES TO THE WINNERS OF THE HONG KONG PARK PAINTING AND PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITIONS WHICH WERE ORGANISED EARLIER THIS MONTH BY THE URBAN COUNCIL IN CONJUNCTION WITH SING TAO JIH/WAN PAO AND SPONSORED BY KODAK (FAR EAST) LIMITED.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE URBAN COUNCIL ALSO EXPRESSED HIS GRATITUDE TOWARDS THE GENEROSITY OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB, THE SUPPORT OF WHICH HE HOPED WOULD EXTEND TO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS OF THE URBAN COUNCIL.

AFTER THE UNVEILING OF A COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE BY THE GOVERNOR, HONG KONG PARK WAS OFFICIALLY OPENED TO OFFER THE PUBLIC A FUN PARK IN THE HEART OF THE BUSTLING CENTRAL DISTRICT.

MEASURES TO LOCALISE DIRECTORATE IN ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS

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MEASURES PROPOSED BY A WORKING GROUP ON LOCALISATION IN THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS WERE AIMED AT DEVELOPING SELECTED LOCAL SENIOR CROWN COUNSEL FOR PROMOTION TO THE DIRECTORATE LEVEL, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, MR JEREMY MATHEWS, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

MR MATHEWS EXPLAINED THAT ONE OF THE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS WAS TO PLACE SELECTED LOCAL SENIOR CROWN COUNSEL IN SPECIALLY CREATED DIRECTORATE DEVELOPMENT POSTS TO UNDERGO A DEVELOPMENT PERIOD OF UP TO TWO YEARS IN ORDER TO GIVE THEM THE EXPERIENCE NEEDED FOR PROMOTION TO THE DIRECTORATE RANK OF DEPUTY PRINCIPAL CROWN COUNSEL.

BUT THE SCHEME WAS NOT A PRE-REQUISITE FOR PROMOTION. IT WAS AN ADDITIONAL AVENUE.

HEADED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS COMPRISE THE DIRECTORATE RANKS OF LAW OFFICER, PRINCIPAL CROWN COUNSEL AND DEPUTY PRINCIPAL CROWN COUNSEL. BELOW THE DIRECTORATE LEVEL ARE THE RANKS OF SENIOR CROWN COUNSEL AND CROWN COUNSEL.

GIVEN THE HISTORICAL FACT OF A PREPONDERANCE OF OVERSEAS OFFICERS IN THE CHAMBERS, MR MATHEWS SAID, LOCALISATION AT A QUICKER PACE WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT SPECIAL MEASURES.

"THE SCHEME IS DESIGNED TO HELP SOME LOCAL OFFICERS GAIN WIDER EXPERIENCE SO THAT THEY WILL BE IN A STRONGER POSITION TO COMPETE WITH SOME OF THE MORE EXPERIENCED OVERSEAS OFFICERS FOR PROMOTION," HE SAID.

IT WILL BE OPEN TO SENIOR CROWN COUNSEL ON THE SCHEME TO BE PROMOTED ANY TIME WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT PERIOD WHEN VACANCIES BECOME AVAILABLE.

MR MATHEWS SAID IT WAS NOT TRUE TO SUGGEST THAT SENIOR CROWN COUNSEL SELECTED FOR THE SCHEME WOULD HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE DEVELOPMENT PERIOD BEFORE THEY BECAME ELIGIBLE FOR PROMOTION.

"ALL SENIOR CROWN COUNSEL, LOCAL AND EXPATRIATE, REMAIN ELIGIBLE FOR PROMOTION. LOCAL OFFICERS, WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE ON THE SCHEME, WILL CONTINUE TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PROMOTION WHENEVER VACANCIES ARISE," HE SAID.

THE DEVELOPMENT PERIOD WILL INCLUDE A TRAINING DURING WHICH THE COUNSEL WILL BE ATTACHED TO GOVERNMENT BRANCHES.

THE PURPOSE OF ATTACHMENT IS TO BROADEN THE PERSPECTIVE OF COUNSEL AND TO DEVELOP THEIR POTENTIAL FOR HIGHER RESPONSIBILITIES. SUCH ATTACHMENTS ARE NOT NOVEL IN THE CIVIL SERVICE; PROFESSIONAL OFFICERS IN OTHER DEPARTMENTS HAVE BEEN ON ATTACHMENTS TO THE SECRETARIAT.

FOR THE MOST PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT PERIOD, THE SELECTED COUNSEL WILL ACT IN TEMPORARY POSTS OF ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL CROWN COUNSEL, WHICH IS A DIRECTORATE RANK PITCHED BETWEEN THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL CROWN COUNSEL AND SENIOR CROWN COUNSEL, TO PERFORM FUNCTIONAL DUTIES OF APPROPRIATE COMPLEXITY.

MR MATHEWS SAID RESERVATIONS HAD BEEN EXPRESSED BY SOME ON THE NEED FOR SUCH A SCHEME AS OVERSEAS COUNSEL WERE ABLE TO GAIN PROMOTION WITHOUT HAVING TO UNDERGO SPECIALLY DESIGNED TRAINING, ATTACHMENT OR GROOMING.

"THE SCHEME IS NOT A PRE-REQUISITE FOR PROMOTION. IT IS MEANT TO GIVE ADDED STRENGTH TO SELECTED LOCAL COUNSEL TO ENHANCE THEIR CHANCE OF PROMOTION. THIS IS IN LINE WITH THE POLICY TO LOCALISE," HE EXPLAINED.

"THE DEVELOPMENT POSTS SCHEME IS A NOVEL IDEA. IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT SOME LOCAL COUNSEL MAY NOT APPRECIATE THE BENEFITS THAT THE SCHEME WILL BRING.

