



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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GOVT MODERNISES PENSION PROVISIONS

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THE GOVERNMENT IS TO MODERNISE PENSION SCHEMES FOR CIVIL SERVANTS TO MEET PRESENT DAY NEEDS, THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE PENSIONS MODIFICATION BILL 1992 AND THE PENSIONS ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS (MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS) BILL 1992, MR WIGGHAM SAID THE BILLS AIMED TO MODERNISE THE DEPENDANT PENSIONS AND SERVICE PENSIONS SCHEMES FOR CIVIL SERVANTS TO MEET PRESENT DAY NEEDS AND TO REMOVE ANOMALIES AND DISCRIMINATORY PROVISIONS.

THE PENSIONS MODIFICATION BILL 1992 WILL MAKE MEMBERSHIP OF THE WIDOWS AND ORPHANS PENSION SCHEME AND THE WIDOWS' AND CHILDREN'S PENSIONS SCHEME VOLUNTARY ON AN APPOINTED DAY.

"EXISTING MEMBERS MAY ELECT TO CEASE TO MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS WITHIN SIX MONTHS FROM THE APPOINTED DAY," MR WIGGHAM SAID.

"UNMARRIED OFFICERS WILL RECEIVE A REFUND OF THEIR PAST CONTRIBUTIONS WITH INTEREST WHEN THEY CEASE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE SCHEME.

"MARRIED OFFICERS WILL HAVE THEIR ACCRUED BENEFITS PRESERVED, AND THEIR DEPENDANTS WILL CONTINUE TO ENJOY A CONTINGENT DEPENDANT PENSION FROZEN AT THE LEVEL WHEN THEY LEAVE THE SCHEME."

OTHER PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN THE BILL INCLUDE:

- \* TO EXTEND THE VOLUNTARY WIDOWS' AND CHILDREN'S PENSIONS SCHEME TO FEMALE OFFICERS, MODEL SCALE I STAFF AND CERTAIN JUNIOR DISCIPLINED SERVICES OFFICERS;
- \* TO STANDARDISE THE PENSIONABLE AGE LIMIT FOR CHILDREN AT 18, IRRESPECTIVE OF SEX;
- \* TO REPEAL THE PROVISION MAKING A HUSBAND'S ENTITLEMENT TO A DEPENDANT PENSION SUBJECT TO FINANCIAL DEPENDENCY ON HIS WIFE; AND
- \* TO PROVIDE PENSION RIGHTS FOR ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN UNDER THE DEPENDANT PENSION AND SERVICE PENSION SCHEMES.

MR WIGGHAM SAID ANOTHER MAJOR CHANGE CONTAINED IN THE PENSIONS MODIFICATION BILL WAS TO MAKE ANNUAL PENSION INCREASES AS OF RIGHT, SO AS TO MAINTAIN THE ORIGINAL PURCHASING POWER OF PENSIONS.

"ADJUSTMENTS WILL BE MADE ANNUALLY ON THE BASIS OF THE MOVEMENT OF THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A)," HE SAID.

"IN EFFECT, THIS FORMALISES THE CURRENT PRACTICE FOR PENSION ADJUSTMENTS BY EMBODYING IT IN LEGISLATION."

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AS REGARDS THE PENSION ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS (MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS) BILL 1992, MR WIGGHAM SAID IT AIMED TO IMPROVE AND CLARIFY PENSIONS LEGISLATION BY REMOVING ANOMALIES AND INCONSISTENCIES.

THE MAJOR CHANGES ARE: TO STANDARDISE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE COUNTING OF SERVICE BELOW THE AGE OF 18 AS PENSIONABLE SERVICE; AND TO INTRODUCE A MORE FLEXIBLE DEFINITION FOR PENSIONABLE EMOLUMENTS TO CATER FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

DEBATES ON THE TWO BILLS WERE ADJOURNED.

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BILL TO ESTABLISH INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

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THE HONG KONG INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY CENTRE CORPORATION BILL INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) SOUGHT TO ESTABLISH THE INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY CENTRE AS A STATUTORY CORPORATION.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR T H CHAU, SAID THE PURPOSE WAS TO GIVE THE CENTRE AN APPROPRIATE STATUS IN LINE WITH THAT OF OTHER MAJOR INDUSTRY SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS.

THE BILL ALSO PROPOSES TO ALLOW IT FLEXIBILITY IN ITS OPERATIONS WHILE PROVIDING A PROPER MEANS OF GOVERNMENT CONTROL.

THE OBJECT OF THE HONG KONG INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY CENTRE CORPORATION IS TO PROMOTE TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AND THE APPLICATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG.

"TO FURTHER THIS OBJECT, THE INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY CENTRE, NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION, WILL PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION, 'INCUBATION', TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES FOR TECHNOLOGY-BASED COMPANIES," HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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SUPREME COURT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 INTRODUCED  
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THE SUPREME COURT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 WOULD EXTEND THE JURISDICTION OF THE COURT OF APPEAL AND PROVIDE THAT A PARTY MIGHT APPEAL AS OF RIGHT FROM A DECISION UPON JUDICIAL REVIEW IN A CRIMINAL CAUSE OR MATTER, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, SAID.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR MATHEWS SAID IT WAS MADE CLEAR THAT THE NEW JURISDICTION WOULD ONLY APPLY IN RESPECT OF JUDGEMENTS GIVEN OR ORDERS MADE AFTER THE DATE OF ENACTMENT.

HE EXPLAINED THAT A PARTY TO PROCEEDINGS IN THE MAGISTRACY, OR ANY OTHER INFERIOR COURT, MIGHT APPLY TO THE HIGH COURT FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW OF THE COURT'S DECISION.

IF THE PROCEEDINGS RELATED TO A CIVIL CAUSE OR MATTER, AN APPEAL FROM THAT JUDICIAL REVIEW WOULD LIE TO THE COURT OF APPEAL AS OF RIGHT.

HOWEVER, IF THE PROCEEDINGS RELATED TO A CRIMINAL CAUSE OR MATTER, THE COURT OF APPEAL HAD NO JURISDICTION TO HEAR AN APPEAL FROM THE JUDICIAL REVIEW.

A PARTY WHO WISHED TO APPEAL MIGHT ONLY DO SO BY APPLYING, WITH LEAVE, TO THE PRIVY COUNCIL IN LONDON.

MR MATHEWS SAID: "THIS DISTINCTION BETWEEN CIVIL AND CRIMINAL MATTERS FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPEALS IS ARTIFICIAL AND SERVES NO USEFUL PURPOSE.

"IT IS NOT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST THAT THE COURT OF APPEAL SHOULD BE UNABLE TO MAKE RULINGS ON ISSUES OF POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANCE."

HE SAID THE BILL HAD THE SUPPORT OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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REGULATION OF TRUST COMPANIES TO BE ENHANCED  
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THE TRUSTEE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 PROPOSING TO UPDATE THE REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS OF TRUST COMPANIES AND STREAMLINE THE REGULATION PROCEDURES HAS BEEN INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR MONETARY AFFAIRS, MR DAVID NENDICK, EXPLAINED THAT A COMPANY WAS ELIGIBLE TO BE REGISTERED AS A TRUST COMPANY IF IT MET THE STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE TRUSTEE ORDINANCE.

/AT PRESENT .....

AT PRESENT, ONE OF THESE REQUIREMENTS IS THAT THE COMPANY MUST HAVE A MINIMUM ISSUED AND FULLY PAID-UP SHARE CAPITAL OF \$1 MILLION AND DEPOSIT CERTAIN INVESTMENTS WITH THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING SERVICES TO A VALUE OF NOT LESS THAN \$500,000.

HE SAID THE BILL PROPOSED TO ADJUST THE FIGURES TO \$3 MILLION AND \$1.5 MILLION RESPECTIVELY.

TURNING TO THE REGULATION OF TRUST COMPANIES, MR NENDICK SAID IT HAD BEEN DIFFICULT FOR THE REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES TO TAKE EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT ACTION BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF SUITABLE SANCTIONS AGAINST BREACHES OF A NUMBER OF PROVISIONS.

EXAMPLES INCLUDE SECTION 81, WHICH RESTRICTS THE OBJECTS OF A TRUST COMPANY, SECTION 92, WHICH PROHIBITS LOANS TO A DIRECTOR OR OFFICERS OF A TRUST COMPANY, AND SECTION 93, WHICH RESTRICTS THE BORROWING OF MONEY BY A TRUST COMPANY.

HE ADDED THAT THE ONLY SANCTIONS WHICH WERE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE, INVOLVING THE APPOINTMENT OF AN INSPECTOR TO CARRY OUT AN INVESTIGATION OR SEEKING COURT CONSENT FOR A TRUST COMPANY WOUND UP, WERE CONSIDERED TOO DRACONIAN IN MOST CIRCUMSTANCES.

"THE BILL INTRODUCES MORE PRAGMATIC AND FLEXIBLE FORMS OF SANCTION, NAMELY DEFAULT FINES COMPARABLE TO THOSE PROVIDED FOR IN THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE.

"WE PROPOSE, IN ADDITION, TO TRANSFER CERTAIN FUNCTIONS FROM THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL TO THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY WHERE BASICALLY TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL, RATHER THAN POLICY, CONSIDERATIONS ARE INVOLVED," HE SAID.

THESE FUNCTIONS INCLUDE THE SPECIFICATION UNDER SECTION 4(3) OF INVESTMENTS IN WHICH A COMPANY MAY INVEST TRUST FUNDS, APPROVAL UNDER SECTION 91(1)(B) OF SECURITIES IN OR UPON WHICH A TRUST COMPANY MAY INVEST, AND EXTENSION UNDER SECTION 91(3) OF THE THREE-YEAR LIMIT WITHIN WHICH ANY LAND ACQUIRED BY A TRUST COMPANY MUST BE SOLD.

