



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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FURTHER EXTENSION OF RENT CONTROLS

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IT IS PROPOSED THAT TENANTS OF POST-WAR DOMESTIC PREMISES WILL CONTINUE TO BE PROTECTED AGAINST EXCESSIVE INCREASES IN RENT, THE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, MR DONALD LIAO, ANNOUNCED TODAY.

THE LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONSOLIDATION)(AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, PUBLISHED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE TODAY, SEEKS TO EXTEND THE LIFE OF PART II OF THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE BY TWO YEARS, UNTIL DECEMBER 18, 1985.

THE BILL ALSO CONTAINS A NUMBER OF OTHER PROPOSALS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE MOST IMPORTANT OF WHICH ARE:

- * THE INTRODUCTION FROM DECEMBER 19 OF AN ADDITIONAL REGULATOR TO THE METHOD OF DETERMINING PERMISSIBLE INCREASES IN RENT;
- * THE EXCLUSION OF ALL NEW TENANCIES CREATED AFTER JUNE 30; AND
- * THE EXCLUSION, FROM DECEMBER 19, 1983 OF EXISTING TENANCIES OF PREMISES WITH A CURRENT RATEABLE VALUE OF \$50 000 AND ABOVE.

COMMENTING ON THE BILL, MR LIAO SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD CONDUCTED A REVIEW OF THE LEGISLATION WELL IN ADVANCE OF ITS CURRENT EXPIRY DATE AT THE END OF THIS YEAR IN ORDER TO GIVE PLENTY OF NOTICE OF PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE CONTROLS AND TO ALLOW TIME FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON THEM.

THE BILL WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON APRIL 27, FOR ITS FIRST AND SECOND READING. THE RESUMPTION OF DEBATE WILL NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL MAY 25, AND THE THIRD READING ON JUNE 8.

PUBLIC VIEWS EXPRESSED DURING THIS TIME WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT AND REPRESENTATIONS MAY BE SUBMITTED TO UMEICO (SWIRE HOUSE, 12TH FLOOR, CHATER ROAD, CENTRAL, HONG KONG) OR THE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING (GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT, LOWER ALBERT ROAD, HONG KONG).

UNDER THE EXISTING FACTOR SYSTEM, THE PERMITTED INCREASE IN RENT IS HALF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CURRENT RENT AND THE FAIR MARKET RENT, OR 30 PER CENT OF THE CURRENT RENT, WHICHEVER IS THE SMALLER AMOUNT.

IT IS NOW PROPOSED THAT IN CASES WHERE THE NEW RENT DETERMINED BY THIS FORMULA IS LESS THAN 30 PER CENT OF THE FAIR MARKET RENT, THE PERMITTED INCREASE SHOULD BE AN AMOUNT NECESSARY TO BRING THE CURRENT RENT UP TO 30 PER CENT OF THE FAIR MARKET RENT.

MR LIAO SAID THE OBJECT WAS TO PREVENT VERY LOW RENTS, MANY OF WHICH HAD BEEN SUBJECT TO CONTROL FOR MORE THAN TEN YEARS, FROM FALLING FURTHER BELOW MARKET LEVELS AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE EVENTUAL RAISING OF SUCH RENTS CLOSER TO MARKET LEVELS.

+AS THE INCREASES AFFECTED BY THE ADDITIONAL REGULATOR WILL BE ON VERY LOW BASE RENTS, THEY WILL NOT BE EXCESSIVE IN DOLLAR TERMS,+ HE SAID. +AND IN SUCH CASES THE NEW RENT WILL BE NO MORE THAN 30 PER CENT OF THE FAIR MARKET RENT.+

AN ANALYSIS CARRIED OUT BY THE RATING AND VALUATION DEPARTMENT EARLY THIS YEAR SHOWED THAT ONLY ABOUT 7 000 OR FIVE PER CENT OF PROTECTED SOLE TENANTS WOULD BE AFFECTED BY THIS PROPOSAL.