"I HOPE THAT LOCAL COUNSEL IN CHAMBERS WILL GIVE THE SCHEME A CHANCE TO WORK. ONCE THE SCHEME STARTS WORKING, LOCAL COUNSEL WILL SEE THE SINCERITY OF THE MANAGEMENT IN LOCALISATION, WHICH IS A COMMITTED POLICY OF THE CHAMBERS. INDEED THE WHOLE DRIVE FOR GREATER LOCALISATION THROUGH SPECIAL MEASURES HAS BEEN INITIATED BY THE MOST SENIOR OFFICERS OF THESE CHAMBERS.

"A DELAY OF THE SCHEME WILL DELAY THE PROCESS OF LOCALISATION. IT WILL ALSO BE UNFORTUNATE FOR THOSE COUNSEL WHO WOULD OTHERWISE BE ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SCHEME," MR MATHEWS SAID.

THE WORKING GROUP, CHAIRED BY THE SOLICITOR GENERAL, MR FRANK STOCK, AND COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE AND FINANCE BRANCHES, HAS ALSO INCLUDED DIRECT RECRUITMENT FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR AS ONE OF ITS RECOMMENDATIONS.

"THE WORKING GROUP CERTAINLY HAS NOT EXCLUDED DIRECT RECRUITMENT AS AN OPTION. WHAT IT SAYS IS THAT IT SHOULD BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER METHODS," MR MATHEWS SAID.

THE WORKING GROUP HAS SUGGESTED THAT DIRECT RECRUITMENT OF LOCAL LAWYERS TO THE DIRECTORATE SHOULD BE USED WITH CARE, TO THE EXTENT DEMONSTRATED BY NEED, AND NOT TO THE EXCLUSION OF OTHER SPECIAL MEASURES.

IT HAS ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT THE POOL OF LOCAL SENIOR CROWN COUNSEL BE EXPANDED TO FORM A SOLID BASE FOR DIRECTORATE LOCALISATION IN THE LONG RUN.

IN ITS PREVIOUS REPORT IN 1988, THE WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDED THE INTRODUCTION OF A "DOUBLE LADDER" SCHEME FOR PROMOTION OF LOCAL OFFICERS FROM CROWN COUNSEL TO SENIOR CROWN COUNSEL AS A SPECIAL MEASURE TO QUICKEN THE PACE OF LOCALISATION IN THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS. THAT SCHEME WAS IMPLEMENTED IN 1988.

AT PRESENT, OUT OF THE 134 SENIOR CROWN COUNSEL, 58 (43.3 PER CENT) ARE LOCAL. AT THE END OF 1988, THERE WERE 99 SENIOR CROWN COUNSEL WITH 23 OF THEM (22 PER CENT) BEING LOCAL.

STI ON MFA

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THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR T.H. CHAU, SAID THIS (THURSDAY) EVENING HE WAS CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC THAT A CONSENSUS COULD BE REACHED BETWEEN IMPORTING AND EXPORTING COUNTRIES ON EXTENDING THE MULTI-FIBRE ARRANGEMENT (MFA).

SPEAKING AT A DINNER HOSTED BY KWUN TONG INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION, MR CHAU SAID THE PROPOSAL BY THE INTERNATIONAL TEXTILES AND CLOTHING BUREAU (ITCB) TO CONDITIONALLY EXTEND THE MFA FOR 17 MONTHS HAD NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY IMPORTING COUNTRIES.

"IN THE COMING WEEKS THERE WILL BE FURTHER IN-DEPTH CONSULTATIONS WITH A VIEW TO REACHING A CONSENSUS BEFORE THE EXPIRY OF THE MFA.

"ON THE BASIS OF PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES WITH MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS, IF BOTH SIDES COULD APPROACH THE QUESTION WITH FLEXIBILITY, I AM CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC THAT A CONSENSUS CAN BE REACHED," HE SAID.

MR CHAU SAID ONE CONDITION SET BY THE ITCB WAS THAT IMPORTING COUNTRIES SHOULD REFRAIN FROM INTRODUCING NEW RESTRICTIONS DURING THE EXTENSION.

"SECONDLY, THE ACCESS FOR EXPORTERS IN ANY RENEWED OR RENEGOTIATED BILATERAL AGREEMENTS MAY BE IMPROVED, BUT IN NO CASE SHOULD IT BE WORSE THAN THE EXISTING ACCESS.

"THIRDLY, THE IMPORTING COUNTRIES SHALL NOT APPLY AGGREGATE OR GROUP LIMITS AND REGIONAL QUOTAS DURING THE EXTENDED PERIOD," HE SAID.

MR CHAU SAID THE EARLIER THE QUESTION OF MFA EXTENSION WAS RESOLVED, THE SOONER WE COULD CONCENTRATE OUR EFFORTS ON OUR ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE UNDER THE URUGUAY ROUND TO RETURN THE TEXTILES AND CLOTHING SECTOR TO THE DISCIPLINES OF THE GATT.

"HONG KONG SUPPORTS THE CONCLUSION OF THE URUGUAY ROUND BY THE END OF THIS YEAR AND EARLY IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS RESULTS," HE SAID.

HE SAID A URUGUAY ROUND AGREEMENT ON TEXTILES AND CLOTHING WOULD SUPERSEDE THE BRIDGING ARRANGEMENT, AND THE WORLD TEXTILE AND CLOTHING INDUSTRY AND TRADE COMMUNITY WOULD HAVE TO FACE THE NEW CHALLENGES THEY SET UPON THEMSELVES.