IT IS ALSO PROPOSED THAT THE POWER UNDER SECTION 95 TO APPOINT AN INSPECTOR TO INVESTIGATE THE AFFAIRS OF A TRUST COMPANY SHOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.

"THIS IS IN LINE WITH SIMILAR POWERS WHICH THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY MAY EXERCISE UNDER SECTIONS 142 AND 143 OF THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE IN RESPECT OF THE INVESTIGATION OF COMPANIES GENERALLY," MR NENDICK SAID.

THE BILL DEFINES MORE CLEARLY CERTAIN PARTICULAR GROUNDS UPON WHICH AN INSPECTOR MAY BE APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE THE AFFAIRS OF A TRUST COMPANY, HE SAID.

THE HONG KONG TRUSTEES' ASSOCIATION HAS BEEN CONSULTED AND SUPPORTS THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CANCER AND ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELD INCONCLUSIVE  
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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CANCER AND ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELD REMAINS INCONCLUSIVE, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, SAID, QUOTING THE INTERNATIONAL RADIATION PROTECTION ASSOCIATION.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LAU WONG-FAT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MRS WONG SAID TWO STUDIES CARRIED OUT IN SWEDEN SUGGESTED THAT EXPOSURE TO ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELDS GENERATED BY HIGH VOLTAGE POWER LINES MIGHT INCREASE CANCER INCIDENCE.

THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN A NUMBER OF OTHER STUDIES ON THE SUBJECT WHICH HAVE COME TO DIFFERENT CONCLUSIONS, SHE ADDED.

MRS WONG SAID THE DIRECTOR OF ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES HAD OBTAINED THE TWO SWEDISH REPORTS IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

"APART FROM THE TWO SWEDISH REPORTS, WE ARE AWARE THAT MANY LEADING AUTHORITIES, SUCH AS THE INTERNATIONAL RADIATION PROTECTION ASSOCIATION, THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION, THE UK RADIOLOGICAL PROTECTION BOARD AND THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY HAVE CONDUCTED STUDIES.

"WE INTEND TO TAKE REFERENCE FROM THESE AUTHORITIES.

"WE ARE ALSO AWARE THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE WILL BE EXAMINING THIS MATTER," MRS WONG NOTED.

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192 AGREEMENTS TO SURRENDER TENANCIES IN THREE YEARS  
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THE COMMISSIONER OF RATING AND VALUATION HAS RECEIVED 192 AGREEMENTS TO SURRENDER TENANCIES UNDER SECTION 18 IN PART I OF THE LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONSOLIDATION) ORDINANCE OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SUEN, WHEN REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON JAMES TO IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR SUEN SAID WHEN THE COMMISSIONER RECEIVED AN APPLICATION FOR HIS ENDORSEMENT OF AN AGREEMENT TO SURRENDER OR TERMINATE A TENANCY, HE WOULD SEND A LETTER TO THE CONCERNED TENANT OR SUB-TENANT INVITING HIM TO ATTEND AN INTERVIEW.

/AT THE .....

AT THE INTERVIEW, A RENT OFFICER WOULD EXPLAIN THE MEANING AND EFFECT OF THE SURRENDER PROVISIONS AND ASK THE TENANT OR SUB-TENANT IF THERE WERE ANY UNDUE PRESSURE OR INFLUENCE.

"THE TENANT OR SUB-TENANT IS ALSO REMINDED THAT HE NEED NOT MOVE OUT OF THE PREMISES IF HE DOES NOT WISH TO," MR SUEN ADDED.

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT IF THE RENT OFFICER HAD ANY DOUBTS AS TO THE PARTICULARS OF THE PROPOSED AGREEMENT HE WOULD CLARIFY THEM WITH THE LANDLORD.

"THE TENANT OR SUB-TENANT IS THEN INVITED TO SIGN THAT HE UNDERSTANDS THE EFFECT OF THE AGREEMENT AND THAT HE HAS NOT BEEN SUBJECT TO ANY UNDUE PRESSURE OR INFLUENCE.

"THE COMMISSIONER WILL THEN ENDORSE THE AGREEMENT."

IN THE PAST THREE YEARS THE COMMISSIONER RECEIVED ONLY ONE COMPLAINT INVOLVING FOUR SUB-TENANTS WHO CLAIMED THEY WERE FORCED TO VACATE THEIR HOMES.

THE CASE HAS BEEN INVESTIGATED BY OFFICERS FROM THE RATING AND VALUATION DEPARTMENT AND IS CURRENTLY THE SUBJECT OF COURT ACTION, HE SAID.

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PERFORMANCE PLEDGE PROGRAMME TO BE EXTENDED

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THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO EXTEND THE PERFORMANCE PLEDGE PROGRAMME TO STATUTORY AUTHORITIES WHICH PROVIDE SERVICES DIRECTLY TO THE PUBLIC, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID FORD, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HUI YIN-FAT TODAY (WEDNESDAY), SIR DAVID SAID: "WE INTEND TO DISCUSS THE PROGRAMME WITH THE HOUSING AUTHORITY EARLY NEXT YEAR.

THEIR PLEDGE COULD INCLUDE, FOR EXAMPLE, STANDARDS FOR HOUSING ALLOCATION MATTERS SUCH AS INTERVIEWS WITHIN SPECIFIED TIMES ON APPLICATIONS FOR HOUSING; FOR PROCESSING OF TENANCY MATTERS SUCH AS REQUESTS FOR TRANSFER; AND FOR DEALING WITH ESTATE MANAGEMENT MATTERS.

AS FOR THE URBAN AND REGIONAL COUNCILS, HE SAID: "WE ARE CONSIDERING WHAT PLEDGES THEY MIGHT MAKE IN EARLY 1993, AND ARE DISCUSSING THESE WITH THEM."

"AT THAT TIME WE PLAN TO DISCUSS THE PROGRAMME WITH THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION, WHICH IS THE OTHER AUTHORITY WITH A SUBSTANTIAL INTERFACE WITH THE PUBLIC."

"WE WILL THEN CONSIDER HOW THE PROGRAMME MAY BE APPLIED TO OTHER AUTHORITIES," HE SAID.

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THERE ARE OTHER NON-GOVERNMENT PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS ALREADY ADOPTING THEIR OWN PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.

THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION IS COMMITTED TO ITS CUSTOMER SERVICE PROGRAMME AND ALREADY PUBLISHES PERFORMANCE ON PUNCTUALITY OF TRAINS, AND RELIABILITY OF TICKETS AND ESCALATORS.

THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY'S BUSINESS PLAN ALREADY SETS TARGET WAITING TIMES, WHICH THE AUTHORITY IS MEETING DURING THIS YEAR, FOR TREATMENT AT ALL ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS AND SELECTED SPECIALIST CLINICS.

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DIRECTOR'S ATTENTION DRAWN TO BREACH OF REGULATIONS

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ALL 13 DIRECTORATE STAFF OF THE LEGAL AID DEPARTMENT TOOK LEAVE ON THE AFTERNOON OF OCTOBER 30 THIS YEAR, THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, SAID.

IT IS CLEAR THAT THE CIVIL SERVICE REGULATIONS IN RELATION TO THE GRANT OF LEAVE WAS NOT COMPLIED WITH ON THIS OCCASION, HE ADDED.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON LAM KUI-CHUN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR WIGGHAM SAID OF THE OFFICERS WHO TOOK LEAVE, TWO WERE TAKING PART IN "TRAILWALKER 92" ORGANISED BY OXFAM HONG KONG WHILE THE REMAINING 11 VISITED MACAU TO ATTEND A FAREWELL GATHERING FOR THE DEPARTMENT'S OUTGOING DIRECTOR.

HE SAID THE LEGAL AID DEPARTMENT, LIKE ALL OTHER DEPARTMENTS, WAS REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH THE CIVIL SERVICE REGULATIONS.

"THE RELEVANT REGULATION STATES THAT LEAVE, OTHER THAN SICK LEAVE AND MATERNITY LEAVE, IS GRANTED SUBJECT TO THE EXIGENCIES OF THE SERVICE," HE EXPLAINED.

"WHILE OFFICERS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO TAKE THEIR EARNED LEAVE, THE NECESSITY TO MAINTAIN AN EVEN SUPPLY OF OFFICERS FOR DUTY MUST BE THE FIRST CONSIDERATION."

THE ATTENTION OF THE DIRECTOR WAS DRAWN TO THIS BREACH OF CIVIL SERVICE REGULATIONS.

MR WIGGHAM SAID HE WAS ASSURED THAT PROPER REGARD WOULD BE PAID TO THEM IN FUTURE.

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NEW SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEME NEXT JULY

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL INTRODUCE A NEW COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE SCHEME ON JULY 1 NEXT YEAR TO REPLACE THE EXISTING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON JIMMY MCGREGOR, MRS WONG SAID THE NEW SCHEME WOULD EMBRACE DIFFERENT "STANDARD" RATES TO MEET THE GENERAL NEEDS OF BROAD CATEGORIES OF CLIENTS AND A RANGE OF "SPECIAL SUBSIDIES" TO MEET THE PERSONAL NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL CLIENTS.

UNDER THE NEW SCHEME, SHE SAID, EVERYONE WOULD BE BETTER OFF.

