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DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL.: 842 8777

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 1993

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 1993

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HONG KONG WANTS CHINA'S MFN STATUS RENEWED

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HONG KONG WANTS CHINA'S MOST FAVOURED NATION TRADING STATUS RENEWED THIS YEAR AND MAINTAINED IN FUTURE, THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR PATTEN SAID HIS DIRECT AND URGENT CONCERN WAS THE DAMAGE THAT MIGHT BE DONE TO HONG KONG IF CHINA'S MFN STATUS WAS WITHDRAWN.

SPEAKING AT A LUNCHEON OF THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, MR PATTEN SAID DESPITE THE FACT THAT HONG KONG WAS A REMARKABLY RESILIENT PLACE, THERE WAS NO DOUBT AT ALL THAT THE IMMEDIATE DAMAGE DONE TO THE TERRITORY BECAUSE OF CHINA'S LOSS OF MFN STATUS WOULD BE VERY SUBSTANTIAL.

"OUR LATEST ESTIMATES SUGGEST IT WOULD HALVE OUR GROWTH RATE AND DESTROY NEARLY 70,000 JOBS.

"SO MY MESSAGE ON THIS ISSUE IS VERY STRAIGHTFORWARD. HONG KONG WANTS CHINA'S MFN STATUS RENEWED THIS YEAR, AND MAINTAINED IN FUTURE," HE SAID.

MR PATTEN MADE IT CLEAR THAT THIS WAS NOT JUST PLEADING HONG KONG'S OWN SPECIAL INTERESTS.

NOTING THAT THE US/HK POLICY ACT 1992 UNDERLINED THE U.S.'S STRONG INTEREST IN THE ECONOMIC VITALITY, PROSPERITY AND STABILITY OF THE TERRITORY, HE SAID IF MFN STATUS WERE WITHDRAWN, IT WOULD COST U.S. CONSUMERS U.S.\$14 BILLION.

IF CHINA WERE TO RETALIATE, U.S. EXPORTS WORTH AN ESTIMATED U.S.\$8 BILLION, AND OVER 150,000 U.S. JOBS WOULD BE PUT AT RISK, HE ADDED.

"AS I SAID, THIS IS A WEAPON THAT CUTS BOTH WAYS."

THE GOVERNOR EXPRESSED APPRECIATION OF OVERSEAS INTEREST IN HONG KONG.

"HONG KONG IS IN MANY WAYS AN INTERNATIONAL CITY, AND IT IS NATURAL THAT ALL THOSE WITH INTERESTS HERE SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING OUR FUTURE PROSPECTS," HE SAID.

"BUT AS PRESIDENT CLINTON HAS SAID, THE JOINT DECLARATION AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR HONG KONG'S RETURN TO CHINA ARE MATTERS FOR CHINA AND BRITAIN TO WORK OUT."

THE GOVERNOR WARNED AGAINST DRAWING HONG KONG'S CONSTITUTIONAL CONCERNS INTO THE MFN DEBATE.

"IF THOSE WHO WOULD HELP US HAVE IT IN MIND TO PULL OUR CONSTITUTIONAL CONCERNS INTO THE MFN DEBATE, I SHOULD LIKE TO MAKE A VERY FRANK APPEAL TO THEM: PLEASE DON'T," HE SAID.

/"YOU CAN'T

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"YOU CAN'T HELP US BY HURTING OUR ECONOMY.

"IT IS NO LESS PERVERSE, FOR BEING WELL-INTENTIONED, TO SET OUT TO REMOVE CHINA'S MFN STATUS WITH THE AVOWED INTENTION OF SUPPORTING HONG KONG.

"THAT WOULD BE MASSIVELY COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE," MR PATTEN SAID.

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POSITIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH TO ELECTION TALKS, SIR ROBIN SAYS
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THE BRITISH TEAM WILL APPROACH THE TALKS ON THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 1994/95 ELECTIONS IN HONG KONG POSITIVELY AND CONSTRUCTIVELY, THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO CHINA, SIR ROBIN MCLAREN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS BEFORE DEPARTURE FOR PEKING, SIR ROBIN SAID THEY WOULD BE WORKING FOR A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME.

"THAT MAY TAKE A LITTLE TIME BUT WE WILL BE LOOKING TO GET DOWN, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, TO THE TASK OF DISCUSSING THE PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ELECTIONS DUE TO TAKE PLACE IN HONG KONG NEXT YEAR AND IN 1995," HE SAID.

SIR ROBIN SAID HE HAD TWO DAYS OF VERY THOROUGH DISCUSSIONS IN HONG KONG IN PREPARATION FOR THE TALKS.

"THE GOVERNOR HAS GIVEN US, ME AND MEMBERS OF MY TEAM, A GREAT DEAL OF HIS TIME," HE SAID.

"WE HAD A GOOD DISCUSSION WITH EXCO AND IT'S BEEN PARTICULARLY VALUABLE TO ME TO HEAR THE VIEWS OF THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF EXCO.

"I THINK WE ARE NOW VERY WELL PREPARED FOR THE TASK WHICH LIES AHEAD."

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CONTRACT SIGNED FOR EXPANDING SHEUNG SHUI WATER WORKS
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THE WATER SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT TODAY (WEDNESDAY) AWARDED A \$91.5 MILLION CONTRACT FOR EXPANDING SHEUNG SHUI TREATMENT WORKS TO MEET THE INCREASING DEMAND FOR POTABLE WATER ARISING FROM THE CONTINUAL DEVELOPMENT OF TAI PO, FANLING AND SHEUNG SHUI NEW TOWNS.

ON COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT IN EARLY 1995, THE CAPACITY OF THE EXISTING TREATMENT WORKS WILL BE INCREASED FROM 100,000 CUBIC METRES TO 200,000 CUBIC METRES PER DAY, WITH PROVISION FOR FURTHER EXPANSION TO AN ULTIMATE CAPACITY OF 250,000 CUBIC METRES.

/THE CONTRACT

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THE CONTRACT INCLUDES THE CONSTRUCTION OF CLARIFIERS, FILTERS, WATER TANKS, ANCILLARY STRUCTURES AND BUILDINGS, AND MODIFICATION OF THE EXISTING TREATMENT WORKS.

THE CONTRACTOR IS ALSO REQUIRED TO CONSTRUCT FACILITIES FOR HOUSING A NEW CHLORINE SCRUBBING PLANT SCHEDULED FOR COMMISSIONING BY THE END OF THIS YEAR.

DESIGNED ON STRICT ACCORDANCE WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN AN ASSESSMENT REPORT BY AN INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT, THE PLANT CAN ABSORB LEAKED CHLORINE AND NEUTRALISE IT WITH SODIUM HYDROXIDE WITHIN THE CHLORINE STORAGE HOUSE UNTIL THE CHLORINE CONTENT DROPS TO A SAFE LEVEL.

THIS WILL MINIMISE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE STORAGE AND HANDLING OF CHLORINE.

THIS CONTRACT IS THE SECOND ONE AWARDED UNDER THE "SHEUNG SHUI TREATMENT WORKS - STAGE II" PROJECT.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF WATER SUPPLIES, MR WU YU-NGONG, SIGNED THE CONTRACT ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT WITH A REPRESENTATIVE OF PAUL Y CONSTRUCTION CO LTD.

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TWO NT SITES TO LET
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THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT IS INVITING TENDERS FOR THE SHORT-TERM TENANCY OF TWO PIECES OF GOVERNMENT LAND IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THE FIRST LOT IN AREA 3 OF TSING KING ROAD ON TSING YI HAS AN AREA OF ABOUT 16,300 SQUARE METRES.

IT IS FOR USE AS A PUBLIC FEE-PAYING CAR PARK FOR CONTAINER TRACTORS AND TRAILERS.

THE TENANCY IS FOR FIVE MONTHS, RENEWABLE MONTHLY AFTERWARDS.

THE SECOND LOT, IN AREA 20, FANLING, HAS AN AREA OF 6,150 SQUARE METRES.

IT IS ALSO EARMARKED FOR USE AS A FEE-PAYING CAR PARK FOR VEHICLES INCLUDING LORRIES, BUT EXCLUDING CONTAINER VEHICLES.

THE TENANCY IS FOR TWO YEARS, RENEWABLE QUARTERLY AFTERWARDS.

CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF TENDERS IS NOON ON MAY 7.

/FORMS OF

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FORMS OF TENDER, TENDER NOTICE AND CONDITIONS MAY BE OBTAINED
FROM:

- * THE KWAI TSING DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, 10TH FLOOR, TSUEN WAN STATION MULTI-STOREY CARPARK BUILDING, 174-208 CASTLE PEAK ROAD, TSUEN WAN;
- * THE NORTH DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, SIXTH FLOOR, 3 PIK FUNG ROAD, NORTH DISTRICT GOVERNMENT OFFICES, FANLING;
- * THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD; AND
- * THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES KOWLOON, 10TH FLOOR, YAU MA TEI CARPARK BUILDING, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, KOWLOON.

THE TENDER PLANS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE IN THESE OFFICES.