"WITH THEIR INGENUITY AND ADAPTABILITY, I AM VERY CONFIDENT THAT OUR TEXTILES AND CLOTHING SECTOR WILL TAKE A FULL GRASP OF THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FREE COMPETITION PRESENTED BY THE NEW AGREEMENT AND MAINTAIN AND DEVELOP HONG KONG'S LEADING POSITION IN WORLD TRADE IN TEXTILES," HE SAID.

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NEW HK/FINLAND TEXTILES AGREEMENT REACHED

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HONG KONG AND FINLAND HAVE JUST CONCLUDED A TWO-YEAR TEXTILES AGREEMENT TO SUCCEED THE CURRENT ONE WHICH EXPIRES ON DECEMBER 31 THIS YEAR.

"THE NEW AGREEMENT, COVERING FOUR QUOTA CATEGORIES AND FOUR EXPORT AUTHORISATION (EA) ITEMS, REPRESENTS AN IMPROVEMENT OVER THE EXISTING ONE IN TERMS OF BOTH PRODUCT COVERAGE AND GROWTH RATES," THE ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF TRADE, MR STUART HARBINSON, SAID.

UNDER THE NEW BILATERAL AGREEMENT, EXISTING QUOTA CATEGORIES OF WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' KNITTED BRIEFS OF COTTON AND MAN-MADE FIBRES AND BRASSIERES OF COTTON AND MAN-MADE FIBRES WILL BE DE-RESTRAINED AND PUT UNDER EA SURVEILLANCE.

ONE EXISTING EA ITEM (SKIRTS AND DIVIDED SKIRTS) WILL ALSO BE REMOVED FROM THE LIST UNDER EA.

THERE WILL BE A GENERAL IMPROVEMENT IN THE ANNUAL GROWTH RATES OF THE QUOTA CATEGORIES UNDER RESTRAINT.

THE NEW AGREEMENT WAS CONCLUDED AFTER A TWO-AND-A-HALF DAY CONSULTATION IN HONG KONG.

THE HONG KONG DELEGATION WAS LED BY MR HARBINSON AND THE FINNISH DELEGATION WAS LED BY AMBASSADOR ERIK HAGFORS, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS.

MR HARBINSON SAID HE WAS PLEASED AN AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED WITH FINLAND.

"THE CONCLUSION OF A BILATERAL AGREEMENT ON BETTER TERMS FOR HONG KONG WILL SET AN ENCOURAGING PRECEDENT FOR HONG KONG'S CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER IMPORTING COUNTRIES WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE LATER THIS YEAR," HE SAID.

DETAILS OF THE NEW HONG KONG/FINLAND TEXTILES AGREEMENT WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN A NOTICE TO EXPORTERS ISSUED BY THE TRADE DEPARTMENT.

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GOVT IMPARTIALITY IN ELECTION VITAL

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THE GOVERNMENT MUST BE IMPARTIAL AND SEEN TO BE IMPARTIAL IN DEALING WITH ALL POLITICAL GROUPS AND CANDIDATES SEEKING ELECTION, THE SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SUEN, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

MR SUEN SAID IN THE HONG KONG CONTEXT, GOVERNMENT IMPARTIALITY WAS ALSO A MATTER OF NECESSITY. ANY COMPROMISE IN THIS REGARD WOULD POSE A SERIOUS THREAT ON THE GOVERNMENT'S CREDIBILITY AS A NON-PARTISAN ADMINISTRATION.

"THIS WOULD UNDERMINE THE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS AND, IN TURN, THE LEGITIMACY OF THE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES TO THE DIFFERENT TIERS OF OUR REPRESENTATIVE SYSTEM," MR SUEN SAID, WHEN ADDRESSING THE INSTALLATION CEREMONY OF THE 1991 OFFICE BEARERS OF THE ZONTA CLUB OF KOWLOON.

HE SAID ANY UNWARRANTED INVOLVEMENT ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS WOULD ONLY PUT GOVERNMENT IMPARTIALITY AT RISK.

HE NOTED THAT THERE WERE CONTRARY VIEWS BEING EXPRESSED FROM TIME TO TIME, SUCH AS THE SUGGESTION THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD REGULATE CERTAIN ACTIVITIES OF POLITICAL GROUPS BY IMPOSING SOME KIND OF CONTROL ON CANDIDATES' PLEDGES AND THE SUBSTANCE AND STYLE OF THEIR CAMPAIGN PLATFORM TO ENSURE THAT THE ELECTORATE WOULD NOT BE MISLED BY EMPTY OR IRRELEVANT PROMISES.

"IF WE FOLLOW THIS LINE OF ARGUMENT TO ITS LOGICAL CONCLUSION, WE WILL REALISE THAT IT IS A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SUGGESTION WHICH COULD SET A MOST UNDESIRABLE PRECEDENT FOR UNNECESSARY GOVERNMENTAL INTERVENTION," HE SAID.

"THE ISSUE IN QUESTION IS REALLY WHETHER WE BELIEVE THAT THE ULTIMATE JUDGE OF POLITICAL GROUPS AND ELECTION CANDIDATES IS THE ELECTORATE, WHO EXERCISES THEIR COLLECTIVE JUDGEMENT THROUGH THE BALLOT BOX.

"OR ARE WE TO SAY THAT WE HARBOUR DOUBTS ABOUT THE DISCERNING POWER AND COMMON SENSE OF THE ORDINARY VOTER TO THE EXTENT THAT IT IS DEEMED APPROPRIATE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO PASS JUDGEMENT ON WHAT POLITICAL GROUPS AND CANDIDATES SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT DO OR SAY TO THE ELECTORATE."

MR SUEN SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT IN THE POLITICAL MATURITY OF THE ELECTORATE AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE BALLOT BOX.

ON THE QUESTION OF WHAT ROLE THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PLAY IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS, HE SAID THAT FIRST AND FOREMOST, THE GOVERNMENT HAD A RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT ELECTIONS TO THE VARIOUS LEVELS OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT WERE OPEN, FREE AND FAIR.