"FOR INSTANCE, AN ELDERLY PERSON AGED 60 NOW RECEIVES A BASIC RATE PLUS SUPPLEMENTS MAKING A TOTAL OF \$1,620 A MONTH, BUT HE WILL RECEIVE \$1,800 A MONTH UNDER THE NEW SCHEME," MRS WONG SAID.

"AN ELDERLY COUPLE BOTH AGED 60 NOW RECEIVE \$2,790 A MONTH, BUT THEY WILL RECEIVE \$3,090 UNDER THE NEW SCHEME."

THE SECRETARY SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE UPDATING THE VARIOUS TARGETS IN SOCIAL WELFARE REGULARLY TO ENSURE THAT THEY MATCH THE CHANGING NEEDS AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE VARIOUS GROUPS OF CLIENTS.

ADDITIONAL TO THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM, MRS WONG SAID, THE GOVERNMENT WAS AT PRESENT CONSULTING THE PUBLIC ON PROPOSALS FOR A RETIREMENT PROTECTION SYSTEM BASED ON STATUTORY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS.

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DANGEROUS GOODS EVACUATION PLAN NOT NECESSARY

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THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT HAVE A CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR EVACUATING AREAS CLOSE TO DANGEROUS GOODS ANCHORAGES (DGA), AS IT DOES NOT CONSIDER THIS IS NECESSARY, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

NONE OF THE SEVEN DGA'S DESIGNATED IN HONG KONG WATERS ARE CLOSE TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS EXCEPT THE TSUEN WAN DGA, HE SAID.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ALBERT CHAN WAI-YIP IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR ASPREY SAID THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE WAS UNDERTAKING A CONSULTANCY STUDY ON HAZARD ASSESSMENT FOR THE TSUEN WAN DGA.

THE STUDY IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY JULY NEXT YEAR.

"POSSIBLE RELOCATION OF THIS DGA WOULD BE CONSIDERED ONLY WHEN THAT CONSULTANCY STUDY IS COMPLETED," MR ASPREY SAID.

/HE ADDED .....

HE ADDED THAT THERE HAD NOT BEEN ANY ACCIDENTS INVOLVING DANGEROUS GOODS IN THE TSUEN WAN DGA AND THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ANCHORAGE WERE CONSIDERED TO BE INSIGNIFICANT.

THE ONLY PRODUCTS ALLOWED TO BE CONTAINED IN VESSELS BERTHED THERE ARE CERTAIN TYPES OF FUEL OIL.

THIS TYPE OF DANGEROUS GOODS IS OF LOW INHERENT DANGER AND THERE IS NEGLIGIBLE EXPLOSION RISK.

MR ASPREY SAID POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE OR HIGHLY INFLAMMABLE SUBSTANCES WERE REQUIRED TO BE HANDLED AT MORE REMOTE AND ISOLATED ANCHORAGES.

DANGEROUS GOODS ARE ONLY PERMITTED TO BE HELD IN VESSELS BERTHED THERE; NO HANDLING OR TRANSFER OF THE GOODS FROM ONE VESSEL TO ANOTHER IS PERMITTED AT THIS ANCHORAGE, HE ADDED.

"WE BELIEVE THAT THE SEPARATION DISTANCE BETWEEN VESSELS CONTAINING DANGEROUS GOODS AND RESIDENTIAL BLOCKS IS ENTIRELY ADEQUATE IN TERMS OF SAFETY," HE SAID.

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CONSUMER COUNCIL MONITORS PROPERTY SALE AND PURCHASE  
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THE CONSUMER COUNCIL HAS NO STATUTORY POWERS TO REGULATE THE SALE AND PURCHASE OF PRIVATE PROPERTIES ON THE MARKET.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR T H CHAU, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON FUNG KIN-KEE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HOWEVER, THE COUNCIL, WHEN CARRYING OUT ITS STATUTORY FUNCTION OF PROTECTING AND PROMOTING THE INTERESTS OF CONSUMERS, MONITORS THE SALE AND PURCHASE OF PRIVATE PROPERTIES IN A NUMBER OF WAYS.

THESE INCLUDE:

- \* COLLECTING AND DISSEMINATING INFORMATION: THE COUNCIL'S 16 CONSUMER ADVICE CENTRES THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY ANSWER QUERIES AND ORGANISE TALKS ON PURCHASE OF PROPERTIES. THE COUNCIL IS CURRENTLY EXAMINING THE QUESTION OF LIABILITY OF DEFECTS IN NEW BUILDINGS;
- \* HANDLING COMPLAINTS: THE COUNCIL HANDLES COMPLAINTS FROM CONSUMERS RELATING TO ESTATE AGENTS AND PROPERTIES. ITS WORK IN THIS AREA LED TO THE PUBLIC CENSURE OF THREE DEVELOPERS AND THEIR SALES AGENTS BY THE COUNCIL IN MARCH 1992;

- \* ADVISING THE GOVERNMENT: THE COUNCIL FROM TIME TO TIME TENDERS ADVICE TO RELEVANT GOVERNMENT OFFICES ON HOW TO BETTER REGULATE THE PROPERTY MARKET. IT HAS ALSO COMMENTED ON THE SALE AND PURCHASE AGREEMENT CURRENTLY BEING REVIEWED JOINTLY BY THE LAW SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT AND MADE PROPOSALS TO THE GOVERNMENT AND RELEVANT TRADE BODIES ON THE NEED FOR FULL DISCLOSURE OF LAYOUT PLANS BEFORE SALE; AND
- \* ENCOURAGING TRADE BODIES TO ESTABLISH CODES OF PRACTICE: THE COUNCIL HAS ACTIVELY PROMOTED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CODE OF PRACTICE BY ESTATE AGENT REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATIONS. IT HAS ALSO PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN URGING THE LAW SOCIETY TO REQUIRE MANDATORY SEPARATE LEGAL REPRESENTATION IN THE CONVEYANCING OF COMPLETED UNITS.

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#### RESTAURANT LICENSING PROCEDURE UNDER STUDY

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THE URBAN SERVICES AND REGIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENTS HAVE RECENTLY SET UP A SENIOR INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, STREAMLINE THE LICENSING PROCEDURES FOR FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHIM PUI-CHUNG, MRS WONG SAID THE TWO MUNICIPAL COUNCILS REGULARLY REVIEW THEIR PROCEDURES AND LICENSING CONFERENCES AT THE WORKING LEVEL ARE HELD WITH RELEVANT DEPARTMENTS TO EXAMINE OUTSTANDING CASES TO EXPEDITE PROCESSING.

SHE ALSO SAID WITHIN THE URBAN COUNCIL AREA, THERE WERE 1,388 UNLICENSED FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS, OF WHICH APPLICATIONS FROM 987 WERE BEING PROCESSED WHILE THE REMAINING 401 HAD NEVER APPLIED FOR A LICENCE.

WITHIN THE REGIONAL COUNCIL AREA, THERE ARE 523 UNLICENSED FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS. OF THESE, APPLICATIONS FROM 439 ARE BEING PROCESSED AND THE REMAINING 84 HAVE NEVER APPLIED FOR A LICENCE.

SO FAR THIS YEAR, 6,416 PROSECUTIONS HAVE BEEN BROUGHT AGAINST UNLICENSED FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS: 3,534 IN THE URBAN COUNCIL AREA AND 2,882 IN THE REGIONAL COUNCIL AREA.

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NO NEED FOR SPECIFIC LAW ON POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS

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THE ADMINISTRATION DO NOT SEE THE NEED, AND THEREFORE HAVE NO PLANS TO INTRODUCE SPECIFIC LEGISLATION TO DEAL WITH THE LEGAL STATUS OF POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS AND ANCILLARY MATTERS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS, MR PETER LAI, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO DR THE HON LEONG CHE-HUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR LAI SAID THE NEED FOR SUCH LEGISLATION ELSEWHERE STEMMED FROM CONSIDERATIONS WHICH WERE NOT APPLICABLE TO HONG KONG'S PRESENT STAGE OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT.

HE SAID UNDER CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS, POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS IN HONG KONG WERE EITHER REGISTERED UNDER THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE OR NOTIFIED UNDER THE SOCIETIES ORDINANCE.

HE ADDED THAT THE SUMMARY OFFENCES ORDINANCE REGULATED ANY APPLICATIONS, FROM POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS OR ANY OTHER BODIES, TO RAISE FUND FOR A NON-CHARITABLE PURPOSE IN CONFINED PUBLIC PLACES.

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COMMUNICATION FACILITIES AVAILABLE AT COUNTRY PARKS

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THE PUBLIC CAN SEEK HELP IN CASE OF EMERGENCY FROM THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT'S 25 MANAGEMENT CENTRES AND 20 PARK WARDEN POSTS LOCATED AT STRATEGIC LOCATIONS IN THE COUNTRY PARKS.

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

APART FROM PARK WARDENS AND THE POLICE WHO ROUTINELY PATROL COUNTRY PARKS, MEMBERS OF THE CIVIL AID SERVICES AND AUXILIARY MEDICAL SERVICES PERSONNEL WITH AMBULANCES ARE ALSO STATIONED IN COUNTRY PARKS DURING SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS, MR EASON SAID.

IN ADDITION, 31 EMERGENCY HELPLINES, LINKED TO THE 999 POLICE COMMAND CONTROL CENTRE AND THE NEAREST POLICE STATIONS, AND 10 PUBLIC PAYPHONES WERE INSTALLED AT POPULAR RECREATION SITES IN OR NEAR COUNTRY PARKS.

"MORE SUCH FACILITIES WILL BE INSTALLED AT SUITABLE LOCATIONS AS PART OF THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT'S ONGOING WORK TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION FURTHER," HE ADDED.