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AIDS AWARENESS CONCERT TO BE HELD ON SUNDAY
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A LIVE CONCERT WILL BE ORGANISED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ON SUNDAY (APRIL 25) AT THE KWAI FONG METRO PLAZA LEVEL 3 TO KICK OFF A MAJOR PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN ON AIDS PREVENTION.

THE TWO-HOUR CONCERT, BEGINNING AT 2.30 PM, IS A PRELUDE TO AN 'ENJOY YOURSELF TONIGHT' SHOW TO BE STAGED ON APRIL 30 (FRIDAY).

FOLLOWING THE LIVE CONCERT AND THE SHOW, A SERIES OF ACTIVITIES, TARGETING AT DIFFERENT COMMUNITY GROUPS, WILL BE CONDUCTED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR TO PROMOTE AIDS AWARENESS.

PEOPLE WITH A RED RIBBON WHICH IS OBTAINABLE AT AN EXHIBITION ON AIDS TO BE HELD AT LEVEL 2 OF THE SAME PLAZA FROM 11 AM TO 6 PM ON THAT DAY CAN BE ADMITTED FREE TO THE CONCERT.

THE RED RIBBONS, WHICH ARE USED AS THE SYMBOL OF AIDS AWARENESS, WILL BE GIVEN OUT AS SOUVENIRS AT THE EXHIBITION.

AIDS AWARENESS PLAYING CARDS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE AUDIENCE WHO TAKE PART IN A QUIZ DURING THE CONCERT.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, YAN CHAI HOSPITAL, TELEVISION BROADCASTING LIMITED (TVB) AND WARNER MUSIC HONG KONG LIMITED HAVE GIVEN ACTIVE SUPPORT IN ORGANISING THE CONCERT.

/OFFICIATING GUESTS

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OFFICIATING GUESTS WILL INCLUDE DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS SHELLEY LAU; DIRECTOR OF HEALTH, DR S H LEE; DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF HEALTH, DR MARGARET CHAN; MR WONG CHI-MUK AND MR STAR CHAN IU-SENG, CHAIRMAN AND DIRECTOR RESPECTIVELY OF THE YAN CHAI HOSPITAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS; MISS HONG KONG 1992 MISS EMILY LO AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM TVB AND WARNER MUSIC HONG KONG LIMITED.

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ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE WELCOME TO COVER THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE CONCERT TO BE HELD AT 2 PM ON SUNDAY (APRIL 25) AT LEVEL 3 OF KWAI FONG METRO PLAZA.

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FOSTER CARE EXHIBITIONS IN HOUSING ESTATES

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THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT WILL STAGE A SERIES OF EXHIBITIONS AT EIGHT PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES FROM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO MAY 16 IN A BID TO ATTRACT MORE CARING COUPLES TO BECOME FOSTER PARENTS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID MANY FAMILIES IN HOUSING ESTATES HAD SHOWN INTEREST TO BECOME FOSTER PARENTS.

AN EXPERIMENTAL EXHIBITION HELD AT LEI TUNG ESTATE IN AP LEI CHAU EARLIER THIS YEAR HAD PROVED TO BE VERY POPULAR WITH RESIDENTS, HE SAID.

EACH OF THE EXHIBITIONS WOULD BE FOLLOWED BY BRIEFINGS TO BE HELD AT THE RESPECTIVE HOUSING ESTATES WITHIN A WEEK.

"INTERESTED COUPLES MAY DISCUSS FOSTER CARE SERVICE WITH SOCIAL WORKERS AT THE BRIEFINGS AND RETURN APPLICATION FORMS IF THEY ARE FOUND TO BE ELIGIBLE," HE SAID.

THE IDEAL FOSTER PARENTS ARE CARING COUPLES AGED BETWEEN 25 AND 60.

FOSTER CARE IS AIMED AT PROVIDING A TEMPORARY ALTERNATIVE FAMILY FOR CHILDREN WHO CANNOT BE ADEQUATELY LOOKED AFTER BY THEIR FAMILIES, POSSIBLY BECAUSE OF NEGLECT, ILLNESS OF PARENTS OR OTHER SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

"THROUGH FOSTERING, CHILDREN CAN GROW UNDER A PROPER FAMILY SETTING AND ENJOY HAPPY CHILDHOOD," THE SPOKESMAN NOTED.

/THE EXHIBITIONS

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THE EXHIBITIONS WILL BE HELD IN HENG ON ESTATE (APRIL 22-23) AND NEW TOWN PLAZA (APRIL 24-25) IN SHA TIN; FUNG TAK ESTATE (APRIL 27-28) AND CHUK YUEN (SOUTH) ESTATE (APRIL 29-30) IN WONG TAI SIN; PO LAM ESTATE (MAY 3-4), KING LAM ESTATE (MAY 5-6) AND TSUI LAM ESTATE (MAY 7-8) IN TSEUNG KWAN O; AND WAN TSUI ESTATE (MAY 13-14) AND SIU SAI WAN ESTATE (MAY 15-16) IN CHAI WAN.

ENQUIRIES ON THE SERVICE CAN BE MADE ON TEL 852 4596 OR 852 4599.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION -----
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,560
REVERSAL OF LAF	+590
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	2,150
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-800
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,350
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	TWI 111.9 *+0.0* 21.4.93

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS

TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.67 PCT	13 MONTHS	2405	5.50	102.45	3.19
1 MONTH	2.79 PCT	16 MONTHS	2408	4.375	101.35	3.35
3 MONTHS	2.83 PCT	19 MONTHS	2411	4.625	101.71	3.52
6 MONTHS	2.95 PCT	22 MONTHS	2502	4.75	101.81	3.74
12 MONTHS	3.17 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 24,798MN

CLOSED 21 APRIL 1993

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MOTION DEBATE ON POLICE COMPLAINTS

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THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF THE SPEECH BY THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, ON THE MOTION DEBATE ON INDEPENDENT UNIT TO INVESTIGATE POLICE COMPLAINTS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TONIGHT.

MR PRESIDENT,

I HAVE LISTENED CAREFULLY TO THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY MEMBERS IN SUPPORT OF MR TO'S MOTION. BUT I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IT IS NECESSARY OR DESIRABLE TO ESTABLISH A SEPARATE, INDEPENDENT BODY TO INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE, ALTHOUGH I ACCEPT THAT IMPROVEMENTS CAN AND SHOULD BE MADE TO THE SYSTEM FOR INVESTIGATING AND MONITORING SUCH COMPLAINTS. THAT IS OUR INTENTION.

IT SHOULD NOT BE ASSUMED THAT OFFICERS OF THE COMPLAINTS AGAINST POLICE OFFICE (CAPO) WOULD NATURALLY TEND TO PROTECT THEIR COLLEAGUES UNDER INVESTIGATION. DURING EACH OF THE PAST THREE YEARS, AN AVERAGE OF 320 POLICE OFFICERS WHO WERE THE TARGET OF COMPLAINTS WERE, FOLLOWING A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION, THE SUBJECT OF CRIMINAL OR DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS OR WARNINGS. THAT DOES NOT INDICATE BIAS OR LACK OF OBJECTIVITY IN INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE. RATHER THE REVERSE. THE MAINTENANCE OF DISCIPLINE, AND OF STANDARDS GENERALLY, IS ONE OF THE PRIME CONCERNS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, AS IT MUST BE FOR THE HEAD OF ANY DISCIPLINED SERVICE. THE NEED TO UPHOLD THE STANDARDS AND REPUTATION OF THE FORCE IS UNDERSTOOD AND ACCEPTED BY OFFICERS AT ALL LEVELS, AND THEY ARE NOT TOLERANT OR FORGIVING OF THOSE WHO LET THE FORCE DOWN.

IT ALSO SHOULD NOT BE ASSUMED THAT THERE IS SOME MINIMUM PROPORTION OF COMPLAINTS WHICH MUST BE GENUINE AND SHOULD, THEREFORE, BE SUBSTANTIATED. THERE IS NO OBJECTIVE BASIS FOR THIS. STATISTICS CAN BE VERY MISLEADING. THE LOW RATE OF SUBSTANTIATED ALLEGATIONS MUST BE SEEN AGAINST THE BACKGROUND THAT SOME 60% OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY CAPO EACH YEAR CANNOT BE PURSUED, BECAUSE FOR EXAMPLE THE COMPLAINANT WITHDRAWS THE COMPLAINT VOLUNTARILY. THE SUBSTANTIATION RATE OF COMPLAINTS WHICH ARE INVESTIGATED IS ABOUT 7%. ANOTHER 9% ARE RESOLVED INFORMALLY AFTER DISCUSSION AND EXPLANATION, AND WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE COMPLAINANTS.