+FOR MOST PROTECTED TENANTS THE BIENNIAL PERMITTED INCREASE WILL STILL BE DERIVED FROM THE EXISTING FACTOR SYSTEM,+ HE EXPLAINED.

COMMENTING ON THE EXCLUSION OF TENANCIES FROM PART II OF THE ORDINANCE, MR LIAO SAID THEY WOULD BE ACCORDED SECURITY OF TENURE UNDER PART IV.

THIS MEANS THAT SITTING TENANTS WILL HAVE SECURITY OF TENURE AS LONG AS THEY ARE PREPARED TO PAY A FAIR MARKET RENT FOR THEIR ACCOMMODATION. WHERE MUTUAL AGREEMENT ON A TENANCY RENEWAL CANNOT BE REACHED, THE TENANT CAN APPLY TO THE LANDS TRIBUNAL FOR THE GRANT OF A NEW TENANCY AT A FAIR MARKET RENT TO BE DETERMINED BY THE TRIBUNAL.

MR LIAO SAID TENANTS WHO TOOK OUT FRESH LETTINGS OF POST-WAR PREMISES AFTER JUNE 30 THIS YEAR, WHATEVER THE AGE OF THE BUILDING, WOULD BE IN THE SAME POSITION AS TENANTS OF BUILDINGS COMPLETED AFTER JUNE 18, 1981, WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN EXCLUDED FROM PART II CONTROLS FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS.

TENANCIES OF PREMISES WITH RATEABLE VALUES OF \$80 000 AND ABOVE AND \$60 000 AND ABOVE WERE EXCLUDED FROM PART II IN 1981 AND 1982 RESPECTIVELY, AND THE FURTHER EXCLUSION PROPOSED IN THE BILL IS A CONTINUATION OF THE PROGRESSIVE REMOVAL OF TENANCIES OF LUXURY FLATS FROM RENT CONTROL. ABOUT 1 100 TENANCIES WOULD BE AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSAL TO EXCLUDE THOSE OF PREMISES WITH A RATEABLE VALUE OF \$50 000 AND ABOVE. +OF THESE, SOME 80 PER CENT ARE HELD BY CORPORATE TENANTS,+ MR LIAO POINTED OUT. HE ADDED THAT IT WAS THE INTENTION TO CONTINUE WITH THE PROGRESSIVE REMOVAL FROM CONTROLS OF LUXURY PREMISES IN FUTURE YEARS.

MR LIAO SAID IT WAS PROPOSED TO CHANGE THE TERM +FAIR MARKET RENT+ TO +PREVAILING MARKET RENT+, BUT THE DEFINITION WOULD REMAIN UNCHANGED. HE SAID THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHANGE WAS TO REMOVE THE POSSIBLY MISLEADING CONNOTATION OF THE TERM +FAIR+.

THE BILL ALSO INCLUDES A NUMBER OF LEGAL AND TECHNICAL REFINEMENTS TO THE EXISTING ORDINANCE.

PROVISION IS MADE FOR THE SURRENDER, BY AGREEMENT, OF A TENANCY PROTECTED UNDER PART II. SUCH AN AGREEMENT WILL BE SUBJECT TO ENDORSEMENT BY THE COMMISSIONER OF RATING AND VALUATION, WHO IS REQUIRED TO SATISFY HIMSELF THAT THE TENANT INVOLVED UNDERSTANDS ITS EFFECT.

ANOTHER PROPOSAL RECOMMENDS THAT WHERE A PRINCIPAL TENANT HAS SUBLET THE WHOLE OF THE PREMISES HE SHOULD NOT BE ACCORDED ANY SECURITY OF TENURE. THE LANDLORD MAY APPLY FOR RECOVERY OF POSSESSION IN SUCH CASES. +HOWEVER,+ MR LIAO STRESSED, +SUB-TENANTS OF THE PREMISES WOULD BECOME DIRECT TENANTS OF THE LANDLORD AND CONTINUE TO ENJOY SECURITY OF TENURE.+

THE BILL ALSO SEEKS TO STRENGTHEN THE EXISTING PROVISION PROHIBITING THE LETTING AND SELLING OF PREMISES FOLLOWING RECOVERY OF POSSESSION FOR SELF-OCCUPATION OR REDEVELOPMENT.