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REMEDIAL MEASURES IMPLEMENTED AT TRAFFIC BLACK SPOTS

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REMEDIAL MEASURES ARE IMPLEMENTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE TO MINIMISE THE OCCURRENCE OF ACCIDENTS AT TRAFFIC BLACK SPOTS, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR JOHN TELFORD, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MIRIAM LAU, HE SAID THESE MEASURES INCLUDED THE INSTALLATION OF PEDESTRIAN RAILINGS, TRAFFIC LIGHTS, CRASH BARRIERS AND TRAFFIC SIGNS.

"WHERE NECESSARY, CHANGES TO THE ROAD CONFIGURATION AND LANE MARKINGS ARE ALSO CONSIDERED," HE SAID.

THERE ARE CURRENTLY 146 LOCATIONS IN THE TERRITORY THAT ARE REGARDED AS TRAFFIC BLACK SPOTS. THESE LOCATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO DETAILED EXAMINATION BY TRAFFIC ENGINEERS, INCLUDING AN ANALYSIS OF THE REASONS WHY THE ACCIDENTS OCCUR.

"THE POLICE ARE INFORMED OF THE SPECIFIC LOCATIONS AND THE REASONS WHY ACCIDENTS ARE OCCURRING. THEY THEN TARGET THEIR ROAD SAFETY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS ACCORDINGLY," MR TELFORD SAID.

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AIR QUALITY STANDARDS FOR TRANSPORT INTERCHANGES

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THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT (EPD) PLANS TO CONDUCT MEASUREMENTS TO FORMULATE AIR QUALITY STANDARDS FOR TRANSPORT INTERCHANGES AT THE CHINA FERRY TERMINAL STARTING FROM THE MIDDLE OF NEXT YEAR.

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

MR EASON SAID ANY STEPS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT VENTILATION IN FUTURE TRANSPORT INTERCHANGES WAS ACCEPTABLE WOULD DEPEND PARTLY ON THE OUTCOME OF THIS MEASUREMENT WORK.

"AFTER THE ASSESSMENT, EPD MAY NEED TO PREPARE PRACTICE NOTES TO ASSIST DESIGNERS AND OPERATORS OF SUCH FACILITIES TO MEET ANY NEW STANDARDS ESTABLISHED.

"PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WILL BE CONSULTED IN THE PREPARATION OF ANY PRACTICE NOTES REQUIRED," HE SAID.

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BUSINESS COUNCIL SEEKS DIFFERENT VIEWS

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THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR T H CHAU, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) ASSURED MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT VIEWS OF OTHER RELEVANT ORGANISATIONS, SUCH AS THE CONSUMER COUNCIL, WOULD BE SOUGHT AND TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN THE GOVERNOR'S BUSINESS COUNCIL FORMULATED THE COMPETITION POLICY.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON EMILY LAU WAI-HING, MR CHAU SAID MEMBERS OF THE BUSINESS COUNCIL WERE PROMINENT BUSINESSMEN WHOSE BUSINESS INTERESTS WERE WELL-KNOWN TO THE GOVERNMENT.

"THUS THE VIEWS OFFERED BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS ON COMPETITION CAN BE SEEN IN PERSPECTIVE, AND ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST CAN BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE POLICY FORMULATION PROCESS," HE SAID.

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NUMBER OF PREGNANT WOMEN ARRIVING FROM CHINA INCREASING

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THE NUMBER OF PREGNANT WOMEN ARRIVING IN HONG KONG ON TWO-WAY PERMITS HAS BEEN INCREASING RECENTLY, AND THIS IS CAUSING THE GOVERNMENT SOME CONCERN.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ZACHARY WONG WAI-YIN, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR ASPREY SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALREADY ASKED THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES NOT TO ISSUE PERMITS TO WOMEN AT AN ADVANCED STAGE OF PREGNANCY, AS IT APPEARED THAT THIS MIGHT BE AN ABUSE OF THE SYSTEM.

"WE ARE MONITORING THE SITUATION; IF THERE IS INCREASING ABUSE OF THIS APPARENT LOOPHOLE, WE MAY NEED TO INTRODUCE FURTHER CONTROLS," MR ASPREY SAID.

MR ASPREY SAID THE NUMBER OF BABIES REGISTERED AS BORN TO TWO-WAY PERMIT HOLDERS IN HONG KONG IN THE PAST THREE YEARS WAS: 1,746 IN 1990; 2,750 IN 1991 AND 3,527 IN THE FIRST 10 MONTHS OF THIS YEAR.

HE ADDED THAT THE NUMBER OF TWO-WAY PERMIT HOLDERS VISITING HONG KONG OVER THE SAME PERIOD WAS 133,021 IN 1990, 140,378 IN 1991, AND 131,067 IN THE FIRST 10 MONTHS OF 1992.

HE SAID IF THE FATHER OF A BABY BORN IN HONG KONG HAD PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS IN HONG KONG, THE BABY WOULD ALSO HAVE THAT STATUS, AND THEREFORE THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG.

THE NUMBER OF BABIES BORN TO TWO-WAY PERMIT HOLDERS WHO ACQUIRED THIS STATUS WAS 1,606 IN 1990, 2,553 IN 1991, AND 3,256 IN THE FIRST 10 MONTHS OF THIS YEAR.

MR ASPREY SAID: "WE ALLOW TWO-WAY PERMIT VISITORS TO OVERSTAY THEIR PERMITS ONLY WHERE THERE ARE VERY SPECIAL OR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES, THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE PREGNANCY."

BUT IF A PERSON WAS PHYSICALLY UNFIT TO TRAVEL BACK TO CHINA, INCLUDING BECAUSE OF A VERY ADVANCED STAGE OF PREGNANCY, AN APPLICATION FOR EXTENSION OF STAY WOULD BE GRANTED, HE ADDED.

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PUBLIC PROCESSION INFORMATION READILY AVAILABLE  
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INFORMATION LEAFLETS ON HOW TO APPLY FOR A PUBLIC PROCESSION LICENCE OR TO NOTIFY THE POLICE OF A PUBLIC MEETING ARE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC AT DISTRICT OFFICES, POLICE STATIONS AND THE POLICE LICENSING OFFICE.

THE ADVICE WAS GIVEN TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LEE WING-TAT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ALSO APPROACH OFFICERS AT POLICE STATIONS OR THE POLICE LICENSING OFFICE TO MAKE ENQUIRIES.

AS WITH OTHER FORMS AND PROCEDURES, MR ASPREY SAID: "WE HAVE KEPT THOSE FOR PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES UNDER REVIEW TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE AS USER-FRIENDLY AS POSSIBLE."

AT PRESENT, THE GOVERNMENT IS REVIEWING PART III OF THE PUBLIC ORDER ORDINANCE WHICH CONCERNS THE REGULATION OF PUBLIC MEETINGS, PROCESSIONS AND GATHERINGS.

"I EXPECT THAT PROCEDURES FOR SUCH EVENTS WILL BE SIMPLIFIED AS A RESULT OF THIS REVIEW," MR ASPREY SAID.

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NO NEED FOR NEW LAW ON LEGCO REPORTING

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THE GOVERNMENT SEES NO NEED FOR ANY CHANGE OR REDECLARATION OF THE EXISTING LAW PROTECTING THE MEDIA IN FAITHFUL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REPORTING.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LI KA-CHEUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID FORD, SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS COMPLETELY SATISFIED THAT THE EXISTING LAW SUFFICIENTLY PROTECTS THE MEDIA IN FAITHFULLY REPORTING OR QUOTING LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SITTINGS AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, EVEN WHERE THE REMARKS HAVE BEEN DEFAMATORY, OR ABUSIVE, OR AMOUNT TO PERSONAL ATTACKS.

"IN THE ABSENCE OF MALICE ON THE PART OF THE MEDIA, MEDIA REPORTS OF THE PROCEEDINGS IN THE LEGISLATURE ARE PRIVILEGED IF THEY ARE FAIR AND ACCURATE.

"IN ADDITION, HONEST AND FAIR COMMENT IN ANY ARTICLE OR EDITORIAL FOUNDED UPON WHAT HAS BEEN SAID, EITHER IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OR IN A COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, IS SIMILARLY PRIVILEGED," SIR DAVID ADDED.

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MORE THERAPISTS NEEDED FOR NEW SERVICES

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THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY WILL REQUIRE ABOUT 40 ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS IN EACH OF THE NEXT FIVE YEARS TO COPE WITH MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS ARISING FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW SERVICES AND WASTAGE, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HUANG CHEN-YA, MRS WONG SAID THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HAD REQUIREMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS TO FILL VACANCIES ARISING FROM WASTAGE.

"FURTHERMORE, EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS EXIST BOTH IN AIDED SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND IN WELFARE INSTITUTIONS," SHE SAID.

SHE NOTED THAT AS AT NOVEMBER 1, A TOTAL OF 217 OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS WERE WORKING IN PUBLIC MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS.

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DETERMINATION OF CONSULTANCY FEES EXPLAINED

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THE LEVEL OF CONSULTANCY FEE FOR THE NEW AIRPORT PROJECTS IS DETERMINED BY COMPETITIVE BIDDING ONCE THE GOVERNMENT IS SATISFIED WITH THE TECHNICAL COMPETENCE OF THE CONSULTANTS THAT HAVE BEEN SHORTLISTED.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR WORKS, MR JAMES BLAKE, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR BLAKE SAID THE GOVERNMENT INTRODUCED A NEW SYSTEM IN JUNE LAST YEAR TO PROVIDE AN ELEMENT OF FEE COMPETITION IN THE SELECTION PROCESS WHICH WAS AIMED AT BASING THE REMUNERATION OF CONSULTANTS ON A FIXED LUMP SUM FEE AND INDEPENDENT OF THE COST OF THE WORKS.