/THERE ARE

THERE ARE VERY GOOD REASONS WHY THE POLICE, IN THE FRONT LINE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT, WILL ALWAYS ATTRACT A LARGE NUMBER OF UNJUSTIFIED COMPLAINTS. SOME WHO ARE PROSECUTED LODGE COMPLAINTS TO TRY TO DISCREDIT THE ARRESTING POLICE OFFICERS AS A MEANS OF DEFENCE. SOME MAKE COMPLAINTS IN THE HOPE OF AVOIDING PROSECUTION ALTOGETHER. OTHERS MAY LODGE COMPLAINTS IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT, FOR EXAMPLE AFTER RECEIVING A SUMMONS FOR A MINOR OFFENCE, BUT ON CALMER REFLECTION DECIDE TO RETRACT THE ALLEGATION. I HAVE HEARD THE SUGGESTION THAT THE PERSON WILL NOT BOTHER TO GO THROUGH THE COMPLAINT PROCESS UNLESS HE HAS A GENUINE CAUSE FOR GRIEVANCE. THAT, AT BEST, IS ANOTHER ASSUMPTION. IF WE WERE TO ACCEPT IT AS A BASIS FOR BELIEVING THE COMPLAINANT'S WORDS, POLICE OFFICERS WOULD HAVE LITTLE PROTECTION AGAINST MALICIOUS COMPLAINTS. POLICE OFFICERS HAVE A RIGHT TO BE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNLESS THERE IS ADEQUATE RELIABLE EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY. FOR SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS, THE QUESTION WHETHER THERE IS ADEQUATE RELIABLE EVIDENCE IN A PARTICULAR CASE IS JUDGED NOT BY CAPO BUT BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS.

IN ANY CASE, THE SUCCESS OR OTHERWISE OF A POLICE COMPLAINTS AND REDRESS SYSTEM SHOULD NOT BE JUDGED JUST ON STATISTICS. WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT IS THE BENEFIT WHICH SOCIETY AS A WHOLE DERIVES. COMPLAINT CASES ENABLE THE POLICE FORCE TO IMPROVE ITS SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC, TO REVISE ITS PROCEDURES AND TO IMPRESS UPON ALL POLICE OFFICERS THE NEED TO BE COURTEOUS AND CONSIDERATE IN DISCHARGING THEIR DUTIES.

IT IS OF COURSE IMPORTANT THAT INDEPENDENT, NON-POLICE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY ARE INVOLVED IN THE CONSIDERATION OF COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE IN ORDER TO ENSURE IMPARTIALITY. THIS IS THE REASON FOR THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE. THE COMMITTEE CONSISTS OF PEOPLE OF HIGH STANDING AND INTEGRITY APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR TO MONITOR THE INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS BY THE POLICE. IT IS ASSISTED BY AN INDEPENDENT SECRETARIAT. THE COMMITTEE ANALYSES AND CONSIDERS THE RESULT OF EACH INVESTIGATION. IT CAN, AND DOES, REFER CASES BACK TO CAPO FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND INVESTIGATION WHERE IT CONSIDERS THIS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT A COMPLAINT HAS BEEN DEALT WITH FULLY AND FAIRLY. IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, IF NOT SATISFIED WITH CAPO'S INVESTIGATION, THE COMMITTEE CAN DRAW A CASE TO THE ATTENTION OF THE GOVERNOR. THIS SYSTEM IMPOSES PRESSURE ON CAPO TO ENSURE THAT COMPLAINTS ARE INVESTIGATED THOROUGHLY AND IMPARTIALLY.

THE ADMINISTRATION REMAINS OF THE VIEW THAT, WHILE MONITORING SHOULD BE DONE BY AN INDEPENDENT BODY, INVESTIGATIONS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE POLICE. THERE ARE GOOD REASONS FOR THIS. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE USUALLY ALLEGE BREACHES OF THE CRIMINAL LAW, OR OF POLICE DISCIPLINE OR PROCEDURES. SOME ARE STRAIGHTFORWARD CRIME REPORTS WHICH CLEARLY SHOULD BE A MATTER FOR THE POLICE; OTHERS REQUIRE A KNOWLEDGE OF POLICE PROCEDURES, AND IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, THE EXERCISE OF PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT AS TO WHETHER THE ACTION OF THE POLICE OFFICER UNDER INVESTIGATION IS JUSTIFIED IN ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CASE.

THE VIABILITY OF ESTABLISHING AN INDEPENDENT UNIT COMPRISING NON-POLICE OFFICERS OUTSIDE THE POLICE FORCE MUST BE QUESTIONABLE. IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN INVESTIGATORS OF THE RIGHT CALIBRE. IT WOULD INEVITABLY BE A SMALL ORGANISATION WITH LITTLE VARIETY IN ITS WORK AND WITH VERY POOR CAREER PROSPECTS, VERY DIFFERENT IN NATURE AND SIZE FROM THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION, WHICH INVESTIGATES ALL ALLEGATIONS OF CORRUPTION IN BOTH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS. IT IS FOR THESE REASONS THAT, IN ALMOST ALL JURISDICTIONS COMPARABLE TO HONG KONG, INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS AGAINST POLICE OFFICERS IS CARRIED OUT BY THE POLICE. THE ADMINISTRATION IS NOT CONVINCED THAT AN INDEPENDENT UNIT WOULD BE BETTER OR MORE EFFECTIVE IN DEALING WITH SUCH COMPLAINTS. WE ARE SUPPORTED IN THIS VIEW BY THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE WHICH RECOMMENDED IN ITS RECENT REVIEW OF THE POLICE COMPLAINTS SYSTEM THAT INVESTIGATION SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE DONE BY CAPO. THIS RECOMMENDATION, I EMPHASISE, WAS MADE ON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE BY A GROUP OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY, BASED ON THEIR YEARS OF CLOSE OBSERVATION OF THE WORK OF CAPO.

THAT SAID, THE EXISTING SYSTEM IS NOT PERFECT. I ACCEPT THAT IT CAN, AND SHOULD, BE IMPROVED TO MAKE IT MORE EFFECTIVE AND TRANSPARENT. THE PROPOSALS IN MRS LAM'S AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION ARE GOOD SUGGESTIONS TO THIS END.

THERE WOULD CERTAINLY BE AN ADVANTAGE TO MAKING THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE A STATUTORY BODY. ITS FUNCTIONS AND POWERS WOULD THEREBY BE BETTER DEFINED AND MORE EASILY UNDERSTOOD. A STATUTORY MONITORING SYSTEM WOULD PUT HONG KONG ON A PAR WITH MANY OTHER SIMILAR JURISDICTIONS. WE INTEND TO MAKE A START NOW ON DRAWING UP LEGISLATION FOR THIS PURPOSE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE HAS ALSO PROPOSED THAT IT SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO COMPLAINANTS AND WITNESSES. WE ACCEPT THIS IN PRINCIPLE. IF THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE IS ABLE TO INTERVIEW WITNESSES, THIS SHOULD ENABLE THE COMMITTEE TO PERFORM BETTER ITS MONITORING ROLE. IT WILL THEN BE ABLE TO CLARIFY DIRECTLY WITH WITNESSES AMBIGUITIES AND DISCREPANCIES, AND MAKE A BETTER ASSESSMENT OF THE WHOLE CASE. WE ARE EXAMINING FURTHER THIS PROPOSAL IN CONSULTATION WITH THE COMMITTEE, INCLUDING THE EVIDENTIAL ASPECTS OF STATEMENTS MADE VOLUNTARILY BY COMPLAINANTS AND WITNESSES TO A MEMBER OF THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE; THE RULES AND GUIDELINES TO BE FOLLOWED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE IN CONDUCTING SUCH INTERVIEWS; AND THE CRITERIA WHICH THE COMMITTEE WILL FOLLOW IN DECIDING WHEN TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS.

THE PROPOSAL THAT THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE SHOULD REPORT BACK AND EXPLAIN TO THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE ANY DISCIPLINARY OR OTHER ACTION TAKEN IN RESPECT OF POLICE OFFICERS IS, I BELIEVE, ALREADY LARGELY EXISTING PRACTICE. AT PRESENT, CAPO SENDS REGULAR REPORTS TO THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE ON ACTION TAKEN IN RESPECT OF COMPLAINERS. THE REPORT ALSO SHOWS ANY INTERNAL ACTION TAKEN AGAINST OFFICERS WHO HAVE BEEN THE SUBJECT OF COMPLAINT, EVEN THOUGH NO SPECIFIC ACTION AGAINST THEM HAS BEEN RECOMMENDED BY CAPO OR THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE. I AGREE THAT WE SHOULD LOOK AT WAYS OF STRENGTHENING THIS SYSTEM ALONG THE LINES SUGGESTED BY MRS LAM, AND THIS WE INTEND TO DO.

WE SHALL ALSO CONSIDER THE SUGGESTION THAT SOME NON-POLICE PERSONNEL SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE INVESTIGATING TEAMS IN CAPO, WITH A VIEW TO BOOSTING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE SYSTEM. I WILL DISCUSS THIS WITH THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE.

I ALSO AGREE THAT, AT PRESENT, PUBLICITY OF THE WORK OF CAPO AND THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE IS INADEQUATE. THIS HAS HELPED TO FOSTER MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT OUR SYSTEM FOR HANDLING POLICE COMPLAINTS. WE INTEND TO IMPROVE PUBLICITY AND PUBLIC AWARENESS, SO AS TO CORRECT MISCONCEPTIONS WHICH MAY DISCOURAGE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC FROM LODGING COMPLAINTS, AND TO ASSURE COMPLAINANTS AND COMPLAINNEES ALIKE OF THE IMPARTIALITY OF THE SYSTEM.