+UNDER THE NEW PROVISION, THE PROHIBITION WILL BE IN FORCE BOTH DURING THE PERIOD OF STAY OF EXECUTION OF THE POSSESSION ORDER AND 24 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF DELIVERY OF VACANT POSSESSION BY THE TENANT,+ HE EXPLAINED. +IN ADDITION, THE MISUSE OF PREMISES FOLLOWING RECOVERY OF POSSESSION WILL BE PROHIBITED, AND THE LANDLORD WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO USE SUCH PREMISES FOR ANY PURPOSE OTHER THAN AS A RESIDENCE FOR THE PERSON FOR WHOM POSSESSION WAS OBTAINED.+

AS A FURTHER FORM OF PROTECTION, HARASSMENT WITH INTENT TO INDUCE A TENANT TO QUIT WOULD BECOME A CRIMINAL OFFENCE UNDER THE ORDINANCE. ANYONE CONVICTED OF SUCH AN OFFENCE WILL BE LIABLE TO A FINE OF \$500 000 AND, ON A SUBSEQUENT CONVICTION, TO IMPRISONMENT FOR 12 MONTHS.

MR LIAO SAID ANYONE WHO HAD ANY QUERIES CONCERNING THEIR OWN POSITION COULD SEEK ASSISTANCE FROM RENT OFFICERS AT THE RATING AND VALUATION DEPARTMENT OR DISTRICT OFFICES.

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LANDS TRIBUNAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983
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A BILL TO EXTEND THE JURISDICTION OF THE LANDS TRIBUNAL AND TO IMPROVE MATTERS OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE WAS PUBLISHED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE TODAY.

THE LANDS TRIBUNAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983 WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AT ITS NEXT SITTING ON APRIL 27 FOR FIRST AND SECOND READING. THE COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING OF THE BILL WILL TAKE PLACE ON MAY 25.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY DIRECT THEIR VIEWS ON THE BILL TO UMELCO OR THE HOUSING BRANCH.

THE MOST IMPORTANT PROVISION IN THE BILL ENABLES THE TRIBUNAL TO DEAL WITH APPLICATIONS FOR POSSESSION DURING THE CONTRACTUAL PERIOD.

UNDER EXISTING LEGISLATION, THE TRIBUNAL IS OBLIGED TO REFER A LANDLORD WHO IS ENTITLED TO POSSESSION UNDER THE CONTRACTUAL TENANCY TO THE DISTRICT COURT OR THE HIGH COURT IN CASES WHERE THE TRIBUNAL FINDS THAT THE MATTER DOES NOT FALL WITHIN THE LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONSOLIDATION) ORDINANCE.

+THE PROPOSED PROVISION STREAMLINES THE JUDICIAL ARRANGEMENT AND AVOIDS THE WASTE OF COST AND TIME TO THE BENEFIT OF BOTH LANDLORDS AND TENANTS,+ A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED.

THE BILL ALSO EMPOWERS THE TRIBUNAL TO MAKE ORDERS FOR PAYMENT AND INTERIM PAYMENT OF RENT AND MESNE PROFITS.

THE BILL CONTAINS A NUMBER OF OTHER PROVISIONS, WHICH ARE TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 1983

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HOSPITAL AND CLINIC FEES REVISED

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS REVISED A SERIES OF FEES AND CHARGES FOR CLINICAL CONSULTATIONS, INVESTIGATIONS AND TREATMENT FOR PRIVATE PATIENTS ATTENDING GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS AND CLINICS.

THE NEW CHARGES, WHICH TAKE EFFECT IMMEDIATELY, ARE PUBLISHED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE TODAY.

COMMENTING ON THE NEW RATES, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT POINTED OUT THAT THE REVISED CHARGES APPLY ONLY TO SUCH ANCILLARY SERVICES AS SURGICAL AND GYNAECOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS, LABORATORY TESTS AND PATHOLOGICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS, RADIOTHERAPY, CHEMOTHERAPY, CARDIAC-CATHERISATION ETC.