SINCE THEN, SHORTLISTED ENGINEERING AND ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS WERE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT SEPARATE TECHNICAL PROPOSALS AND FEE PROPOSALS IN BIDDING FOR ANY PARTICULAR CONSULTANCY PROJECT.

"THESE PROPOSALS ARE OPENED BY THE PROJECT DEPARTMENT, AND AN ASSESSMENT OF THE TECHNICAL COMPETENCE OF THE CONSULTANTS IS MADE ACCORDING TO A MARKING SYSTEM PREVIOUSLY APPROVED BY THE ENGINEERING AND ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS SELECTION BOARD (EACSB) AND MADE KNOWN TO THE CONSULTANTS SHORTLISTED.

"AN OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE CONSULTANTS' COMBINED TECHNICAL AND FEE PROPOSALS IS THEN MADE, BASED ON PRE-DETERMINED WEIGHTING OF TECHNICAL COMPETENCE AGAINST FEE PROPOSALS," HE SAID.

MR BLAKE SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO EVIDENCE TO DATE THAT THE CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE FEES WERE ABUSED AS THESE CONSULTANCY PROJECTS WERE APPROVED BY THE EACSB, THE PROVISIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY OR THE MTRC BOARD WHOSE COMPOSITION HELPED TO ENSURE THAT FAIR AND REASONABLE ASSESSMENTS WERE ALWAYS CARRIED OUT.

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NO PLANS TO EXTEND JOINT FUNDING SCHEME

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AN ANNUAL AVERAGE OF 5,200 HONG KONG STUDENTS WERE ON FIRST-DEGREE AND SUB-DEGREE COURSES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM FROM THE YEARS 1983/84 TO 1991/92.

DURING THE SAME NINE-YEAR PERIOD, THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS RECEIVED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN TERMS OF GRANTS OR LOANS FROM THE UK/HK GOVERNMENT JOINT FUNDING SCHEME (JFS) AVERAGED 1,490 A YEAR.

THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF GRANTS AND LOANS PROVIDED TO HONG KONG STUDENTS IN THE SAME PERIOD WAS \$409.83 MILLION AND \$80.63 MILLION RESPECTIVELY.

/THESE STATISTICS .....

THESE STATISTICS WERE PROVIDED BY THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHEUNG MAN-KWONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR CHAN SAID THE JFS WAS THE ONLY SCHEME WHICH WAS FINANCED BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT JOINTLY WITH ANOTHER GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY LOCAL STUDENTS STUDYING OVERSEAS.

"THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO PLANS TO INTRODUCE NEW SCHEMES OR EXTEND THE SCOPE OF THE EXISTING ONE," HE SAID.

MR CHAN ALSO SAID BOTH THE JFS AND THE LOCAL STUDENT FINANCE SCHEME (LSFS) WERE MEANS-TESTED SCHEMES BUT THEIR MAXIMUM LEVELS OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WERE DETERMINED ON A DIFFERENT BASIS.

THE MAXIMUM FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE UNDER THE JFS IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OVERSEAS FEES PAID BY HONG KONG STUDENTS AND THE NOTIONAL HOME FEES CHARGED BY UK INSTITUTIONS.

UNDER THE LSFS, THE MAXIMUM GRANT IS THE ACTUAL TUITION FEES AND ACADEMIC EXPENSES WHILE THE MAXIMUM LOAN IS THE STUDENTS' LIVING EXPENSES.

"APPLICATIONS UNDER THE TWO SCHEMES ARE OTHERWISE PROCESSED IN A BROADLY SIMILAR MANNER," MR CHAN SAID.

"ALL STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE IN THEIR ANNUAL APPLICATIONS DETAILED INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE ON THEIR FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES."

STATISTICS PROVIDED BY MR CHAN ALSO SHOWED THAT THERE WERE 69,110 HONG KONG STUDENTS ATTENDING FIRST DEGREE AND SUB-DEGREE COURSES IN THE UK AND THE THREE OTHER MOST POPULAR COUNTRIES FROM 1989/90 TO 1991/92.

OF THE TOTAL, 26,010 STUDIED IN THE USA, 17,550 IN CANADA, 15,900 IN THE UK AND 9,650 IN AUSTRALIA.

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#### LITTLE VALUATION EFFECT ON DEPOSITS

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THERE IS PRESENTLY NO PLAN TO COLLECT INFORMATION TO DETERMINE VALUATION EFFECTS ON STATISTICS ON DEPOSITS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR MONETARY AFFAIRS, MR DAVID NENDICK, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ROGER LUK KOOM-HOO, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

OF TOTAL CUSTOMER DEPOSITS, ABOUT 46 PER CENT ARE IN HK DOLLARS AND 24 PER CENT IN U.S. DOLLARS.

"GIVEN THE STABLE U.S. DOLLAR EXCHANGE RATE UNDER THE LINKED EXCHANGE RATE SYSTEM, THERE IS THUS LITTLE VALUATION EFFECT IN RESPECT OF 70 PER CENT OF DEPOSITS WITH AUTHORISED INSTITUTIONS," MR NENDICK SAID.

WHILE THE BALANCE OF SOME 30 PER CENT IS SUSCEPTIBLE TO VALUATION EFFECTS DEPENDING ON THE VOLATILITY OF EXCHANGE RATES, IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT THE BENEFIT OF HAVING SUCH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WOULD CURRENTLY JUSTIFY THE ADDITIONAL COST OF REPORTING AND COLLATING THE DATA, HE ADDED.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD KEEP THE MATTER UNDER REVIEW IN THE LIGHT OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS.

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AMENDED MOTION ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION CARRIED

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) DEBATED FOR MORE THAN TWO HOURS ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

EIGHTEEN LEGISLATORS TOOK TURN TO SPEAK. THE MOTION AS AMENDED BY DR THE HON LEONG CHE-HUNG WAS CARRIED.

THE AMENDED MOTION READ: "THAT THIS COUNCIL URGES THE ADMINISTRATION TO REVIEW THE PRIORITIES OF ITS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES, TO ADOPT THE TWO CONVENTIONS ENDORSED IN THE EARTH SUMMIT 1992, AND TO DRAW UP A COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION POLICY WITH A TARGET TOWARDS ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT."

AN ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE OBJECTIVE OF SCHOOL EDUCATION DID NOT TAKE PLACE BECAUSE OF A LACK OF QUORUM.

FIVE BILLS - SUPREME COURT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992, TRUSTEE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992, PENSIONS MODIFICATION BILL 1992, PENSIONS ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS (MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS) BILL 1992 AND HONG KONG INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY CENTRE CORPORATION BILL - WERE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS.

DEBATES ON THEM WERE ADJOURNED.

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1992

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GOVERNOR COMMENDS POLICE FOR BRAVERY

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, COMMENDED THE POLICE FOR THEIR BRAVERY AND COMPETENCE IN TWO SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONS IN TSUEN WAN AND KOWLOON CITY TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER VISITING TAI PO DISTRICT, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "WE KNOW THAT IN HONG KONG WE HAVE ONE OF THE FINEST POLICE FORCES IN THE WORLD AND THAT'S BEEN CONFIRMED TODAY.

"I JUST WANT TO MAKE IT ABUNDANTLY PLAIN THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF HONG KONG STANDS FOURSQUARE BEHIND OUR POLICE IN THE WORK THEY HAVE TO DO.

"WE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE LAW AND ORDER ONE OF OUR TOP PRIORITIES. THAT'S WHY WE'RE GOING TO PUT MORE POLICE ON THE BEAT, ON THE STREET, AND THAT'S WHY WE WANT TO GO ON PUTTING MORE RESOURCES INTO IMPROVING POLICE EQUIPMENT.

"WE HAVE A GREAT POLICE FORCE AND WE'RE GOING TO MAKE SURE THAT IT CONTINUES TO DEAL WITH CRIME TOUGHLY AND COMPETENTLY AND DECISIVELY."

"THEY HAVE THE TOTAL SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNITY IN WHAT THEY HAVE DONE," HE ADDED.

THE GOVERNOR ALSO WISHED THE POLICE OFFICERS AND RESIDENTS INJURED IN THE INCIDENTS A SPEEDY RECOVERY.

ASKED ABOUT CO-OPERATION BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA IN TACKLING CRIME, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "I DON'T THINK THAT THAT IS REMOTELY AFFECTED BY THE DEBATE WHICH IS GOING ON ABOUT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT. IT'S IN CHINA'S INTEREST AND IN HONG KONG'S INTEREST TO CO-OPERATE SUCCESSFULLY IN DEALING WITH CRIME.

"I VERY MUCH WELCOME THE HELP WHICH CHINA HAS GIVEN US IN THE PAST. I WELCOME THE DECISION TO PLACE LIAISON OFFICERS IN HONG KONG.

"WE HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF COMMON INTEREST IN DEALING WITH CRIMINALS WHATEVER SIDE OF THE BORDER THEY ACT ON AND I HAVE NO DOUBT AT ALL THAT OUR CO-OPERATION WILL CONTINUE AND BE EVER MORE SUCCESSFUL."

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GOVERNOR VISITS TAI PO

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, TOURED TAI PO THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON TO FAMILIARISE HIMSELF WITH THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT AND THE INDIGENOUS SETTLEMENTS IN THE DISTRICT.

ACCOMPANIED BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR ALBERT LAM, AND THE TAI PO DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMAN, MR HO YUNG-SANG, THE GOVERNOR FIRST VISITED THE SHOPPING ARCADE OF UPTOWN PLAZA, ONE OF THE LATEST PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AREA.