"BY THIS I MEAN ELECTIONS WHICH EVERYONE IS FREE TO TAKE PART WITHOUT ANY FEAR OF CONSEQUENCES, AND WHICH ARE SAFEGUARDED FROM FRAUD, MANIPULATION AND CORRUPTION."

HE SAID SUCH ELECTIONS WERE VITAL TO THE INTEGRITY OF ANY SYSTEM OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

"IN THIS REGARD, I AM VERY PROUD, AND I HOPE YOU SHARE MY PRIDE, THAT HONG KONG'S RECORD OF CLEAN AND HONEST ELECTIONS COMPARES FAVOURABLY WITH THOSE OF OTHER DEVELOPED DEMOCRACIES," HE SAID.

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40 RECEIVE GOOD CITIZEN AWARD

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THE CALL FOR PUBLIC CO-OPERATION IN PREVENTING, REPORTING AND PROVING CRIME IS GETTING POSITIVE RESPONSE AS EXEMPLIFIED BY AN IMPRESSIVE PARADE OF GOOD CITIZENS AT A PRESENTATION CEREMONY TODAY (THURSDAY).

FORTY PUBLIC-SPIRITED CITIZENS WERE AWARDED TODAY FOR BRAVERY AND INITIATIVE DISPLAYED IN A WIDE RANGE OF CASES INCLUDING THEFT, ROBBERY, BURGLARY AND EXTORTION.

THEIR PARTICIPATION VARIED FROM TAKING PART IN THE PURSUIT OF A CULPRIT, INFORMING THE POLICE OF THE CRIME AND GIVING EVIDENCE IN COURT.

SPEAKING AT TODAY'S PRESENTATION, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, COMMENDED THE AWARDEES FOR READILY PERFORMING THEIR CIVIC DUTIES AT THE RIGHT TIME, THEREBY SETTING GOOD EXAMPLES FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW.

WITH AN AIM TO PROMOTE PUBLIC CO-OPERATION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME, THE GOOD CITIZEN AWARD SCHEME WAS INTRODUCED IN 1973. IT IS JOINTLY ADMINISTERED BY THE ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE AND THE HONG KONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. SO FAR, OVER 2,100 INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN PRESENTED WITH THE COVETED AWARD.

AMONG THE 40 AWARDEES HONOURED TODAY, SEVEN ARE FEMALE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND TWO ARE EXPATRIATES. THE ELDEST IS A 59-YEAR-OLD SECURITY GUARD AND THE YOUNGEST A 12-YEAR-OLD STUDENT.

THE AWARDEES ARE FROM ALL PROFESSIONS - STUDENT, HOUSEWIFE, DRIVER, WORKER, SALESMAN, SECURITY GUARD, CLERK, BANK STAFF AND PIANO TEACHER.

COMMENTING ON THE DIVERSITY IN THE BACKGROUND OF THE AWARDEES, MRS WONG SAID PARTICIPATION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME SHOULD NOT BE INFLUENCED BY ONE'S AGE, SEX OR NATIONALITY.

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AT THE CEREMONY, EACH AWARDEE WAS PRESENTED A CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION JOINTLY SIGNED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HONG KONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, A SOUVENIR AND A CASH AWARD RANGING FROM \$3,000 TO \$6,000.

ALSO OFFICIATING AT TODAY'S CEREMONY WERE THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE HONG KONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, MR W.S. CHAN, AND THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF POLICE, SUPPORT, MR LAU TO-YEE.

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AMENDMENT BILL ON LEGCO OATHS TO BE GAZETTED

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AN AMENDMENT BILL CONCERNING THE OATHS OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

AT PRESENT, SECTION 19 OF THE OATHS AND DECLARATIONS ORDINANCE PROVIDES THAT THE OATHS OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS SHALL BE TENDERED BY THE GOVERNOR.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID CLAUSE 2 OF THE OATHS AND DECLARATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991 SOUGHT TO AMEND THIS SECTION SO THAT THE OATHS WOULD BE TENDERED BY THE PRESIDENT OR DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

"THIS AMENDMENT ARISES FROM THE NEED TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR AND HIS ROLE AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND ALSO THE NEED TO ESTABLISH A SEPARATE IDENTITY FOR THE LATTER AS THE 1995 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WILL HAVE AN ELECTED PRESIDENT," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

CLAUSE 3 OF THE BILL SEEKS TO AMEND SECTION 22 OF THE ORDINANCE WHICH PROVIDES THAT A MEMBER WHO HAS ALREADY TAKEN THE OATH CANNOT BE REQUIRED TO TAKE IT AGAIN.

THE AMENDMENT WOULD GIVE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THE FLEXIBILITY AND POWER TO REQUIRE, THROUGH ITS STANDING ORDERS, ITS MEMBERS TO TAKE THEIR OATHS AFRESH AFTER A GENERAL ELECTION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE BILL IS EXPECTED TO BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON JUNE 5.

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THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1991

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CONTRACT FOR IMPROVING ACCESS ROAD TO NGONG PING SIGNED
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MAJOR ROAD IMPROVEMENT WORKS ON THE ACCESS ROAD TO NGONG PING ON LANTAU ISLAND WILL START LATER THIS MONTH FOLLOWING THE AWARD OF A \$66 MILLION CONTRACT BY THE HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT.

AT THE CONTRACT SIGNING CEREMONY TODAY (THURSDAY), THE DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS, MR KWEI SEE-KAN, SAID THE CONTRACT COVERED THE WIDENING AND REALIGNMENT OF THE EXISTING 2.6-KILOMETRE LONG ACCESS ROAD FROM THE JUNCTION BETWEEN SHAM WAT ROAD AND KEUNG SHAN ROAD TO THE PO LIN MONASTERY AT NGONG PING.