I ALSO AGREE THAT WE WOULD BENEFIT FROM MORE RELIABLE INFORMATION ON THE VIEWS OF THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE EXISTING SYSTEM FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE. THE SECRETARIAT OF THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE IS PLANNING TO CONDUCT A SAMPLE SURVEY OF COMPLAINANTS WHOSE CASES HAVE RECENTLY BEEN FINALISED. THIS SHOULD GIVE US SOME INDICATION OF HOW THE EXISTING SYSTEM MIGHT BE IMPROVED. THE ADMINISTRATION WILL ALSO DISCUSS WITH THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE HOW WE SHOULD SEEK TO GAUGE PUBLIC OPINION ON OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SYSTEM, TO SEE WHETHER FURTHER CHANGES ARE NECESSARY.

MR PRESIDENT, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE SYSTEM FOR HANDLING POLICE COMPLAINTS SHOULD BE, AND BE SEEN TO BE OPEN, FAIR AND TRANSPARENT. WE SHOULD SEEK TO BUILD ON THE PRESENT SYSTEM, NOT TO OVERTHROW IT. THE PROPOSALS IN MRS LAM'S AMENDMENT TO MR TO'S MOTION WILL, I BELIEVE, ACHIEVE REAL WORTHWHILE IMPROVEMENTS; AND FORM A BASIS ON WHICH FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS CAN IF NECESSARY BE MADE. THIS APPROACH TO IMPROVING THE EXISTING SYSTEM IS PRAGMATIC AND SENSIBLE. IT WILL ENABLE US AND THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE TO REVIEW THE NEED FOR FURTHER CHANGES IN FUTURE.

MR PRESIDENT, I COMMEND MRS LAM'S AMENDMENT.

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10 BUDGET-RELATED BILLS INTRODUCED

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A TOTAL OF 10 BILLS TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE REVENUE-RELATED PROPOSALS IN THE BUDGET WERE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993 SEEKS TO MAKE TWO MAJOR CONCESSIONS ON SALARIES TAX.

ONE IS TO WIDEN THE SECOND AND THIRD MARGINAL TAX RATE BANDS WHILE THE OTHER IS TO INCREASE SUBSTANTIALLY SALARIES TAX ALLOWANCES, BOTH APPLICABLE FROM THE 1993/94 YEAR OF ASSESSMENT.

THE COMBINATION OF THESE CONCESSIONS WILL RESULT IN REDUCED TAX BILLS FOR OVER THREE-QUARTERS OF SALARIES TAXPAYERS, WHILE MORE THAN A QUARTER OF A MILLION OTHER TAXPAYERS WILL FALL OUT OF THE TAX NET ALTOGETHER.

/THE EFFECT

THE EFFECT OF THE ESTATE DUTY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993 WOULD BE TO CHANGE THE LEVELS AT WHICH ESTATE DUTY IS LEVIED SO AS TO REDUCE THE IMPACT WHICH THE TAX HAS ON RELATIVELY SMALL ESTATES.

THE ENTERTAINMENTS TAX (REPEAL) BILL 1993 SEEKS TO ABOLISH THE TAX ON THE ENTRANCE TO RACE MEETINGS.

THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON K Y YEUNG, CONFIRMED THAT THE JOCKEY CLUB HAD KINDLY AGREED TO DONATE TO THE COMMUNITY CHEST AN AMOUNT EQUIVALENT TO THE TAX WHICH WAS PREVIOUSLY PAYABLE EVERY YEAR.

ON THE STAMP DUTY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993, MR YEUNG SAID THE EFFECT WOULD BE TO REDUCE THE RATE OF STAMP DUTY PAYABLE ON THE SALE AND PURCHASE ON TRANSFER OF STOCK FROM 0.4 PER CENT TO 0.3 PER CENT.

THIS CONCESSION IS DESIGNED TO ENSURE HONG KONG'S CONTINUED COMPETITIVENESS IN INTERNATIONAL STOCK TRADING.

"I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE INDUSTRY WILL PASS ON THE FULL BENEFIT OF THIS CONCESSION TO INVESTORS," HE SAID.

THE DUTIABLE COMMODITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993 HAS THREE PURPOSES.

FIRST, IT ABOLISHES THE DUTY ON COSMETICS.

SECONDLY, IT WOULD INCREASE THE DUTY RATES ON LIQUOR, TOBACCO AND FUEL.

"I SHOULD EMPHASISE THAT THESE ARE NOMINAL INCREASES DESIGNED SIMPLY TO MAINTAIN THE REAL VALUE OF THE DUTY IMPOSED IN LINE WITH INFLATION."

FOR THIS REASON, THOSE DUTY RATES WHICH ARE SET ON AN AD VALOREM BASIS HAVE REMAINED UNCHANGED.

THIRDLY, A CLAUSE OF THE BILL IS PART OF A PACKAGE OF ADDITIONAL TAX CONCESSIONS TO DISABLED DRIVERS OFFERED IN THREE OTHER BILLS INTRODUCED INTO THE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE CLAUSE HAS THE EFFECT OF EXEMPTING FROM DUTY ON FUEL FOR DISABLED DRIVERS OF MOTORCYCLES OR TRICYCLES, UP TO A LIMIT OF 100 LITRES A MONTH.

THE FIRST BILL OFFERING CONCESSIONS IS THE MOTOR VEHICLES (FIRST REGISTRATION TAX) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993.

THE EFFECT OF THE BILL WOULD BE TO AMEND THE ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE THAT FIRST REGISTRATION TAX WILL NOT BE PAYABLE ON A MOTORCYCLE OR MOTOR TRICYCLE REGISTERED BY A DISABLED PERSON, REGARDLESS OF THE VEHICLE'S TAXABLE VALUE.

THE SECOND CONCESSIONARY BILL IS THE ROAD TRAFFIC (MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS) BILL 1993.

IT WOULD EXTEND TO SUCH DRIVERS OF MOTORCYCLES AND MOTOR TRICYCLES THE EXEMPTION FROM VEHICLE AND DRIVING LICENCE FEES NOW APPLICABLE TO DISABLED DRIVERS OF CARS.

THE THIRD BILL IN THE PACKAGE IS THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL (PASSAGE TAX) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993.

THE BILL WOULD PROVIDE THAT ANY DISABLED PERSON WHO CAN SATISFY THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT THAT HE REQUIRES, AS A DRIVER OF A MOTORCYCLE OR MOTOR TRICYCLE, TO MAKE USE OF THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL, WILL BE EXEMPT FROM THE PAYMENT OF THE TUNNEL TAX.

ON THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL 1993, MR YEUNG SAID THE PURPOSE WAS TO INTRODUCE A SYSTEM OF COMPOSITE TAX RETURNS, OR CTR'S, WITH EFFECT FROM APRIL 1, 1994.

A CTR WILL BE A SINGLE RETURN COVERING ALL TAXES LEVIED UNDER THE INLAND REVENUE ORDINANCE.

"ITS INTRODUCTION WILL SIMPLIFY PROCEDURES FOR TAXPAYERS WHO NOW HAVE TO FILL IN TWO OR MORE TAX RETURNS FOR THE INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT, AS WELL AS ALLOWING RE-DEPLOYMENT OF RESOURCES WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT TO HELP TO COMBAT TAX AVOIDANCE AND EVASION," HE SAID.

HE ASSURED MEMBERS THAT THE INTRODUCTION OF CTR'S WOULD AFFECT NEITHER THE RATES OF TAX NOR THE AMOUNTS PAYABLE.

"ITS PURPOSE IS SIMPLY TO MAKE LIFE EASIER FOR ALL CONCERNED," HE SAID.

THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO.3) BILL 1993 PROVIDES THAT WHERE A RELEVANT PAYMENT IS DERIVED FROM AN ASSOCIATE, THE FULL AMOUNT (RATHER THAN THE PRESENT 10 PER CENT) WOULD BE TREATED AS ASSESSABLE PROFITS.

TO PREVENT REVENUE LOSS, THE BILL WOULD TAKE EFFECT FROM THE DAY FOLLOWING THE BUDGET SPEECH, THAT IS MARCH 4.

MR YEUNG SAID THE BILL COULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE LEGITIMATE IMPORTATION OF TECHNOLOGY INTO HONG KONG. THERE ARE TWO REASONS.

FIRST, THE AMENDMENTS ARE ONLY DIRECTED AT ARRANGEMENTS WHERE ASSOCIATED PARTIES ARE INVOLVED. SECOND, THE MEASURES SHOULD NOT RESULT IN ANY GENERAL INCREASE IN COSTS TO NON-RESIDENT TECHNOLOGY EXPORTERS OR TECHNOLOGY USERS IN HONG KONG.