THE DAILY MAINTENANCE CHARGES FOR THE FIRST AND SECOND CLASS BEDS IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL, AT PRESENT AT \$240 AND \$160 RESPECTIVELY, WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED FOR THE TIME BEING.

+A REVIEW ON THE DAILY MAINTENANCE FEES IS UNDERWAY AND A DECISION WILL BE MADE IN A FEW MONTHS' TIME,+ HE ADDED.

THE SPOKESMAN STRESSED THAT THE CURRENT REVISION OF FEES AND CHARGES WILL NOT AFFECT THE GENERAL PUBLIC WHO STAY IN THE GENERAL WARDS OF GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS OR ATTEND OUT-PATIENT CLINICS.

HE EXPLAINED THAT PRIVATE PATIENTS ARE THOSE REFERRED TO GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS OR SPECIALIST CLINICS BY PRIVATE MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS AND THOSE WHO OPT TO STAY IN FIRST AND SECOND CLASS WARDS IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS.

THE RATES FOR THE ANCILLARY MEDICAL CHARGES FOR PRIVATE PATIENTS ATTENDING GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS AND CLINICS HAVE NOT BEEN REVISED SINCE 1975, WITH SOME AS FAR BACK AS 1972, HE SAID.

+THESE CHARGES ARE NO LONGER REALISTIC AND DEFINITELY INSUFFICIENT TO COVER THE FULL COSTS OF SUCH SERVICES,+ HE ADDED.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT IT IS GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO RECOVER IN FULL OR IN PART THE COST OF THESE SERVICES, AND IT IS CONSIDERED NECESSARY TO UPDATE THE CHARGES NOW WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF COMPUTERISED SYSTEMS, WHICH RENDER COSTING EXERCISES MUCH MORE ACCURATE AND EFFICIENT.

HE REITERATED THAT IT REMAINS GOVERNMENT POLICY TO CHARGE NOMINAL FEES FOR PATIENTS IN THE GENERAL WARDS AND THOSE WHO ATTEND THE GENERAL OUT-PATIENT CLINICS WITH A PROVISIO TO WAIVE OR REDUCE THESE FEES FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT AFFORD THEM.

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OPINIONS WELCOME ON REGIONAL TRANSPORT SERVICES
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DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS WERE TODAY (APRIL 15) ENCOURAGED TO AIR THEIR VIEWS ON REGIONAL TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT SERVICES THROUGH THEIR RESPECTIVE DISTRICT BOARDS.

ADDRESSING A GROUP OF 36 UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE KOWLOON CITY AND KWUN TONG DISTRICT BOARDS WHO VISITED THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT AT ITS KOWLOON REGIONAL OFFICES TODAY, MR PANG HAU-CHUNG, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT (KOWLOON), SAID THE BOARDS' OPINIONS WERE IMPORTANT TO THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY DECISIONS.

+THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT WAS REORGANISED IN OCTOBER 1982 IN LINE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION DRIVE, GIVING AUTONOMY TO THE REGIONAL OFFICES OF HONG KONG, KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES,+ MR PANG RECALLED.

+THIS WAS TO ENABLE FASTER AND MORE EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT NEEDS IN THE DISTRICTS,+ HE SAID.

THE ARRANGEMENT HAS WORKED WELL SINCE THEN.

TODAY'S VISIT WAS TO FAMILIARISE BOARD MEMBERS WITH THE OPERATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT.

THE GROUP LATER VISITED THE DEPARTMENT'S LICENSING OFFICES, THE INDOOR DRIVING INSTRUCTION CENTRE AND PARKING METER DEPOT.

ARRANGEMENTS ARE TO BE MADE FOR ANOTHER VISIT BY THE NEW CHAIRMEN OF THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEES OF ALL THE DISTRICT BOARDS IN KOWLOON WHEN THEY ARE ELECTED.