"SOME SECTIONS OF THE ACCESS ROAD TO NGONG PING ARE CURRENTLY THREE-METRE WIDE WITH NO FOOTWAYS. THE REMAINING SECTIONS ARE SIX-METRE WIDE.

"THE WHOLE ACCESS ROAD WILL BE WIDENED TO A 7.3-METRE WIDE CARRIAGEWAY WITH ASSOCIATED FOOTWAYS," MR KWEI SAID.

THE CONTRACT ALSO INCLUDES CONSTRUCTION OF A ROAD BRIDGE, BUS BAYS, A CARPARK AND LANDSCAPING WORKS.

MR KWEI SAID ALL THE WORKS COVERED BY THE CONTRACT SHOULD NORMALLY TAKE 23 MONTHS TO COMPLETE.

HOWEVER, IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE ROAD CAPACITY AND SAFETY OF THE EXISTING ACCESS ROAD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, THE DEPARTMENT HAD MADE ARRANGEMENTS SO THAT IMPROVEMENT TO THREE SECTIONS OF THE EXISTING ACCESS ROAD WOULD BE COMPLETED IN ONLY 18 MONTHS, HE SAID.

"THESE SECTIONS WITH A TOTAL LENGTH OF 1.2 KILOMETRES ARE EITHER ONLY THREE-METRE WIDE OR HAVE UNSATISFACTORY ALIGNMENT," MR KWEI SAID.

AS FOR THE REMAINING 1.4-KILOMETRE LONG, SIX-METRE WIDE SECTIONS OF THE ACCESS ROAD, MR KWEI SAID IMPROVEMENT WORKS WOULD BE COMPLETED FIVE MONTHS LATER, IN APRIL 1993.

THE DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS SAID THE IMPROVEMENT WORKS WOULD START AT THE END OF THIS MONTH, ADDING THAT DURING CONSTRUCTION, TWO WAY TRAFFIC IN THE EXISTING ACCESS ROAD WOULD BE MAINTAINED.

THE CONTRACT WAS AWARDED TO CHUN WO CONSTRUCTION & ENGINEERING CO. LTD.

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THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1991

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SWD OUT-REACHING TEAMS SCORE TRIPLE SUCCESS
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AFTER FOUR YEARS OF SUSTAINED EFFORTS, A SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT (SWD) OUT-REACHING TEAM FINALLY SUCCEEDED IN CONVINCING AN 80-YEAR-OLD WOMAN AND HER 60-YEAR-OLD SON TO GIVE UP STREET-SLEEPING.

AH HO AND HER SON ARE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS. THEY USED TO LIVE IN A SIDE STREET IN CENTRAL AND DESPITE REPEATED OFFERS OF COMPASSIONATE REHOUSING AND OTHER SERVICES, THE PAIR HAD REMAINED UNMOVED.

IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS, SWD WORKERS VISITED THEM REGULARLY AND TIME AND AGAIN OFFERED THEM ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION. ONLY ON TWO OCCASIONS HAD THE PAIR AGREED TO GIVE UP STREET-SLEEPING, BUT THEY FAILED TO TURN UP FOR THE APPOINTMENTS TO COMPLETE THE FORMALITIES FOR MOVING INTO A CUBICLE IN CENTRAL OR A TEMPORARY HOUSING AREA OF THEIR CHOICE.

HOWEVER, SWD STAFF, CONVINCED THAT THE PAIR WOULD CHANGE THEIR MIND ONE DAY, NEVER WAVERED IN THEIR EFFORTS.

NOW, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE AND HOUSING DEPARTMENTS, AH HO AND HER SON HAVE STARTED A NEW LIFE IN A PUBLIC HOUSING UNIT ON HONG KONG ISLAND.

THEY WERE ALSO GIVEN A REMOVAL ALLOWANCE OF \$3,000 TO ASSIST THEM IN SETTING UP THEIR NEW HOME. SWD STAFF WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THEIR WELFARE TO SEE IF ANY FURTHER ASSISTANCE NEED BE RENDERED.

MEANWHILE, ANOTHER SWD OUT-REACHING TEAM ALSO SUCCESSFULLY CONVINCED A 60-YEAR-OLD STREET SLEEPER ON THE WALKWAY OF THE GENERAL POST OFFICE IN CENTRAL TO ACCEPT COMPASSIONATE REHOUSING.

THIS ELDERLY MAN HAS BEEN ADAMANT ON STREET-SLEEPING ON THE WALKWAY FOR YEARS. A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH WAS POSSIBLE RECENTLY AS HIS HEALTH BEGAN TO DETERIORATE.

ON THE ADVICE OF SWD STAFF, HE AGREED TO BE ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL. DURING THE TREATMENT PERIOD, SWD STAFF VISITED HIM AND AGAIN SUGGESTED COMPASSIONATE REHOUSING FOR HIM. THE RESPONSE WAS POSITIVE THIS TIME.

ARRANGEMENTS WERE DULY MADE AND THE MAN IS NOW AWAITING ALLOCATION OF A PUBLIC HOUSING UNIT.

IN ANOTHER CASE, A CLIENT OF THE EAST KOWLOON REGIONAL OUT-REACHING TEAM WHO HAD BEEN A STREET SLEEPER FOR 24 YEARS, ALSO QUITTED STREET-SLEEPING.

AH KONG, 55, HAS BEEN KNOWN TO SWD SINCE THE LATE 60'S. OVER THE YEARS HE HAS BEEN GIVEN MONETARY AND EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCES AS WELL AS TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION.