"THIS IS BECAUSE HONG KONG TAX PAID BY A NON-RESIDENT WILL GENERALLY GIVE RISE TO A FOREIGN TAX CREDIT IN HIS HOME COUNTRY," HE ADDED.

DEBATES ON THE BILLS WERE ADJOURNED.

AMENDMENTS PROPOSED TO UPDATE EDUCATION ORDINANCE

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A BILL THAT SEEKS TO PROPOSE ADDITIONS TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF MORE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EDUCATION FIELD AND TO REMOVE OUT-OF-DATE PROVISIONS AND REDUNDANCIES IN THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE EDUCATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, SAID ONE OF THE PROPOSALS WAS TO GIVE THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION NEW POWERS TO INSPECT AND REMOVE DOCUMENTS FROM SUSPECTED UNREGISTERED SCHOOLS.

REMOVAL OF THIS LACUNA WILL ENABLE THE DIRECTOR TO TACKLE MORE EFFECTIVELY THE PROBLEMS POSED BY UNREGISTERED SCHOOLS, HE NOTED.

ANOTHER PROVISION IN THE BILL EMPOWERS THE DIRECTOR TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST UNREGISTERED SCHOOLS WHICH CLAIM FALSELY TO BE REGISTERED SCHOOLS IN ADVERTISEMENTS.

"THE ABSENCE OF SUCH A PROVISION NOW HAS HAMPERED ATTEMPTS TO EXERCISE PROPER CONTROL OVER ILLEGAL SCHOOLS," MR CHAN SAID.

AT PRESENT, AN OPERATION PROVIDING EDUCATION TO FEWER THAN 20 STUDENTS DURING ANY ONE DAY IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE REGISTERED AS A SCHOOL.

THERE IS INCREASING PUBLIC CONCERN THAT PRIVATE TUTORIAL CENTRES WHICH MAKE USE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY BY OPERATING IN SMALL DOMESTIC PREMISES IN HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS DO NOT SUFFICIENTLY SAFEGUARD THE SAFETY AND THE INTERESTS OF STUDENTS.

MR CHAN SAID: "WE PROPOSE TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO CAN BE TAUGHT IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES AT ANY TIME DURING THE DAY TO FEWER THAN EIGHT WHILE RETAINING THE PRESENT PROVISION OF NOT REQUIRING OPERATIONS INVOLVING FEWER THAN 20 STUDENTS ON ANY ONE DAY TO BE REGISTERED.

"THIS CHANGE WILL NOT AFFECT INTEREST GROUPS, SUCH AS THOSE RUN BY VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, WHICH OFFER COURSES OF A NON-ACADEMIC NATURE."

THE BILL FURTHER SEEKS TO STRENGTHEN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT.

IT PROPOSES TO GIVE SPONSORING BODIES APPROPRIATE POWERS IN APPOINTING AND DISMISSING SCHOOL MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS.

BY FORMALISING THE ROLE OF THE SPONSORING BODY IN THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT HIERARCHY, MR CHAN SAID, THE AMENDMENT WOULD HELP TO FACILITATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE.

REGARDING THE GENERAL TIDYING UP OF PROVISIONS, THE BILL PROPOSES TO DELETE SECTION 4 IN THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE WHICH SETS OUT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION TO SUPERINTEND MATTERS RELATING TO EDUCATION IN HONG KONG.

/THIS PROVISION

THIS PROVISION HAS BECOME OUT-OF-DATE BECAUSE SEPARATE BODIES OR AUTHORITIES SUCH AS THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL, THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE AND THE HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY HAVE BEEN CREATED TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SPECIFIC SECTORS OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

THE BILL ALSO PROPOSES TO DELETE A NUMBER OF PROVISIONS IN THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE WHICH SET OUT THE GROUNDS ON WHICH THE DIRECTOR MAY REFUSE TO REGISTER SCHOOLS FOR POLITICAL REASONS AS WELL AS TO REFUSE OR CANCEL THE REGISTRATION OF TEACHERS.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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MORE EFFECTIVE ACTION AGAINST IRRESPONSIBLE DIRECTORS
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A BILL THAT SEEKS TO PROVIDE MORE EXTENSIVE AND MORE READILY ENFORCEABLE MEASURES AGAINST IRRESPONSIBLE COMPANY DIRECTORS WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) (NO.3) BILL 1993, THE SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, MR MICHAEL CARTLAND, SAID THE BILL ALSO CONTAINED SOME MINOR PROVISIONS TO STREAMLINE THE OPERATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE.

MR CARTLAND SAID THE EXISTING PROVISIONS ON DISQUALIFICATION OF COMPANY DIRECTORS SUFFERED FROM THE SAME INHERENT WEAKNESSES AS THE EARLIER UK LEGISLATION.

"FOR EXAMPLE, THEY PROVIDE THE COURT WITH THE MAXIMUM DISCRETION BUT LITTLE GUIDANCE AS TO THE SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES THAT WOULD MERIT DISQUALIFICATION, AND THEY SET PRECONDITIONS FOR ACTION TO BE TAKEN THAT ARE UNNECESSARILY STRINGENT," HE SAID.

THE NEW PROVISIONS IN THE BILL ARE BASED UPON UK'S COMPANY DIRECTORS DISQUALIFICATION ACT 1986 WHICH PROVIDED MORE EFFECTIVE AND MORE READILY ENFORCEABLE MEASURES AGAINST COMPANY DIRECTORS WHO ABUSED THEIR OFFICE OR PAID LITTLE REGARD TO THEIR STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS.

"THEY REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT ADVANCE ON THE EXISTING PROVISIONS BY PRESCRIBING MORE SPECIFIC MEASURES TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF DIRECTORS' MISCONDUCT," MR CARTLAND SAID.

IN RELATION TO INSOLVENCIES, FOR EXAMPLE, IT WILL NO LONGER BE A PRECONDITION THAT A PERSON MUST BE INVOLVED AS A DIRECTOR IN TWO INSOLVENT COMPANIES WITHIN FIVE YEARS BEFORE A DISQUALIFICATION ORDER MAY BE MADE.

/INSTEAD, IT

INSTEAD, IT WILL BE MANDATORY THAT AN ORDER BE MADE BY THE COURT IF A PERSON IS OR HAS BEEN A DIRECTOR OF ONE COMPANY WHICH HAS BECOME INSOLVENT AND IF, IN THE OPINION OF THE COURT, HIS CONDUCT AS A DIRECTOR OF THAT COMPANY EITHER ALONE, OR TAKEN TOGETHER WITH HIS CONDUCT AS A DIRECTOR OF ANY OTHER COMPANIES, MAKES HIM UNFIT TO BE CONCERNED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF A COMPANY.

THE BILL ALSO INTRODUCES A SEPARATE SCHEDULE OUTLINING MATTERS TO WHICH THE COURT SHOULD HAVE REGARD IN DETERMINING THE UNFITNESS OF DIRECTORS.

"THESE NEW PROVISIONS SHOULD HELP TO PREVENT UNSCRUPULOUS DIRECTORS FROM SIMPLY STARTING UP AGAIN IN A SIMILAR VEIN WITHOUT ANY CONCERN FOR CREDITORS WHO MAY SUBSEQUENTLY BE LEFT EMPTY-HANDED AS A RESULT OF THEIR IRRESPONSIBLE OR CYNICAL CONDUCT," MR CARTLAND SAID.

MOREOVER, THE BILL ENABLES THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO APPLY FOR A DISQUALIFICATION ORDER IF IT APPEARS FROM AN INSPECTOR'S REPORT OR FROM DOCUMENTS OBTAINED UNDER SECTIONS 152A OR B, THAT IT IS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST THAT A PERSON SHOULD BE DISQUALIFIED.

MR CARTLAND SAID OTHER PROVISIONS OF THE BILL WERE MORE SHARPLY FOCUSED AND PROVIDED GREATER ASSISTANCE TO THE COURT.

"IT IS, FOR EXAMPLE, MADE CLEAR THAT WHERE A COURT MAY MAKE A DISQUALIFICATION ORDER IN THE COURSE OF PROSECUTION OF AN OFFENCE, THE COURT MAY ITSELF TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO MAKE SUCH AN ORDER WITHOUT WAITING FOR AN APPLICATION," HE SAID.

THE BILL PROPOSES THAT DISQUALIFICATION ORDERS MAY RANGE FROM ONE TO 15 YEARS DEPENDING UPON THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE MISCONDUCT.

SUCH ORDERS MAY BE MADE NOT ONLY AGAINST PERSONS WHO ARE NAMED AS OFFICE BEARERS BUT ALSO AGAINST PERSONS WHO ARE ACTING AS SHADOW DIRECTORS.

THE BILL ALSO PROVIDES THAT A PERSON WHO BECOMES INVOLVED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF A COMPANY WHILE DISQUALIFIED OR WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE MANAGEMENT AND WHO FOLLOWS THE INSTRUCTIONS OF A PERSON WHOM HE KNOWS TO BE DISQUALIFIED, MAY BE HELD PERSONALLY LIABLE FOR ANY DEBTS OF THE COMPANY INCURRED DURING THE RELEVANT PERIOD.