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181 CASES HANDLED BY CHAI WAN EMERGENCY CLINIC
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A TOTAL OF 181 CASES HAVE BEEN HANDLED BY THE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY SECTION OF THE CHAI WAN HEALTH CENTRE DURING THE PAST FOUR DAYS SINCE IT BEGAN OPERATION ON MONDAY (APRIL 11).

MEMBERS OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT BOARD WERE TOLD THIS TODAY (FRIDAY) DURING A VISIT TO THE CLINIC TO SEE ITS FACILITIES AND OPERATION.

THEY LEARNED THAT OF THESE, 131 PATIENTS WERE TREATED AND DISCHARGED WHILE THE REMAINING 50 WERE GIVEN PRIMARY TREATMENT BEFORE BEING SENT TO QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION.

THE CLINIC, WHICH OPENS DAILY FROM 8 AM TO 9.30 PM, SERVES AS THE DISTRICT'S CASUALTY STATION UNTIL THE PROPOSED EASTERN HOSPITAL WAS COMPLETED.

DURING THE VISIT, THE MEMBERS WERE SHOWN VARIOUS LIFE-SAVING EQUIPMENT AND INSTRUMENTS AND WERE BRIEFED ON HOW THE CLINIC OPERATED.

ACCOMPANYING THE PARTY WERE THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR (HONG KONG) OF THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT, DR CHAN KWAN-YUEN, AND THE EASTERN DISTRICT OFFICER, MR H.T. LUI, WHO IS ALSO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DISTRICT BOARD.

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SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED TO MUSICIANS AND DANCERS
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TALENTED YOUNG MUSICIANS AND DANCERS CAN NOW APPLY FOR THE 1983/84 SCHOLARSHIPS OF THE HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB MUSIC FUND.

THE SCHOLARSHIPS ARE PRIMARILY FOR ONE YEAR TO ENABLE SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS TO PURSUE A THREE-YEAR FULL-TIME COURSE AT EITHER THE HONG KONG CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC OR THE HONG KONG ACADEMY OF BALLET.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE MUSIC FUND POINTED OUT TODAY THAT THE SCHOLARSHIPS WOULD COVER TUITION FEES AND INCLUDE A TECHNICAL ALLOWANCE. A MONTHLY SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE OF UP TO \$1 000 MIGHT BE GRANTED ACCORDING TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS.

FOR EXCEPTIONALLY TALENTED CANDIDATES, OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIPS MIGHT BE CONSIDERED, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

CANDIDATES APPLYING FOR ADVANCED INSTRUMENTAL STUDIES SHOULD NOT BE OVER THE AGE OF 23 ON SEPTEMBER 1, 1983 AND SHOULD HAVE ACHIEVED A MERIT IN GRADE VIII OR EQUIVALENT. PREFERENCE WILL BE GIVEN TO THOSE WITH A DIPLOMA STANDARD.

AS FOR BALLET SCHOLARSHIPS, CANDIDATES SHOULD BE AT LEAST 16 YEARS OLD ON SEPTEMBER 1, 1983 AND HAVE SOME PREVIOUS DANCE TRAINING. PREFERENCE WILL BE GIVEN TO THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED, OR ARE WORKING FOR, THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCING ELEMENTARY EXAMINATION OR ITS EQUIVALENT.

ALL APPLICANTS SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST ONE YEAR'S RESIDENCE IN HONG KONG AND THEY WILL BE AUDITIONED OR INTERVIEWED IN MAY (FOR MUSIC) AND JULY (FOR BALLET) 1983. SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES ARE EXPECTED TO TAKE UP THEIR SCHOLARSHIPS IN SEPTEMBER 1983.

APPLICATION FORMS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM:

(A) HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB MUSIC FUND OFFICE,
7TH FLOOR, PACIFIC HOUSE,
20 QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL,
HONG KONG.