/HOWEVER, DESPITE

HOWEVER, DESPITE THE TEAM'S REPEATED PERSUASION AH KONG STILL PREFERRED TO STAY ON THE STREETS. SWD STAFF CONTINUED TO CLOSELY MONITOR HIS CASE TO ENSURE HIS WELFARE WAS TAKEN CARE OF.

IN EARLY JANUARY THIS YEAR AH KONG INDICATED HIS WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT COMPASSIONATE REHOUSING AND WAS LATER ALLOCATED A PUBLIC HOUSING UNIT. HE WAS ALSO GIVEN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND ESCORT SERVICES FOR SETTING UP HIS NEW HOME LAST MONTH.

ACCORDING TO SWD STATISTICS, THE MAJORITY OF THE 990-ODD RECORDED STREET SLEEPERS HAD REJECTED VARIOUS OFFERS OF ASSISTANCE FROM THE DEPARTMENT.

IN THE 12-MONTH PERIOD ENDING MARCH, ABOUT 1,400 OFFERS OF ACCOMMODATION IN TEMPORARY AND EMERGENCY SHELTERS, 800 OFFERS OF ACCOMMODATION IN TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS, 100 COMPASSIONATE REHOUSING OFFERS AND A SIMILAR NUMBER OF PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION OFFERS HAD BEEN REJECTED BY STREET SLEEPERS.

DESPITE THE HIGH REJECTION RATE, AN SWD SPOKESMAN SAID THIS WOULD NOT SWAY THE DEPARTMENT'S DETERMINATION TO HELP THE STREET SLEEPERS.

"JUST A FEW SUCCESSFUL CASES WOULD MEAN THAT OUR EFFORTS HAVE BEEN WORTHWHILE," HE SAID.

TO OBTAIN FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE SITUATION OF STREET SLEEPERS, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR M.D. CARTLAND, RECENTLY VISITED A NUMBER OF HOSTELS OPERATED BY THE STREET SLEEPERS SOCIETY.

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TWENTY-ONE PASSED LICENTIATE EXAMINATION

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THE LICENTIATE COMMITTEE OF THE MEDICAL COUNCIL OF HONG KONG ANNOUNCED TODAY (THURSDAY) THAT TWENTY-ONE CANDIDATES HAVE PASSED THE PART II (ENGLISH FOR PROFESSIONAL USE PAPER) OF THE LICENTIATE EXAMINATION FOR UNREGISTRABLE DOCTORS THIS YEAR.

THE PART II EXAMINATION HAS BEEN HELD TWICE THIS YEAR, IN MARCH AND MAY, GIVING CANDIDATES A CHOICE OF EXAMINATION DATES AND ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THOSE WHO FAILED IN THE FIRST EXAMINATION TO TAKE THIS PART OF THE EXAMINATION AGAIN IN THE SAME YEAR.

OF THE 21 SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES, 18 PASSED THE EXAMINATION IN MARCH AND THREE IN MAY.

ALL THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED THE PART II EXAMINATION THIS YEAR ARE ELIGIBLE TO TAKE THE PART III EXAMINATION SCHEDULED FOR JULY THIS YEAR.

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THE PART III LICENTIATE EXAMINATION IS AN ORAL EXAMINATION ON CANDIDATES' ABILITY TO APPLY PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE TO CLINICAL PROBLEMS.

EACH CANDIDATE WILL BE GIVEN AN ORAL EXAMINATION IN EACH OF THE THREE DISCIPLINES OF MEDICINE, SURGERY AND OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY.

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RATEPAYERS REMINDED ON MAY 31 DEADLINE FOR LODGING OBJECTIONS
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THE RATING AND VALUATION DEPARTMENT (RVD) TODAY (THURSDAY) REMINDED RATEPAYERS THAT THOSE WISHING TO OBJECT TO THE NEW RATEABLE VALUE FOR THE YEAR COMMENCING APRIL 1, 1991 MUST SERVE A PROPOSAL ON THE COMMISSIONER OF RATING AND VALUATION ON OR BEFORE FRIDAY, MAY 31.

A PROPOSAL SERVED AFTER MAY 31 WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED, A DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE PROPOSAL SHOULD BE MADE ON THE SPECIFIED FORM (R. 20A) WHICH IS AVAILABLE FROM THE RVD OR ANY DISTRICT OFFICE.

IT MUST EITHER BE DELIVERED BY HAND TO THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFICE AT HENNESSY CENTRE, 17TH FLOOR, 500 HENNESSY ROAD, CAUSEWAY BAY OR SENT BY POST TO ARRIVE ON OR BEFORE MAY 31.

SERVICE BY FACSIMILE MACHINE IS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE MODE OF SERVICE UNDER THE RATING ORDINANCE.

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT UP TO YESTERDAY, 16,500 PROPOSALS HAD BEEN RECEIVED. ALL PROPOSALS WILL BE CONSIDERED CAREFULLY BY SENIOR PROFESSIONAL STAFF OF THE DEPARTMENT AND RATEPAYERS WILL BE NOTIFIED OF THE COMMISSIONER'S DECISION WITHIN ABOUT SIX MONTHS, HE SAID.

ENQUIRIES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION MAY BE DIRECTED TO RVD ON TEL. 805 7666.

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THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1991

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VILLAGE HOUSES IN SAI KUNG DECLARED DANGEROUS
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THE BUILDING AUTHORITY HAS DECLARED THE BUILDING AT 65 SAI KUNG ROAD, NEW TERRITORIES TO BE DANGEROUS AND THE ADJOINING MAIN BUILDING AT NO. 66, LIABLE TO BECOME DANGEROUS.