FUTHERMORE, THE REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES WILL BE REQUIRED TO KEEP A REGISTER OF DISQUALIFICATION ORDERS WHICH WILL BE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC UPON PAYMENT OF A SUITABLE FEE.

MR CARTLAND SAID THE PROPOSALS HAD BEEN RECOMMENDED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMPANY LAW REFORM AFTER CONSULTATION WITH A NUMBER OF PROFESSIONAL AND TRADE BODIES.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

BILL ON LAND EASEMENT FOR SEWAGE TUNNEL WORKS

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A BILL THAT SEEKS TO EMPOWER THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE DEEP UNDERGROUND TUNNELS PASSING BENEATH PRIVATE LAND IS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE SEWAGE TUNNELS (STATUTORY EASEMENTS) BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, SAID THESE TUNNELS WERE REQUIRED AS PART OF THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR SEWAGE COLLECTION, TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL TO TRANSPORT SEWAGE TO MAJOR TREATMENT WORKS BEFORE DISPOSAL THROUGH AN OCEANIC OUTFALL.

UNDER THE BILL, THE GOVERNMENT IS REQUIRED TO PREPARE AND GAZETTE A PLAN TO SHOW THE PROPOSED ROUTE OF A SEWAGE TUNNEL AND THE LAND SITUATED ON THE ROUTE IN RESPECT OF WHICH EASEMENTS AND OTHER RIGHTS IN FAVOUR OF THE GOVERNMENT MAY BE CREATED.

THE BILL ALSO ENABLES LAND OWNERS TO HAVE THE RIGHT TO OBJECT TO THE ROUTE SHOULD THEY FIND THE CREATION OF EASEMENTS REDUCE THE VALUE OF THEIR LAND.

MR EASON SAID ON THE BASIS OF CURRENT ENGINEERING KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE, THE TUNNEL WORKS SHOULD CAUSE LITTLE OR NO DAMAGE.

NEVERTHELESS, THE BILL ALSO PROVIDES FOR COMPENSATION IN CASES OF PROVEN LOSS OR DAMAGE.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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CHILD ABUSE WORKING GROUP TO RECONVENE SOON

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THE WORKING GROUP ON CHILD ABUSE UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE WILL RECONVENE VERY SHORTLY, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IT WILL HAVE NEW TERMS OF REFERENCE AND ITS MEMBERSHIP WILL INCLUDE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS, SOCIAL WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGISTS AND MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.

"THIS WILL EMPHASISE THE IMPORTANCE OF A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH IN DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM OF CHILD ABUSE," SHE SAID.

MRS WONG WAS SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND JUVENILES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 WHICH SEEKS TO WIDEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH A CHILD MAY BE CONSIDERED TO BE IN NEED OF CARE OR PROTECTION.

FOLLOWING EIGHT MEETINGS, THE GOVERNMENT AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AD HOC GROUP SET UP TO SCRUTINISE THE BILL HAVE AGREED ON A NUMBER OF AMENDMENTS.

HOWEVER, MRS WONG SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONCERNED OVER ONE AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY THE AD HOC GROUP CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF "APPROVED SOCIAL WORKER" IN THE CHILD ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE.

NOTING THAT CHILD ABUSE IS "A COMPLEX AREA OF SOCIAL WORK", THE SECRETARY SAID THE ORIGINAL INTENTION FOR INCLUDING MEDICAL PRACTITIONER AND CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST IN THE CHILD ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE WAS TO ENSURE MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PROFESSIONAL ADVICE IN PROTECTING A CHILD.

"SUCH ADVICE, A SECOND OPINION, SHOULD NOT BE CONFINED TO THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION," SHE SAID, STRESSING THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER OF UNDERMINING THE PROFESSIONAL STATUS OR ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS.

"IN FACT, THE FINAL DECISION OF WHETHER OR NOT TO REMOVE A CHILD SUSPECTED OF BEING ABUSED WOULD ALWAYS REST WITH THE SOCIAL WORKER HANDLING THE CASE.

"THE CHILD ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE WHICH INVOLVES OTHER PROFESSIONALS WILL ASSIST THE FRONTLINE SOCIAL WORKER IN MAKING A DECISION," MRS WONG ADDED.

MRS WONG ALSO POINTED OUT THAT A SET OF OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE BILL WOULD BE ISSUED.

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RECORD OF BREAKTHROUGH IN HK'S HEALTH CARE HISTORY

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THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY'S FIRST ANNUAL REPORT WAS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) DESCRIBED AS "THE RECORD OF A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH IN THE HISTORY OF HEALTH CARE DEVELOPMENT IN HONG KONG" BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG.

TABLING THE REPORT BEFORE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MRS WONG SAID THE WORK OF THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY (HA) IN THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 1992 COULD BE CLASSIFIED INTO THREE BROAD AREAS: THE SETTING UP OF A NEW CORPORATE INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT 37,000 EMPLOYEES FROM 16 DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONS; THE PREPARATION FOR MANAGEMENT TRANSFER OF 36 PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND 56 SPECIALIST INSTITUTIONS; AND THE PLANNING OF CLINICAL SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS.

"IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH A CORPORATE INFRASTRUCTURE CAPABLE OF ASSUMING EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF THE VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS UNDER ITS COMMON MANAGEMENT, THE HA HAS SUCCESSFULLY DEVELOPED A NEW, UNIFIED SYSTEM CATERING FOR PERSONNEL, ACCOUNTING AND PROCUREMENT FUNCTIONS," MRS WONG SAID.

"A GREAT DEAL OF TIME AND EFFORTS HAVE BEEN DEDICATED TO ACHIEVE MANAGEMENT TRANSFER AND REFORMS," SHE ADDED.

AS OF MARCH 31, 1992, 54 PER CENT OF THE 34,000 ELIGIBLE STAFF HAD OPTED FOR HA EMPLOYMENT TERMS, INCLUDING 93 PER CENT OF FORMER SUBVENTED HOSPITAL STAFF AND 30 PER CENT OF CIVIL SERVANTS.

MRS WONG SAID A "DETERMINED START" HAD ALSO BEEN MADE ON MANAGEMENT REFORMS THROUGH THE IDENTIFICATION OF EIGHT CANDIDATE HOSPITALS FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF THESE REFORMS AND THE SETTING UP OF HOSPITAL GOVERNING COMMITTEES TO ENHANCE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT.

ADDITIONALLY, A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY HAS BEEN FORMULATED FOR THE LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF SERVICE DELIVERY.

ALTHOUGH THE YEAR 1991/92 HAS BEEN A PRODUCTIVE AND DYNAMIC ONE FOR HA, THE SECRETARY NOTED THAT MUCH REMAINED TO BE DONE TO PREPARE THE PUBLIC HOSPITAL SYSTEM FOR THE CHALLENGES POSED BY THE AGEING POPULATION, RAPID ADVANCEMENT OF MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY AND RISING CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS.

"THROUGH GREATER COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY, THE AUTHORITY WILL BE ABLE TO RESPOND SWIFTLY TO CHANGING COMMUNITY NEEDS AND DEPLOY RESOURCES WITH FLEXIBILITY TO THOSE IN NEED," SHE SAID.

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RAILWAYS ANNUAL REPORTS TABLED

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THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON K Y YEUNG, TABLED THE ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION (MTRC) AND KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION (KCRC) FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31 LAST YEAR IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE MTRC REGISTERED A NET PROFIT EVEN WITHOUT ANY CONTRIBUTION FROM PROPERTY DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR.

THE TOTAL NET PROFIT WAS \$403 MILLION, COMPARED WITH \$67 MILLION IN 1991.

"THIS FIRMLY PLACES THE CORPORATION ON ITS WAY TO ELIMINATE ACCUMULATED LOSSES, NOW REDUCED TO \$3.06 BILLION," MR YEUNG SAID.

FOR KCRC, INCLUDING INCOME FROM PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT, ITS NET PROFIT WAS \$526 MILLION, 17 PER CENT HIGHER THAN 1991.

A DIVIDEND OF \$150 MILLION WAS PAID TO THE GOVERNMENT AFTER CONSIDERING KCRC'S LONG-TERM CASH FLOW REQUIREMENTS AND INVESTMENT NEEDS.

"THE FACT THAT THE CORPORATION HAS BEEN ABLE TO PAY A DIVIDEND TO THE GOVERNMENT REFLECTS THE CONFIDENCE WE HAVE IN THE CORPORATION'S FINANCIAL STRENGTH.

"IT IS ALSO A POSITIVE SIGNAL TO FUTURE POTENTIAL INVESTORS IN HONG KONG'S RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE," HE SAID.

LAST YEAR, THE MTRC CARRIED ABOUT 751 MILLION PASSENGERS, 3.4 PER CENT HIGHER THAN 1991; WHILE THE KCR CARRIED 198 MILLION PASSENGERS, AN INCREASE OF ABOUT 5 PER CENT OVER 1991. FOR THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT SYSTEM (LRT), THE FIGURES WERE 106 MILLION AND 10 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY.