(B) MUSIC OFFICE HEADQUARTERS,
RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT,
9TH FLOOR, HONG KONG ARTS CENTRE, AND

(C) MUSIC CENTRES OF THE MUSIC OFFICE,
(ADDRESSES ARE OBTAINABLE ON 5-249353)

COMPLETED APPLICATION FORMS MUST BE RETURNED TO THE HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB MUSIC FUND OFFICE BY THE APPLICANT PERSONALLY.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR ADVANCED INSTRUMENTAL STUDIES IS MONDAY, APRIL 25, 1983 AND FOR BALLET IS MONDAY, JUNE 6, 1983.

FURTHER DETAILS MAY BE OBTAINED BY DIALLING 5-249353.

COMMUNITY LEADERS PLANT TREES

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A TOTAL OF 780 000 YOUNG TREES WILL BE PLANTED IN HONG KONG THIS YEAR, THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, DR JOHN RIDDELL-SWAN SAID THIS (FRIDAY) AFTERNOON.

OF THESE TREES, WHICH ARE PRODUCED AT NURSERIES OF THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT, 380 000 WILL BE PLANTED IN COUNTRY PARKS AS PART OF THE DEPARTMENT'S ON-GOING FORESTRY WORK. THE REMAINDER WILL BE PLANTED BY OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN OTHER AREAS, DR RIDDELL-SWAN SAID.

DR RIDDELL-SWAN TODAY LED A GROUP OF GUESTS, INCLUDING LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND LEADERS OF ORGANISED GROUPS, TO PLANT THE FIRST TREES AT A SITE INSIDE THE ABERDEEN COUNTRY PARK TO KICK OFF THIS YEAR'S COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING SCHEME.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE SCHEME IS A MASS PLANTING ON SUNDAY (APRIL 17) WHEN 10 000 YOUNG TREES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED FREE OF CHARGE TO VISITORS TO SIX COUNTRY PARKS FOR PLANTING.

LOCATIONS WHERE THESE TREES WILL BE AVAILABLE ARE NEAR THE RESERVOIR BARRIER INSIDE THE POKFULAM COUNTRY PARK ON HONG KONG ISLAND; NEAR THE NAM SHAN CAMP SITE INSIDE THE LANTAU SOUTH COUNTRY PARK ON LANTAU; NEAR THE TAI AU MUN CAR PARK INSIDE THE CLEAR WATER BAY COUNTRY PARK; NEAR THE PAK TAM CHUNG CAR PARK INSIDE THE SAI KUNG COUNTRY PARK; AT BRIDE'S POOL IN THE PLOVER COVE COUNTRY PARK, AND NEAR THE ROUTE TWISK MANAGEMENT CENTRE INSIDE THE TAI LAM COUNTRY PARK IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

SPEAKING AT TODAY'S SPECIAL CEREMONY, DR RIDDELL-SWAN SAID ANOTHER 3 000 SEEDLINGS HAD BEEN GIVEN TO SCHOOLS AND WELFARE CENTRES FOR THE BEAUTIFICATION OF THEIR PREMISES.

HE SAID: +THERE ARE NOW PROBABLY MORE TREES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OF HONG KONG THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE THIS CENTURY.+

DR RIDDELL-SWAN RECALLED THAT THE FIRST COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING DAY ORGANISED BY THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT WAS HELD IN SHING MUN IN 1957 AND TREE PLANTING DAYS WERE ANNUAL EVENTS UNTIL THE MID-SEVENTIES. THE SCHEME WAS REVIVED LAST YEAR AND IT WILL CONTINUE IN FUTURE.

+THE PLANTING OF TREES IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR HONG KONG IF WE ARE TO KEEP OUR LANDSCAPE FRESH AND GREEN AND IF WE ARE TO MAKE AMENDS FOR TREES LOST THROUGH A WIDE VARIETY OF CAUSES, SOME NECESSARY AND SOME UNFORTUNATELY EASILY PREVENTABLE.

+I WOULD LIKE, THEREFORE, TO ASK ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY TO AFFIRM THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE BEAUTIFICATION OF HONG KONG BY PLANTING A TREE OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS IN ONE OF THEIR COUNTRY PARKS.+

STAFF OF THE DEPARTMENT WILL BE ON DUTY ON SUNDAY IN THE SIX COUNTRY PARKS TO ASSIST THE TREE-PLANTING PUBLIC.