IN A STATEMENT TODAY (THURSDAY), THE PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT BUILDING SURVEYOR SAID THE TWO-STORY VILLAGE TYPE BUILDINGS ARE GENERALLY CONSTRUCTED OF LOADBEARING MASONRY WALLS WITH TIMBER FLOORS AND ROOFS.

HOWEVER, A PORTION OF THE FIRST FLOOR AT THE REAR OF THE BUILDING AT NO. 65 IS OF REINFORCED CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION.

SUBSEQUENT TO RECEIPT OF A COMPLAINT IN NOVEMBER LAST YEAR, IT WAS FOUND DURING AN INSPECTION THAT THE BUILDING WAS GENERALLY IN A DILAPIDATED CONDITION WITH SEVERE SPALLING TO THE REINFORCED CONCRETE SLAB EXPOSING DETERIORATED REINFORCEMENT AND DEFLECTION OF THE REINFORCED CONCRETE BEAM OVER THE MAIN ENTRANCE.

FURTHERMORE, THERE WERE NUMEROUS VERTICAL CRACKS IN THE LOADBEARING WALLS AND DEFECTIVE FLOOR AND ROOF JOISTS AND AREAS OF BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PLASTER/RENDERING WERE EITHER LOOSE OR HAD ALREADY FALLEN AWAY TO EXPOSE THE MASONRY WALLS.

THE OWNER OF THE BUILDING WAS ADVISED IN WRITING IN JANUARY THIS YEAR TO UNDERTAKE SUFFICIENT REPAIRS TO THE IDENTIFIED DEFECTS TO RENDER THE BUILDING SAFE.

HOWEVER, FURTHER INSPECTIONS IN APRIL AND EARLY MAY INDICATED THAT NO REPAIRS HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT AND THE BUILDING HAD FURTHER DETERIORATED TO THE EXTENT THAT IT WAS CONSIDERED TO BE DANGEROUS AND SHOULD BE CLOSED AND DEMOLISHED.

IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT THE BUILDING AT 66 SAI KUNG ROAD WHICH SHARES A COMMON PARTY-WALL WITH NO. 65, ALTHOUGH NOT IN SUCH AN ADVANCED STATE OF DILAPIDATION AS THE ADJOINING BUILDING, HAS NUMEROUS CRACKS IN ITS LOADBEARING WALLS ESPECIALLY AROUND UPPER FLOOR WINDOW OPENINGS IN THE FRONT MAIN WALL AND THE PARTY-WALL WITH NO. 65.

IT WAS FELT THAT THE MAIN BUILDING AT NO. 66 COULD NOT SAFELY WITHSTAND THE DEMOLITION OF NO. 65 AND THUS IT TOO SHOULD BE CLOSED AND DEMOLISHED AS BEING LIABLE TO BECOME DANGEROUS.

NOTICES OF INTENTION TO APPLY FOR CLOSURE ORDERS FROM THE HONG KONG DISTRICT COURT ON JUNE 6 WERE POSTED ON THE TWO BUILDINGS TODAY.

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UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS TO BE CLOSED

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THE BUILDING AUTHORITY IS SEEKING TO CLOSE THE UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS AT 8D MONG KOK ROAD/324 PORTLAND STREET IN MONG KOK, SO THAT THEY CAN BE DEMOLISHED WITHOUT DANGER TO THE OCCUPIERS AND THE PUBLIC.

THE UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURES ARE LOCATED AT THE FIFTH FLOOR, FLATS A TO F OF FRONT PORTION, 8D MONG KOK ROAD/324 PORTLAND STREET.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO APPLY FOR A CLOSURE ORDER UNDER THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE FROM THE HONG KONG DISTRICT COURT ON JULY 23 WAS POSTED ON THE PREMISES TODAY (THURSDAY).

DEMOLITION WORK IS EXPECTED TO START ONCE THE CLOSURE ORDER IS ISSUED.

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GRADING OF BEACH WATER QUALITY

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

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

THE GRADING WILL BE ANNOUNCED BIWEEKLY DURING THE BATHING SEASON, TO COINCIDE WITH THE FREQUENCY AT WHICH BEACH WATERS ARE USUALLY SAMPLED.

THE GRADING IS BASED ON THE MOST RECENT E. COLI DATA OBTAINED BY THE EPD IN ITS ROUTINE MONITORING PROGRAMME. AS WITH LAST YEAR, THE GRADING ALSO INCLUDES AN ESTIMATE OF THE RISK OF SUFFERING SOME MINOR SKIN OR GASTROINTESTINAL COMPLAINTS AS A RESULT OF SWIMMING AT A BEACH WHICH HAS SOME DEGREE OF POLLUTION.

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

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

/HOWEVER, THE

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

"BEACHES WITH HIGHLY DEVELOPED HINTERLANDS ARE LIKELY TO BE MORE POLLUTED THAN THE GRADES SUGGEST DURING AND AFTER HEAVY RAIN," AN EPD SPOKESMAN SAID.

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

THE SYSTEM FOR GRADING BEACH WATER QUALITY IS AS FOLLOWS:

GRADE "1" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS GOOD. THE E. COLI COUNT IS NO MORE THAN 24 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED RISK OF MINOR ILLNESS TO SWIMMERS IS UNDETECTABLE.

GRADE "2" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS FAIR. THE E. COLI COUNT IS NO MORE THAN 180 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED HEALTH RISK IS NO MORE THAN 10 CASES OF MINOR ILLNESS PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.

GRADE "3" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS ACCEPTABLE. THE E. COLI COUNT IS NO MORE THAN 610 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED HEALTH RISK IS NO MORE THAN 15 CASES OF MINOR ILLNESS PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.

GRADE "4" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS POOR. THE E. COLI COUNT IS MORE THAN 610 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED HEALTH RISK IS MORE THAN 15 CASES OF MINOR ILLNESS PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.