AT THE END OF LAST YEAR, THE MTRC'S LOANS AND FINANCE LIABILITIES STOOD AT \$18.4 BILLION WITH A YEAR-END DEBT-TO-EQUITY RATIO OF 2.3 TO 1, WHILE THE BORROWINGS OF KCRC WAS \$894 MILLION WITH A 1 TO 5.1 RATIO.

"THE MTRC IS WIDELY RESPECTED IN THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL COMMUNITY. THE HIGH CREDIT RATINGS ENJOYED BY THE CORPORATION DEMONSTRATE CONFIDENCE IN THE FINANCIAL STRENGTH OF THE CORPORATION AND ITS FUTURE PLANS.

"WITHOUT AN EXTENSION OF THE EXISTING SYSTEM, THE CORPORATION EXPECTS TO BE ABLE TO RETIRE ALL DEBTS ON EXISTING LOANS BY AROUND THE TURN OF THE CENTURY," MR YEUNG SAID.

OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, THE MTRC HAS BUDGETED TO SPEND \$5 BILLION ON MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS. IT IS PLANNING TO IMPROVE THE MORNING PEAK TRAIN SERVICE ON THE TSUEN WAN LINE FROM THE EXISTING 30 TRAIN TRIPS PER HOUR TO 31 SOME TIME THIS YEAR, 32 NEXT YEAR AND 34 IN 1996.

MR YEUNG SAID ONCE AGREEMENT WAS REACHED WITH THE CHINESE SIDE REGARDING THE FINANCING OF THE AIRPORT RAILWAY, AND FINANCE COMMITTEE APPROVAL WAS OBTAINED, THE MTRC WOULD BE ABLE TO PROCEED WITH A PROJECT THAT AFFORDED MUCH-NEEDED RELIEF TO THE EXISTING SYSTEM AND SUPPORT FOR THE NEW AIRPORT.

FOR THE KCRC, HE NOTED THAT CASH GENERATED BY THE OPERATING DIVISIONS WAS SUFFICIENT TO COVER ONGOING CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND DEBT REPAYMENT.

MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS TO KCRC'S SERVICES WERE MADE DURING THE YEAR TO ENHANCE CUSTOMER SERVICES, HE SAID.

PUNCTUALITY WAS IMPROVED, WITH A DAILY AVERAGE OF 95 PER CENT AND 98 PER CENT OF TRAINS ARRIVING ON TIME FOR KCR AND LRT RESPECTIVELY.

OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, THE KCRC PLANS TO INVEST A FURTHER \$5.3 BILLION IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS.

"THIS SUBSTANTIAL INVESTMENT CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES THE CORPORATION'S CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO UPGRADING ITS SYSTEMS TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICES," MR YEUNG SAID.

MATRIMONIAL CAUSES FEES GO UP
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HAS PASSED A RESOLUTION TO INCREASE THE FEES PAYABLE UNDER THE MATRIMONIAL CAUSES ORDINANCE BY ABOUT 60 PER CENT.

MOVING THE MOTION TO MAKE THE MATRIMONIAL CAUSES (FEES) (AMENDMENT) RULE 1993, THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY, MR K Y YEUNG, SAID: "THIS TAKES INTO ACCOUNT INFLATION SINCE THE LAST FEE REVISION IN APRIL 1988."

HE SAID THE OPPORTUNITY HAD BEEN TAKEN TO UPDATE THE SCHEDULE BY INTRODUCING THREE CHANGES.

FIRST, THE FEE RELATING TO APPOINTMENT BEFORE A REGISTRAR IS PROPOSED FOR REPEAL, BECAUSE IT IS NO LONGER TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT BEFORE A REGISTRAR.

SECONDLY, IT IS PROPOSED TO INTRODUCE A SINGLE FEE TO REPLACE THE TWO-TIER FEE ON THE TAXATION OF A BILL OF COSTS.

THIRDLY, A NEW FEE WILL BE INTRODUCED ON FILING AN ELECTION TO TAKE FIXED COSTS UNDER THE DISTRICT COURT (FIXED COSTS IN MATRIMONIAL CAUSES) RULES.

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FISH MARKETING RATE PRESCRIBED IN GAZETTE
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) PASSED A MOTION ENABLING THE FISH MARKETING ORGANISATION TO PRESCRIBE ITS RATE OF COMMISSION BY NOTICE IN THE GAZETTE.

MOVING THE MOTION, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ELIZABETH BOSHER, SAID THE ORGANISATION MIGHT, INSTEAD OF PRESCRIBING ITS RATE OF COMMISSION IN ITS BY-LAWS, PRESCRIBE THE RATE BY NOTICE IN THE GAZETTE, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE FISH MARKETING ADVISORY BOARD.

THIS WOULD STREAMLINE THE PROCEDURE FOR PRESCRIBING THE RATE OF COMMISSION, WHILE ENSURING THAT ANY DECISION TO CHANGE THE RATE WAS TAKEN ONLY AFTER CONSULTATION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THOSE WHO BUY AND SELL FISH THROUGH WHOLESALE FISH MARKETS, SHE SAID.

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SENIOR CITIZENS DAY PROPOSAL SUPPORTED

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IT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO ENCOURAGE THE ORGANISATION OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROJECTS TO PROMOTE GREATER RESPECT FOR ELDERLY CITIZENS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, SAID.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HUI YIN-FAT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MRS WONG SAID ON MANY SPECIAL OCCASIONS SUCH AS VALENTINE'S DAY, MOTHER'S DAY, FATHER'S DAY AND CHILDREN'S DAY, PROGRAMMES WERE ORGANISED TO CELEBRATE THE MEANING OF LOVE AND RESPECT.

"WE FEEL THAT TO DO THE SAME FOR ELDERLY CITIZENS IS HIGHLY APPROPRIATE," SHE SAID.

"SINCE IN PRACTICE, THE FESTIVAL FOR THE ELDERLY HAS FOR MANY YEARS BEEN FALLING ON THE THIRD SUNDAY OF NOVEMBER, THE MARKING OF A 'SENIOR CITIZENS DAY' IS A BEFITTING EXPRESSION OF THE COMMUNITY'S RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTION MADE BY ELDERLY CITIZENS.

"THE ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS TO ORGANISE ACTIVITIES ON THIS MEANINGFUL OCCASION," SHE ADDED.

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BRIDGE PROPOSAL NOT YET RECEIVED

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT RECEIVED ANY PROPOSAL FROM THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A BRIDGE CONNECTING ZHUHAI AND TUEN MUN.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR MICHAEL LEUNG, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ANNA WU IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR LEUNG SAID CLEARLY SUCH A BRIDGE COULD NOT BE BUILT WITHOUT THE AGREEMENT OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT OR THE SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION GOVERNMENT AFTER JUNE 30, 1997.

"THIS IS UNDERSTOOD BY THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES," HE SAID.

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RESTAURANT OPERATORS ADVISED AGAINST DRAWING SEAWATER
FOR USE IN FISH TANKS

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THERE IS NO LEGISLATION TO REGULATE THE USE OF SEA WATER FOR KEEPING LIVE FISH IN RESTAURANTS OR BY FISHMONGERS IN THE MARKET PLACE AT PRESENT, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION ON CONTAMINATED SEAFOOD BY THE HON STEVEN POON KWOK-LIM, MRS WONG SAID LIVE FISH, LIVE ANIMALS AND LIVE BIRDS AS WELL, WERE NOT DEFINED AS FOOD IN LAW.

"ONLY AFTER KILLING AND OTHER PROCESSING DOES IT BECOME FOOD INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION," SHE SAID.

"AT THAT POINT IN TIME, COMMON FOOD CONTROLS APPLY."

MRS WONG POINTED OUT THAT THE KEEPING OF LIVE FISH IN RESTAURANTS AND THE MARKET PLACE WAS RELEVANT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE ASPECT WHICH WAS LOOKED AFTER BY THE TWO MUNICIPAL SERVICES DEPARTMENTS.

SHE SAID THE DEPARTMENTS HAD TAKEN ACTIVE STEPS TO ADVISE SEAFOOD RESTAURANT OPERATORS AND SEAFOOD SELLERS NOT TO DRAW SEAWATER FROM SUSPECTED SOURCES FOR USE IN FISH TANKS.

A CODE OF PRACTICE ON SHELL FISH HYGIENE TO GUARD AGAINST CONTAMINATION OF SHELL FISH IN WET STORAGE HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO FOOD HANDLERS.

TO ENSURE FOOD SAFETY, MRS WONG SAID THE HYGIENE DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH OPERATED A FOOD SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME UNDER WHICH FOOD SAMPLES, INCLUDING SEAFOOD, WERE TAKEN FROM VARIOUS WHOLESALE AND RETAIL OUTLETS AND POINTS OF IMPORT FOR LABORATORY EXAMINATION.

THE TESTS INCLUDE BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION FOR TOTAL BACTERIAL COUNT, FAECAL COLIFORM AND FOOD POISONING ORGANISMS, CHEMICAL ANALYSIS FOR HEAVY METALS, AND TOXICITY TEST FOR BIOTOXINS.