/DR RIDDELL-SWAN

DR RIDDELL-SWAN SAID: +IT WAS NOT ENOUGH JUST TO PLANT TREES. TREES HAVE TO BE PROTECTED, ESPECIALLY FROM THEIR GREATEST ENEMY --- FIRE.

+VISITORS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE SHOULD TAKE PARTICULAR CARE NOT TO START FIRES AND DO EVERYTHING THEY CAN TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO TREES AND PLANTS THROUGH VANDALISM AND IGNORANCE.+

THREE LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS, THE REV JOYCE BENNETT, DR HENRY HU AND MR CHEUNG YAN-LUNG PRESENTED SOUVENIR BANNERS TO REPRESENTATIVES OF SCHOOL GROUPS, ORGANISED HIKING GROUPS AND OTHER PARTIES WHO HAD TAKEN PART IN VARIOUS VOLUNTARY CONSERVATION PROJECTS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE DURING THE YEAR.

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LAND RESUMPTION FOR UC SPORTS GROUND
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ABOUT 2 226 SQUARE METRES OF PRIVATE LAND AT THE JUNCTION OF HAMMER HILL ROAD AND LUNG CHEUNG ROAD WILL BE RESUMED FOR AN URBAN COUNCIL SPORTS GROUND AND SWIMMING POOL PROJECT.

ANNOUNCING THIS TODAY, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT TO MEET THE SHORTFALL OF ACTIVE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE EAST KOWLOON AREA, THE URBAN COUNCIL PLANS TO CONSTRUCT ON A FIVE-HECTARE SITE A COMPLEX TO BE KNOWN AS THE +HAMMER HILL ROAD SPORTS GROUND AND SWIMMING POOL+.

+THE PROJECT WILL INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF AN EIGHT-LANE RUNNING TRACK WITH ATHLETIC TRAINING FACILITIES, AN ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL PITCH, TENNIS COURTS, A STANDARD MAIN SWIMMING POOL AND RECREATIONAL POOLS SUCH AS A WAVE POOL AND A SLIDE POOL,+ THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

+THIS WILL BE A SPECIAL FEATURE OF THE PROJECT AS SO FAR NO RECREATIONAL POOLS EXIST IN HONG KONG,+ HE ADDED.

+DEVELOPMENT WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN TWO STAGE. WORK ON THE FIRST STAGE, COMPRISING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SPORTS GROUND AND THE OTHER OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, WILL START IN JULY. WORK ON THE SWIMMING POOLS AND RECREATIONAL POOLS FACILITIES, WHICH FORMS STAGE TWO OF THE PROJECT, IS EXPECTED TO START NEXT YEAR.+

THE RESUMPTION WILL AFFECT 796 STRUCTURES, COMPRISING 700 DOMESTIC DWELLINGS, EIGHT SHOPS, 82 WORKSHOPS, FOUR GODOWNS AND TWO UNREGISTERED TEMPLES.

+ABOUT 2 400 PEOPLE FROM ABOUT 690 FAMILIES WILL BE REHOUSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PRESENT HOUSING POLICY,+ THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

+THOSE ELIGIBLE WILL BE PAID EX-GRATIA DOMESTIC REMOVAL ALLOWANCE WHILE BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS WILL BE OFFERED EX-GRATIA CASH ALLOWANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CURRENT POLICY.+

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SEMINAR FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

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A SEMINAR FEATURING +LANGUAGE LEARNING SKILLS AND LEARNING LANGUAGE SKILLS+ WILL BE HELD ON MAY 14 FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

ORGANISED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING CENTRE FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND/FOREIGN LANGUAGE, THE SEMINAR WILL BE HELD AT THE CENTRE'S HONG KONG UNIT AT 9A BONHAM ROAD, HONG KONG.

THE PRINCIPAL LECTURER OF THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC'S DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE, MR YU FONG-YING, WILL PRESENT THE THEME SPEECH.