MR PATTEN TOOK A PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE AREA FROM A ROOF TOP OF THE BUILDING BEFORE VISITING A FAMILY THERE.

HE THEN WENT TO LAM TSUEN - A COLLECTIVE NAME FOR THE 25 VILLAGES IN VALLEYS IRRIGATED BY THE LAM TSUEN RIVER IN NORTHERN TAI PO.

WHILE THERE, THE GOVERNOR VISITED LAM TSUEN VALLEY COMMITTEE OFFICE, LAM TSUEN FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOL, AND A 250-YEAR-OLD TIN HAU TEMPLE.

BEFORE CONCLUDING HIS TOUR, MR PATTEN MET DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS AT A RESTAURANT IN TAI WO ESTATE.

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POLICE PRAISED FOR ACTION AGAINST GANGSTERS

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THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, HAS PRAISED THE POLICE FOR THEIR COURAGEOUS ACTION IN ARRESTING ARMED GANGSTERS IN TSUEN WAN AND SENT CONDOLENCES TO THE OFFICERS INJURED IN THE INCIDENT.

"THIS WAS AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE OF POLICE BRAVERY IN THE FACE OF HEAVILY ARMED CRIMINALS, WHICH RESULTED IN ALL THE SUSPECTS BEING APPREHENDED," HE SAID.

"I WAS DEEPLY SHOCKED TO HEAR OF THE INJURIES SUFFERED IN THE GRENADE EXPLOSION, PARTICULARLY TO THE SERGEANT WHO HAS SERIOUS EYE DAMAGE. OUR SYMPATHY GOES OUT TO THEIR FAMILIES AND WE WISH THEM ALL A SPEEDY RECOVERY," HE ADDED.

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TOUGHER PENALTIES FOR STEALING CARS PROPOSED

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROPOSED TOUGHER PENALTIES FOR THE OFFENCE OF "TAKING CONVEYANCE WITHOUT AUTHORITY" (TCWA) IN A BID TO OVERCOME THE INCREASING PROBLEM OF MISSING VEHICLES.

THE THEFT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 WHICH WILL BE GAZETTED ON FRIDAY (DECEMBER 4) SEEKS TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR THE OFFENCE OF TCWA TO SEVEN YEARS OF IMPRISONMENT FROM THE EXISTING MAXIMUM OF THREE YEARS.

THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID TOUGHER PENALTIES WERE NEEDED IN VIEW OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROBLEM WHICH SAW THE NUMBER OF MISSING VEHICLES RISE FROM ABOUT 4,400 CASES IN 1989 TO AN ESTIMATED 7,000 CASES THIS YEAR.

THE ANNUAL RATE OF RECOVERY HAS DROPPED FROM 83.2 PER CENT IN 1989 TO 57 PER CENT THIS YEAR.

MR ASPREY SAID AT PRESENT, ALL CASES OF MISSING VEHICLES WERE INITIALLY CLASSIFIED AS TCWA -- AN OFFENCE ORIGINALLY DESIGNED TO COVER 'JOYRIDERS' WHO ONLY USE THE VEHICLE FOR A LIMITED PERIOD.

"IF THERE IS EVIDENCE TO PROVE THAT THE OFFENDER HAS A CRIMINAL INTENTION OF PERMANENTLY DEPRIVING THE OWNER OF HIS VEHICLE, HE WILL BE CHARGED WITH THE OFFENCE OF THEFT, WHICH CARRIES A MAXIMUM PENALTY OF 10 YEARS' IMPRISONMENT," HE SAID.

HOWEVER, THE DIFFICULTY IN SECURING THE NECESSARY EVIDENCE TO PROVE THIS CRIMINAL INTENTION HAS BEEN A MAJOR BARRIER FOR THE POLICE TO PROSECUTE UNDER THE OFFENCE OF THEFT.

THIS WAS THE REASON WHY THE OFFENCE OF TCWA WAS CREATED FIRST IN UK AND LATER IN HK.

"SINCE THE PROOF FOR THEFT MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE EVEN IN CASES WHERE A PERSON IS CAUGHT TRYING TO BREAK INTO A CAR OR IS ACTUALLY DRIVING THE MISSING CAR, THE POLICE HAVE TO RESORT TO THE LESSER OFFENCE OF TCWA IN MANY CASES," MR ASPREY EXPLAINED.

FROM 1989 TO JUNE THIS YEAR, ONLY 37 PEOPLE INVOLVED IN CASES OF MISSING VEHICLES WERE CONVICTED OF "THEFT OF VEHICLES". ONLY 10 WERE IMPRISONED.

DURING THE SAME PERIOD, ABOUT 740 PEOPLE WERE CONVICTED OF TCWA, AND ONLY 58 OF THEM WERE JAILED. THE MOST COMMON PENALTY FOR THOSE CONVICTED OF TCWA WAS A FINE OF \$500 TO \$1,000.

MR ASPREY SAID THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WAS TRYING TO IDENTIFY SUITABLE CASES TO MAKE AN APPLICATION TO THE COURT OF APPEAL TO REVIEW THE LEVEL OF SENTENCES.

"IT IS ENCOURAGING TO NOTE THAT IN A RECENT COURT OF APPEAL CASE, THE COURT STATED THAT IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC, SUBSTANTIAL PRISON SENTENCES SHOULD BE IMPOSED ON THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE THEFT AND DISPOSAL OF VEHICLES," HE ADDED.

THE PHENOMENON OF REPEATED OFFENDERS WAS ALSO WORRYING. LAST YEAR, ABOUT 32 PER CENT OF DEFENDANTS CONNECTED WITH MISSING VEHICLES CASES JUMPED BAIL.

THIS YEAR, A NUMBER OF ARRESTED SUSPECTS WHO WERE GRANTED BAIL COMMITTED THE SAME OFFENCE A SECOND TIME DURING THE BAIL PERIOD OR SHORTLY AFTER RELEASE FROM BAIL.

HE ADDED THAT IT WAS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND OF RISING NUMBER OF MISSING VEHICLES, THE UNSATISFACTORY PROSECUTION RESULTS, THE POLICE OPERATIONAL DIFFICULTIES IN PROSECUTING OFFENDERS, THE AGGRAVATED SITUATION OF REPEATED OFFENDERS AND THE LIMITED SUCCESS IN RECOVERING MISSING VEHICLES, THAT THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSED TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR THE OFFENCE OF TCWA IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A GREATER DETERRENT EFFECT.

THE BILL WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON DECEMBER 16.

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41,000 P1 DISCRETIONARY PLACES TAKEN  
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RESULTS OF ALLOCATION OF DISCRETIONARY PLACES UNDER THE PRIMARY ONE ADMISSION SYSTEM FOR THE 1992 SCHOOL YEAR WILL BE RELEASED ON FRIDAY (DECEMBER 4) BY ALL GOVERNMENT AND AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SAID ABOUT 41,000 OUT OF 66,000 APPLICANTS WILL BE OFFERED A DISCRETIONARY PLACE.

PARENTS ARE ADVISED, WHETHER THEIR CHILDREN HAVE BEEN INTERVIEWED BY THE SCHOOL OR NOT, TO GO BACK TO THE SCHOOL WHICH THEY HAVE APPLIED FOR A PRIMARY 1 PLACE ON FRIDAY BETWEEN 9 AM AND 5 PM OR ON SATURDAY (DECEMBER 5) BETWEEN 9 AM AND NOON TO FIND OUT THE RESULTS OF THEIR APPLICATION.

REGISTRATION OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS WILL TAKE PLACE ON DECEMBER 7 AND 8 (MONDAY AND TUESDAY) DURING SCHOOL HOURS.

FOR PARENTS WHOSE CHILDREN HAVE BEEN OFFERED A PRIMARY PLACE, THEY ARE ADVISED TO NOTE CAREFULLY THE REGISTRATION PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS OF INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS, SUCH AS PARENT'S COPY OF THE APPLICATION FORM AND THE NUMBER OF PHOTOGRAPHS TO BE BROUGHT ALONG TO THE SCHOOL FOR REGISTRATION.

PARENTS WHO CANNOT REGISTER THEIR CHILD WITH THE SCHOOL WITHIN THE SPECIFIED PERIOD SHOULD NOTIFY THE SCHOOL OR THROUGH THE PRIMARY ONE ADMISSION UNIT OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (TEL NO. 572 4383) TO MAKE ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS - THEY WOULD BE DEEMED TO HAVE GIVEN UP THE DISCRETIONARY PLACE IF THEY FAILED TO DO SO.

REGISTRATION OF THE CHILD WITH THE SCHOOL WILL BE REGARDED AS BINDING ON BOTH THE SCHOOL AND THE PARENT.

THE SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED THAT UNDER THE PRIMARY ONE ADMISSION SYSTEM, A GOVERNMENT OR AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL CAN ACCEPT CHILDREN TO FILL UP TO A MAXIMUM OF 65 PER CENT OF ITS TOTAL PRIMARY 1 PLACES AS DISCRETIONARY PLACES.

THE REMAINING 35 PER CENT WILL BE RESERVED FOR CENTRAL ALLOCATION AT A LATER STAGE.

AS SOME SCHOOLS ARE OVER-SUBSCRIBED FOR THEIR DISCRETIONARY PLACES. IT IS NATURAL THAT SOME CHILDREN MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SECURE A PRIMARY ONE PLACE AT THIS STAGE.

PARENTS OF THESE CHILDREN, TOGETHER WITH THOSE WHO ONLY INTENDED TO TAKE PART IN THE CENTRAL ALLOCATION, WILL BE INFORMED BY LETTER SOME TIME IN MARCH NEXT YEAR TO GO TO A DISTRIBUTION/COLLECTION CENTRE IN THEIR HOME DISTRICT FOR CHOICE OF SCHOOLS.

"THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WILL THEN ALLOCATED A PRIMARY 1 PLACE TO THEIR CHILDREN WITHIN THEIR HOME DISTRICT, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARENTAL CHOICES," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

DETAILED PROCEDURES OF THE CENTRAL ALLOCATION WILL BE ANNOUNCED LATER.

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#### GOVT HAS CLEAR DUTY TO MAINTAIN SAFETY IN PORT

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THE PORT OF HONG KONG HAS A GOOD SAFETY RECORD AND THE GOVERNMENT HAS A CLEAR DUTY OF CARE IN MAINTAINING MARINE SAFETY FOR VESSELS IN HONG KONG WATERS AND ON THE HONG KONG SHIPPING REGISTER, THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE, MR TONY MILLER, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

ADDRESSING THE ROTARY CLUB OF HONG KONG ISLAND EAST LUNCHEON MEETING, MR MILLER SAID: "WE ARE PROUD OF THAT RECORD, BUT WE ARE BY NO MEANS COMPLACENT. WE WANT AND FULLY INTEND TO MAKE IT BOTH SAFER AND MORE EFFICIENT. THE TWO MUST GO HAND IN HAND."

THE MARINE DEPARTMENT DEALS WITH VARIOUS AREAS OF MARINE SAFETY UNDER FIVE BROAD HEADINGS:

\* THE COMPETENCE OF SEAFARERS

- \* THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF VESSELS
- \* NAVIGATION AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
- \* THE TRANSPORTATION OF DANGEROUS GOODS
- \* CARGO-HANDLING AND INDUSTRIAL SAFETY

ON THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF VESSELS, MR MILLER SAID: "OUR DUTY OF CARE IS TO ENSURE THAT VESSELS IN HONG KONG WATERS OR ON THE HONG KONG SHIPPING REGISTER ARE CONSTRUCTED AND MAINTAINED IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS, LOCAL LEGISLATION AND COMMON PRUDENCE."

"PORT STATE CONTROL AND HIGH SPEED FERRIES ARE USEFUL EXAMPLES TO ILLUSTRATE THE MARINE DEPARTMENT'S APPROACH TO THIS AREA."

THE INTENTION OF PORT STATE CONTROL IS TO ACT AS A BACKSTOP IN PROTECTING THE LIVES OF SHIP CREWS AND THE SAFETY OF THE PORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT, TO PREVENT OWNERS AND OPERATORS, AND THEIR CLASSIFICATION SOCIETIES AND INSURANCE COMPANIES ALLOWING THE CONDITION OF A SHIP TO SLIP BELOW SAFE LIMITS.

"IT CANNOT BE, NOR SHOULD IT BE, A SUBSTITUTE FOR RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT BY OWNERS AND OPERATORS.

"IN HONG KONG WE TAKE THIS RESPONSIBILITY CAREFULLY. GIVEN THE NUMBER OF SHIPS CALLING, WE ARE OBLIGED TO DO A DEGREE OF TARGETING. THIS YEAR HAS SEEN SOME INTERESTING RESULTS.

"ON THE CARGO SIDE, THREE RUST-BUCKETS LEFT THE PORT HEADING FOR THE SCRAP YARDS, AFTER A FOURTH, A BULKER, WAS ARRESTED AND DECLARED LAID-UP PENDING THE OWNER CARRYING OUT SUBSTANTIAL REPAIRS. HE GAVE IN AFTER A MONTH AND SOLD THE VESSEL FOR SCRAP," SAID MR MILLER.

HE STRESSED THAT HONG KONG CHECKED ITS OWN FLAG VESSELS WITH PARTICULAR CARE.

MR MILLER SAID: "HONG KONG IS THE CENTRE OF WHAT IS PROBABLY THE WORLD'S BIGGEST HIGH-SPEED FERRY OPERATION, COMPRISING HYDROFOILS, SIDE-WALL HOVERCRAFT AND CATAMARANS OF ALL SHAPES AND SIZES.

"WE ARE PIONEERS IN THE FIELD AND WE HAVE HAD OUR SHARE OF ACCIDENTS. EACH ONE HAS BEEN ANALYSED WITH SCRUPULOUS CARE AND THE RESULTS SHARED WITH OWNERS, OPERATORS, BUILDERS AND THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION."

AS A RESULT, HONG KONG IS PLAYING A KEY ROLE IN RE-WRITING THE INTERNATIONAL RULE BOOK IN THIS AREA.

"THE EMPHASIS, THE GOVERNMENT'S DUTY OF CARE LIES WITH PREVENTION NOT CURE, WITH SAFE CODES OF CONSTRUCTION AND SAFE OPERATION. THE ONUS TO ENSURE PROPER MAINTENANCE AND SAFE PRACTICE LIES WITH THE OPERATORS. THERE CAN BE NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THIS."

PROGRAMME TO EDUCATE PUBLIC ON ELECTRICITY UPGRADING  
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THE GOVERNMENT WILL LAUNCH A PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO EXPLAIN TO THE PUBLIC THE VOLTAGE UPGRADING PROGRAMME TO BE CARRIED OUT OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

UNDER THE CONVERSION PROGRAMME, THE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY VOLTAGES IN HONG KONG WILL BE UPGRADED FROM THE EXISTING 200 VOLTS AND 346 VOLTS TO 220 VOLTS AND 380 VOLTS RESPECTIVELY.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN TODAY (WEDNESDAY) POINTED OUT THAT THE UPGRADING PROGRAMME WOULD BRING HONG KONG INTO LINE WITH THE SYSTEM WHICH WAS MOSTLY USED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

"THIS CAREFULLY CONTROLLED PROGRAMME WOULD CAUSE AS LITTLE INCONVENIENCE AS POSSIBLE," HE ADDED.

THE SPOKESMAN STRESSED THAT NO ONE WOULD NEED TO ENTER HOMES TO CARRY OUT THE CONVERSION AND THE CHANGEOVER WOULD COST ELECTRICITY CONSUMERS NOTHING.

HE POINTED OUT THAT AFTER THE CONVERSION, THE FIRST THING CONSUMERS WOULD NOTICE WAS THAT LIGHT BULBS WOULD GIVE OUT MORE LIGHT.

"MOST HOUSEHOLD EQUIPMENT IS ALREADY RATED AT 220 VOLTS, SO IT WILL OPERATE AT PEAK EFFICIENCY."

"AFTER THE CHANGE, IT WILL BE WORKING AS IT WAS DESIGNED TO - AND WILL ALSO GIVE A BETTER PERFORMANCE," HE EXPLAINED, ADDING THAT BECAUSE OF THE OVERALL BETTER PERFORMANCE, CONSUMERS SHOULD NOT NOTICE ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN ELECTRICITY BILLS.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID EXISTING HOUSEHOLDS' WIRING WAS ADEQUATE FOR THE UPGRADED VOLTAGE.

"IF YOUR APPLIANCES AND WIRING OPERATE SAFELY AT THE EXISTING VOLTAGE, THERE SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM WHATSOEVER. BUT IF YOU HAVE ANY DOUBTS, YOU SHOULD CONSULT A REGISTERED ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR," HE SAID.

REGARDING OLDER APPLIANCES RATED AT 200 VOLTS, THE SPOKESMAN SAID THEY WOULD STILL FUNCTION SAFELY AND SATISFACTORILY.

HE SAID THE INCREASE IN VOLTAGE WOULD NOT POSE ANY ADDITIONAL DANGER PROVIDED THAT ALL THE USUAL PRECAUTIONS WERE TAKEN.

"IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT, YOUR FUSES AND OTHER PROTECTIVE DEVICES WILL WORK JUST AS BEFORE," HE SAID.

"NO ADDITIONAL SUPPLY CUTOFF WILL BE REQUIRED FOR THE CONVERSION TO TAKE PLACE SINCE THE VOLTAGE UPGRADING WORK WILL BE CARRIED OUT, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, TOGETHER WITH THE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY'S ROUTINE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

THE TWO POWER COMPANIES HAVE SET UP THE FOLLOWING 24-HOUR HOTLINES TO ANSWER QUERIES FROM THE PUBLIC:

360 6498 (ENGLISH/CANTONESE) (CHINA LIGHT AND POWER CO, LTD)  
555 4999 (CANTONESE) (THE HONG KONG ELECTRIC CO, LTD)  
555 4000 (ENGLISH)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC CAN OBTAIN A FREE LEAFLET FROM THE FOLLOWING OUTLETS:

- \* DISTRICT OFFICES
- \* HOUSING AUTHORITY ESTATE OFFICES
- \* THE CONSUMER COUNCIL
- \* CHINA LIGHT AND POWER CO, LTD CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRES
- \* THE HONG KONG ELECTRIC CO, LTD CUSTOMER CENTRE AND PAY-IN CENTRES

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HK MUST KEEP ITS PEOPLE COMPETITIVE

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THE KEY INGREDIENT TO HONG KONG'S COMPETITIVENESS IS ITS REMARKABLE PEOPLE, AND TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE, HONG KONG MUST KEEP ITS PEOPLE HERE, SAID DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF TRADE, MR CHRISTOPHER JACKSON.

ADDRESSING AN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LUNCHEON MEETING TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR JACKSON SAID:

"IT IS QUITE CLEAR TO ME THAT, IF HONG KONG IS TO REALISE ITS POTENTIAL, IT MUST HAVE AN EVER-INCREASING SUPPLY OF WELL-TRAINED, ARTICULATE, YOUNG GRADUATES; MORE LOCAL PROFESSIONALS; MORE IMAGINATIVE, FREE-THINKING INNOVATORS AND TECHNOCRATS. THAT IS THE WAY FORWARD.