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

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

SIMILARLY, THE REOPENING OF A CLOSED BEACH WOULD ONLY BE CONSIDERED IF A "3" GRADE OR BETTER WERE CONSISTENTLY OBTAINED.

AT PRESENT, TWO BATHING BEACHES, NAMELY CASTLE PEAK AND OLD CAFETERIA, HAVE BEEN DECLARED UNSUITABLE FOR SWIMMING PURPOSES, BASED ON THE WATER QUALITY DURING PAST SEASONS.

THEY ARE POLLUTED BY FAECAL WASTES AND FAIL TO ACHIEVE CONSISTENTLY THE HONG KONG STANDARDS. THE PUBLIC ARE ADVISED NOT TO SWIM IN THE WATER AT THESE TWO BEACHES.

IN ADDITION, ROCKY BAY BEACH HAS BEEN CLOSED FOR SWIMMING PURPOSES BY THE URBAN COUNCIL. THESE THREE BEACHES ARE IDENTIFIED BY AN "X" IN THE FOLLOWING LIST.

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

BEACH -----	PREVIOUS GRADING ----- (AS AT 9.5.91)	PRESENT GRADING ----- (AS AT 23.5.91)
HONG KONG SOUTH -----		
BIG WAVE BAY	2	2
CHUNG HOM KOK	1	1
DEEP WATER BAY	1	1
HAIRPIN	1	2
MIDDLE BAY	1	1
REPULSE BAY	1	1
SHEK O	2	2
SOUTH BAY	1	1
ST STEPHEN'S	1	1
TURTLE COVE	1	1
STANLEY MAIN	2	2
ROCKY BAY	X	X
TO TEI WAN*	1	1
TUEN MUN DISTRICT -----		
OLD CAFETERIA	X	X
NEW CAFETERIA	2	2
CASTLE PEAK	X	X
KADOORIE	2	2
BUTTERFLY	2	2
SAI KUNG DISTRICT -----		
CAMPERS	1	1
CLEAR WATER BAY 1ST BEACH	1	1
CLEAR WATER BAY 2ND BEACH	1	1
HAP MUN BAY	1	1
KIU TSUI	1	1
PAK SHA CHAU	1	1
SILVERSTRAND	3	2
TRIO (HEBE HAVEN)	1	1
ISLANDS DISTRICT -----		
CHEUNG SHA UPPER	1	1
CHEUNG SHA LOWER	2	2
DISCOVERY BAY*	1	1
HUNG SHING YEH	1	1
KWUN YAM WAN	1	1
TONG FUK	1	1
LO SO SHING	1	1
PUI O	1	2
SILVERMINE BAY	2	3
TUNG WAN, CHEUNG CHAU	2	2
TUNG O*	1	1

TSUEN WAN DISTRICT

ANGLERS'	3	3
APPROACH	3	3
CASAM	2	2
GEMINI	2	2
HOI MEI WAN	2	2
LIDO	2	2
TING KAU	3	3
TUNG WAN, MA WAN	2	1

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

THE FOLLOWING BEACHES HAVE CHANGED GRADING ON THIS OCCASION:

TUNG WAN ON MA WAN, FROM "2" TO "1"; SILVERSTRAND, FROM "3" TO "2"; HAIRPIN AND PUI O, FROM "1" TO "2"; SILVERMINE BAY, FROM "2" TO "3".

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

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT THE PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OFFICER (WATER POLICY) OF THE EPD, MR P.R. HOLMES, ON TEL. 835 1234.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
 MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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HKEF

	DATE	\$ MILLION
	----	-----
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT ON	22.5.91	480
EFFECT OF FORWARDS TO BE SETTLED ON	23.5.91	-138
EFFECT OF OPERATIONS THIS MORNING		+138
EFFECT OF OPERATIONS THIS AFTERNOON		NEUTRAL
TRADE WEIGHTED INDEX 112.7 *+0.4*	23.5.91	

/HONG KONG

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
91-DAY EXCHANGE FUND BILLS

HKEI

ISSUE NUMBER	MATURING ON	OUTSTANDING \$ MILLION	
-----	-----	-----	-----
Q115	10.7.91	380	+100
Q116	17.7.91	350	+130
Q117	24.7.91	388.5	+91.5
Q118	31.7.91	450	+30
Q119	7.8.91	405	+75
Q120	14.8.91	360	+120
Q121	21.8.91	350	+130
Q109	29.5.91	810	-330
Q110	5.6.91	450	+30
Q111	12.6.91	444	+36
Q112	19.6.91	560	-80
Q113	26.6.91	440	+40
Q114	3.7.91	460	+20

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
182-DAY EXCHANGE FUND BILLS

HKEJ

ISSUE NUMBER	MATURING ON	OUTSTANDING \$ MILLION	
-----	-----	-----	-----
H164	13.11.91	90	+170
H003	29.5.91	210	+50
H004	12.6.91	250	+10
H005	26.6.91	230	+30
H101	10.7.91	153	+107
H156	24.7.91	180	+80
H157	7.8.91	169.5	+90.5
H158	21.8.91	160	+100
H159	4.9.91	150	+110
H160	18.9.91	190	+70
H161	2.10.91	140	+120
H162	17.10.91	114	+146
H163	30.10.91	106	+154

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
364-DAY EXCHANGE FUND BILLS

HKEK

ISSUE NUMBER	MATURING ON	OUTSTANDING \$ MILLION	
-----	-----	-----	-----
Y187	26.2.92	230	+30
Y188	25.3.92	180	+80
Y189	22.4.92	190	+70
Y190	20.5.92	200	+60

AVERAGE DAILY TRANSFER FOR WEEK ENDING 17.5.91 WAS 2,410 MN