THERE WILL BE PLACES FOR 80 SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND APPLICATIONS WILL BE TREATED ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS.

HEADS OF SCHOOLS WISHING TO NOMINATE TEACHERS TO ATTEND THE SEMINAR SHOULD SUBMIT THEIR NOMINATIONS TO THE SENIOR INSPECTOR, ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING CENTRE, 9A BONHAM ROAD, HONG KONG ON OR BEFORE APRIL 28.

ENQUIRIES CONCERNING THE SEMINAR MAY BE MADE AT THE CENTRE AT TEL. NO. 5-482537.

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OLD TEN-CENT COINS TO BE WITHDRAWN

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THE OLD, HEAVIER NICKEL-AND-BRASS TEN-CENT COINS WILL CEASE TO BE LEGAL TENDER FROM JANUARY 1 NEXT YEAR.

A PROCLAMATION ON THIS IS PUBLISHED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE TODAY.

THIS MEANS THAT FROM JANUARY 1, 1984, THERE WILL BE NO LEGAL OBLIGATION TO ACCEPT THESE OLD COINS IN SATISFACTION OF DEBTS NOT EXCEEDING TWO DOLLARS, THE LEGAL TENDER LIMIT FOR TEN-CENT COINS. THE COINS BECAME LEGAL TENDER ON FEBRUARY 16, 1949.

THE PUBLIC SHOULD THEREFORE EXCHANGE THEIR COINS AT BANKS BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF NEXT YEAR.

ALTHOUGH SHOPKEEPERS AND OTHERS NEED NOT ACCEPT THE COINS AFTER THAT TIME, THE BANKS HOWEVER, WILL ACCEPT THEM FOR EXCHANGE.

THE NEW, SMALLER, TEN-CENT COIN, ALSO MADE OF NICKEL-AND-BRASS, WAS INTRODUCED ON JULY 2, 1982. SINCE THAT DATE THE OLD COINS RECEIVED BY THE HONGKONG AND SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM CIRCULATION.

AS AT MARCH 31 THIS YEAR, 553 MILLION TEN-CENT COINS WERE IN CIRCULATION, OF WHICH 361 MILLION WERE THE OLD TYPE. HOWEVER, IT IS LIKELY THAT A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF THE OLD COINS HAVE BEEN LOST.

THE DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS OF THE TWO COINS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

	<u>DIAMETER</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>	<u>EDGE/ THICKNESS</u>	<u>SHAPE</u>	<u>TYPE OF EDGE</u>
	(MM)	(GRAMME)	(MM)		
NEW COIN: NICKEL-BRASS	17.50	1.85	1.15	ROUND	PLAIN
OLD COIN: NICKEL-BRASS	20.57	4.54	1.85	ROUND	MILLED

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TEAMS MAY ENROL FOR TAI PO DRAGON BOAT RACE
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TEAMS WISHING TO TAKE PART IN THIS YEAR'S DRAGON BOAT RACE IN TAI PO MAY ENROL WITH THE DISTRICT OFFICE OR THE RURAL COMMITTEE FROM TODAY.

THE RACE WILL BE HELD ON JUNE 15 ALONG THE MAIN DAM OF THE PLOVER COVE RESERVOIR. THE LENGTH OF THE RACING COURSE IS ABOUT 1 000 METRES.

APPLICATION FORMS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE OFFICES OF THE TAI PO RURAL COMMITTEE AND DISTRICT OFFICE AND MUST BE RETURNED BEFORE MAY 10.

EACH TEAM SHALL HAVE 27 MEMBERS, COMPRISING A PADDLING CREW OF 24, ONE DRUMMER, ONE GONG-BEATER AND ONE STEERSMAN.

THE DRAGON BOAT RACE IS ORGANISED BY A COMMITTEE COMPRISING THE DISTRICT OFFICE, THE RURAL COMMITTEE, THE TAI PO SPORTS ASSOCIATION AND OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

THE EVENT WILL COST ABOUT \$300 000 FUNDED BY THE DISTRICT BOARD AND LOCAL DONATIONS.

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