"AND SOMEHOW, TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE, HONG KONG MUST KEEP THESE PEOPLE HERE, EXCITED BY HONG KONG AND THE PROSPECTS IT OFFERS; INVOLVED IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY; WITH A SENSE THAT THEY HAVE SOME SAY IN ITS RUNNING," HE SAID.

MR JACKSON PAID TRIBUTE NOT ONLY TO BUSINESSMEN, BUT ALSO WORKERS, SMALL ENTREPRENEURS, STUDENTS AND PROFESSIONALS IN THE TERRITORY.

THE GOVERNMENT RECOGNISED THE IMPORTANCE OF A WELL-TRAINED WORKFORCE, AND "THAT IS WHY THE NUMBER OF FIRST-DEGREE UNIVERSITY PLACES IS BEING DOUBLED BETWEEN 1991 AND 1995; THAT IS WHY THE UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY OPENED ITS DOORS LAST YEAR; AND THAT IS WHY A SPECIAL RETRAINING FUND HAS BEEN SET UP WITH AN IMMEDIATE INJECTION OF \$300 MILLION, ANNOUNCED BY THE GOVERNOR IN HIS RECENT LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ADDRESS.

/"IT IS .....

"IT IS ALSO WHY THE GOVERNOR ANNOUNCED A 20 PER CENT INCREASE IN THE FUNDS TO BE ALLOCATED BY THE RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL FOR STAFF AND GRADUATE STUDENTS TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH PROJECTS," HE ADDED.

TURNING TO THE SUBJECT THAT CHINA'S MOST FAVOURED-NATION (MFN) TRADING STATUS MIGHT BE WITHDRAWN OR MADE CONDITIONAL BY THE UNITED STATES, MR JACKSON DESCRIBED THE PROSPECT AS "WORRISOME".

MANY BUSINESSES IN CHINA AND HONG KONG'S RE-EXPORT TRADE WOULD SUFFER SERIOUSLY. HONG KONG HAS RECOVERED FROM MANY REVERSALS SOME EQUALLY AS GREAT, SOME GREATER. BUT IT WOULD BE A HEAVY BLOW AT A CRITICAL PERIOD IN HONG KONG'S DEVELOPMENT.

"MFN WITHDRAWAL WOULD BE A SERIOUS SETBACK FOR THE FORCES OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES HAS SUCH A STRONG INTEREST.

"I AM SURE THAT PRESIDENT-ELECT BILL CLINTON AND HIS SUPPORTERS WILL WISH TO AVOID DAMAGING THE HONG KONG ECONOMY AND ITS VITAL ROLE IN DEVELOPING AND OPENING UP CHINA'S ECONOMY.

"BUT WE CAN NO LONGER RELY ON A PRESIDENTIAL VETO AND WORK TO SUSTAIN THAT VETO IN THE SENATE. WE NEED TO MAKE OUR MESSAGE COUNT WITH ALL SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN," MR JACKSON SAID.

HE TOLD AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN IN HONG KONG THAT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WAS ADVANCING ITS CASE ONCE AGAIN IN WASHINGTON, AND IN LITTLE ROCK.

"WE MUST FINE-TUNE EXISTING STRATEGIES AND DEVELOP NEW ONES TO MAKE QUITE SURE THAT THE HONG KONG MESSAGE GETS ACROSS TO VERY WIDE AUDIENCE, NOT ONLY IN WASHINGTON, BUT IN KEY STATES AND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS.

"WE MUST WORK TO KEEP MFN IN PLACE, AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN RETAINING HONG KONG'S COMPETITIVENESS," MR JACKSON SAID.

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MOBILE EYE STATION AND NEW DENTAL VAN IN SERVICE

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE IMPLEMENTING A TERRITORY-WIDE ORAL HEALTH EDUCATION EARLY NEXT YEAR TO PROMOTE DENTAL HEALTH AMONG CHILDREN OF SCHOOL AGE, THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH, DR S H LEE, SAID.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY FOR THE EYE STATION AND DENTAL VAN PROJECT CONCERN HONG KONG TODAY (WEDNESDAY), DR LEE SAID THE OCCASION MARKED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW FACILITIES TO PROMOTE PRIMARY HEALTH CARE (PHC) TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

HE NOTED THAT THE ORGANISATION'S COMMITMENT TO THE PROVISION OF BETTER PHC SERVICES WAS REALISED IN STAGES BY PUTTING THE INNOVATIVE MOBILE EYE STATION AND THE NEW DENTAL VAN WITH X-RAY FACILITY INTO SERVICE.

/DR LEE .....

DR LEE SAID: "PHC IS PARTICIPATORY CARE AND THE GOVERNMENT ALWAYS TREASURES COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE PROVISION OF PHC SERVICES TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG."

THE MOBILE EYE STATION, THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN HONG KONG, WILL BE USED FOR THE PROVISION OF PROMOTIONAL, PREVENTIVE AND CURATIVE EYE SERVICES FOR THE SPECIAL-NEED GROUPS SUCH AS THE ELDERLY, PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN AND THE DISABLED.

ON DENTAL SERVICE, DR LEE SAID THE PROJECT CONCERN HONG KONG HAD STEADILY EXPANDED THE SERVICE TO BENEFIT LARGER POPULATION REQUIRING HELP SINCE THE 1980'S.

"THIS NEW DENTAL VAN WITH X-RAY FACILITY WILL DEFINITELY IMPROVE THE SCOPE AND QUALITY OF YOUR DENTAL SERVICES," DR LEE SAID.

THE NEW VAN WILL NOT ONLY INCLUDE BASIC DENTAL CARE TO PEOPLE REQUIRING HELP SUCH AS THE DISABLED AND THE NON-AMBULATORY GROUPS BUT ALSO WILL PROVIDE DENTAL SCREENING AND HEALTH EDUCATION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

DR LEE SAID THE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE ORGANISATION AND THE GOVERNMENT WAS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION.

DR LEE ALSO SPOKE HIGHLY OF THE ORGANISATION FOR ITS DEDICATION, DEVOTION AND COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES DURING THE PAST THREE DECADES.

HE LOOKED FORWARD TO A CONTINUED "PARTNERSHIP IN HEALTH" IN THE FUTURE.

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#### BETTER FIRE PROTECTION SERVICE FOR TIN SHUI WAI

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RESIDENTS OF THE FAST DEVELOPING TIN SHUI WAI TOWN AND THE NEARBY AREAS IN YUEN LONG WILL BE PROVIDED WITH BETTER FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY RESCUE SERVICES WITH THE COMMISSIONING OF A NEW FIRE STATION AND AN AMBULANCE DEPOT.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF TIN SHUI WAI FIRE STATION AND AMBULANCE DEPOT TODAY (WEDNESDAY), CHIEF FIRE OFFICER MR WONG MAN-CHIU SAID THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN OFFERING EFFICIENT SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY THROUGH MAXIMISING THE RESOURCES ALLOCATED.

"IN THE PAST 30 YEARS, WE HAVE SUCCEEDED IN POSITIONING FIRE STATIONS AND AMBULANCE DEPOTS STRATEGICALLY, MODERNISING THE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM, ACQUIRING ADDITIONAL APPLIANCES AND EQUIPMENT, AND IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF SERVICE FOR THE PUBLIC," HE SAID.

/"MEMBERS OF .....

"MEMBERS OF THE DEPARTMENT, IRRESPECTIVE OF FIREMEN OR AMBULANCEMEN, ARE FULLY AWARE OF THEIR DUTY TO SAVE AND PROTECT LIVES AND PROPERTIES," HE ADDED.

HE ENCOURAGED THE OFFICERS TO KEEP PHYSICALLY FIT, TO HAVE A CLEAR MIND, AND BE RESOURCEFUL AND BRAVE TO HANDLE VARIOUS KINDS OF JOBS.

FIREMEN WERE ALSO TOLD TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE TRAINING FACILITIES AT THE NEW FIRE STATION AND AMBULANCE DEPOT.

TIN SHUI WAI DISTRICT COVERS AN AREA OF 5,000 HECTARES AND WILL HAVE A POPULATION OF 140,000 WHEN FULLY DEVELOPED.

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WATER SUPPLY TO SOUTHWEST KOWLOON TURNS WEAK

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FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO SOME PREMISES IN SOUTHWEST KOWLOON WILL TURN WEAK FROM MIDNIGHT TO 6 AM ON FRIDAY (DECEMBER 4) BECAUSE OF CONNECTION WORK ON WATER MAINS.

THE AFFECTED PREMISES INCLUDE THOSE IN MONG KOK, YAU MA TEI, MAN FUK ROAD, MAN WAN ROAD, HO MAN TIN STREET AS WELL AS THE AREA BOUNDED BY BOUNDARY STREET, LA SALLE ROAD, PRINCE EDWARD ROAD WEST AND WATERLOO ROAD.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND  
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION
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OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,500
REVERSAL OF LAF	NIL
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	1,500
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	+230
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,730
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER TWI 113.5 *-0.3* 2.12.92	

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1992

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS

TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	4.20 PCT	15 MONTHS	2402	5.50	100.09	5.49
1 MONTH	4.35 PCT	18 MONTHS	2405	5.50	99.95	5.61
3 MONTHS	4.44 PCT	21 MONTHS	2408	4.375	97.95	5.73
6 MONTHS	4.57 PCT	24 MONTHS	2411	4.625	97.95	5.83
12 MONTHS	5.26 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 11,796MN

CLOSED 2 DECEMBER 1992

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