THE OPERATION OF ANY FOOD BUSINESS IS ALSO GOVERNED BY THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES ORDINANCE AND AN OPERATOR IS REQUIRED TO OBTAIN A LICENCE FROM EITHER ONE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS BEFORE HE CONDUCTS BUSINESS.

FURTHERMORE, PERSONS ENGAGED IN THE FOOD BUSINESS ARE REQUIRED UNDER THE FOOD BUSINESS (URBAN COUNCIL) BY-LAWS AND THE FOOD BUSINESS (REGIONAL COUNCIL) BY-LAWS TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY STEPS TO PROTECT THE FOOD FROM RISK OF CONTAMINATION.

UNDER THE TWO BY-LAWS, COLLECTION OF SHELL FISH FOR SALE FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION IN THE WATERS OF VICTORIA HARBOUR, ABERDEEN HARBOUR, KWAI CHUNG AND TSUEN WAN BAYS ARE PROHIBITED.

HOWEVER, MRS WONG ADVISED THAT GOOD PERSONAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND FOOD HYGIENE, SUCH AS THOROUGH CLEANSING AND COOKING OF FOOD BEFORE CONSUMPTION, WAS NO LESS IMPORTANT THAN CARRYING OUT SAMPLE TESTS ON FOOD IN ENSURING FOOD SAFETY.

USE OF ZERO EMISSION VEHICLES BEING STUDIED

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO EXPLORE WAYS AND MEANS TO BRING ABOUT THE USE OF ZERO EMISSION VEHICLES IN HONG KONG AS PART OF ITS LONG-TERM SOLUTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION CAUSED BY EXHAUST GAS FROM MOTOR VEHICLES.

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

THE SUBJECT OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES AND THEIR POSSIBLE USE IN HONG KONG IS BEING EXAMINED BY AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING PARTY.

IT IS LOOKING INTO AREAS SUCH AS THE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES, THEIR AVAILABILITY ON THE MARKET, THEIR SUITABILITY FOR USE IN HONG KONG'S CLIMATE AND TOPOGRAPHY, AS WELL AS MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE THEIR WIDER USE.

"IDEAS SUCH AS THE REDUCTION OF FIRST REGISTRATION TAXES, AND LICENCE FEES ETC ARE BEING CONSIDERED. AND THE WORKING PARTY IS AIMING TO SUBMIT ITS REPORT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN JUNE THIS YEAR," MR EASON SAID.

MR EASON SAID CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF AND DESPITE RECENT WORK ON ELECTRIC VEHICLES IN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES, THE ELECTRIC VEHICLES OPTION WAS STILL AT THE DEVELOPMENT STAGE.

"AS MOST OF THE ELECTRIC VEHICLES DEVELOPED ARE STILL PROTOTYPES, THERE IS ONLY LIMITED SCOPE FOR CONSIDERING SUCH VEHICLES FOR PRACTICAL USE IN HONG KONG AT PRESENT," HE ADDED.

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REVIEW ON URBAN RENEWAL PROCESS TO BE COMPLETED BY MID YEAR

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THE REVIEW GROUP TO EXAMINE THE URBAN RENEWAL PROCESS WITH PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE ROLE OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (LDC) AIMS TO COMPLETE ITS WORK BY THE MIDDLE OF THIS YEAR.

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

MR EASON SAID THE REVIEW HAD TAKEN LONGER TO COMPLETE THAN ORIGINALLY ENVISAGED BECAUSE THE SUBJECT WAS A COMPLEX ONE.

HE SAID ANY CHANGES IN POLICY RELATING TO THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION IN PARTICULAR OR TO URBAN RENEWAL OR REDEVELOPMENT IN GENERAL WHICH MIGHT EMERGE FROM THE REVIEW WOULD BE MADE PUBLIC.

MR EASON SAID THE LESSONS TO BE DRAWN FROM THE REVIEW WOULD BE RELEVANT IN LARGE MEASURE TO THE OPERATIONS OF PRIVATE DEVELOPERS OTHER THAN THE LDC.

"ALTHOUGH THE CORPORATION'S OPERATIONS MAY BE DIFFERENT FROM OTHER PRIVATE DEVELOPERS IN SOME RESPECTS, IT FACES SIMILAR PROBLEMS IN SUCH MATTERS AS LAND ACQUISITION AND DEALING WITH OWNERS AND TENANTS AFFECTED BY REDEVELOPMENT," HE SAID.

"THE ADMINISTRATION THEREFORE BELIEVES THAT IT SHOULD COMPLETE THIS REVIEW AND DRAW CONCLUSIONS WHICH WILL HAVE A BEARING ON FUTURE OPERATIONS OF THE LDC AS WELL AS OTHER DEVELOPERS.

"THEREAFTER, IT CAN CONSIDER WHAT OTHER AREAS OF STUDY REMAIN TO BE COVERED BEFORE CONTINUING," HE SAID.

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APPROVED DECORATION CONTRACTOR SYSTEM UNDER REVIEW

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THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT IS CURRENTLY REVIEWING THE EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS AND PRACTICES UNDER THE APPROVED DECORATION CONTRACTOR SYSTEM TO IDENTIFY POSSIBLE AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PANG CHUN-HOI IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR EASON SAID THE REVIEW WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT TENANTS' COMMENTS ON THE SYSTEM AND SHOULD TAKE ABOUT THREE MONTHS TO COMPLETE.

MR EASON EXPLAINED THAT THE SYSTEM WAS INTRODUCED IN 1982 BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF THE POLICE AND THE ICAC TO COMBAT CRIMINAL ACTIVITY RELATING TO DECORATION WORK IN NEW HOUSING ESTATES.

ONLY APPROVED CONTRACTORS OR TENANTS THEMSELVES ARE ALLOWED TO CARRY OUT DECORATION WORK IN NEW ESTATES.

"TO DATE, THERE HAVE BEEN NO CONFIRMED CASES OF AN APPROVED CONTRACTOR OR HIS EMPLOYEES BEING INVOLVED IN HARASSMENT," MR EASON SAID.

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WOULD CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE WORK AND BEHAVIOUR OF APPROVED CONTRACTORS RIGOROUSLY, HE SAID.

IN ADDITION, THE POLICE ARE ALERT TO THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THEIR GROUND PATROLS AND SURVEILLANCE DURING NEW FLAT INTAKE PERIODS.

WHILE ALL COMPLAINTS AND REPORTS OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY ARE INVESTIGATED, PUBLIC HOUSING TENANTS ARE ADVISED DURING INTAKE BRIEFINGS TO REPORT TO THE POLICE ANY INCIDENTS OF HARASSMENT, MR EASON SAID.

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IMPORTED GRAPES FREE FROM PESTICIDE RESIDUE

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THERE HAS NOT BEEN ANY CASE OF GRAPES FOUND WITH PESTICIDE RESIDUE, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IF THERE HAD BEEN, SHE ADDED, THE GRAPES WOULD HAVE BEEN DESTROYED.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ALBERT CHAN WAI-YIP, MRS WONG NOTED THAT 16 SAMPLES OF GRAPES, 15 OF WHICH WERE IMPORTED FROM THE UNITED STATES, WERE TAKEN FOR EXAMINATION LAST YEAR.

"NO PESTICIDE RESIDUE WAS FOUND IN ANY OF THE SAMPLES TAKEN," SHE SAID.

MRS WONG SAID THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH MAINTAINED CLOSE LIAISON WITH COUNTRIES EXPORTING FOOD TO HONG KONG AND REQUIRED FROM THE EXPORTING AUTHORITY FOOD TEST REPORTS ON THE EXPORT ITEMS.

"UNDER ITS FOOD SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME, THE DEPARTMENT REGULARLY TAKES SAMPLES OF IMPORTED FOOD, INCLUDING FRUITS, FROM POINTS OF ENTRY AND RETAIL OR WHOLESALE OUTLETS FOR EXAMINATION.

"ANY FOOD ITEM CONSIDERED UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION WILL BE DENIED IMPORT," SHE SAID.

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METALLIC CONCENTRATIONS IN FOOD CLOSELY MONITORED

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL SHORTLY PUBLISH ON A REGULAR BASIS REPORTS ON THE RESULTS OF FOOD TESTING FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC, 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 CHRISTINE LOH KUNG-WAI, MRS WONG SAID BACTERIOLOGICAL, METALLIC AND PESTICIDE CONTENT IN FOOD IN HONG KONG WAS MONITORED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH THROUGH ITS FOOD SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME.

SHE SAID THE MAXIMUM PERMITTED CONCENTRATIONS OF HEAVY METALS WERE SET OUT IN THE FOOD ADULTERATION (METALLIC CONTAMINATION) REGULATIONS WITH REFERENCE TO GUIDELINES INCLUDING THE PROVISIONAL TOLERABLE WEEKLY INTAKE RECOMMENDED BY THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION (WHO).

"THE STANDARDS SPELT OUT IN OUR LAW ARE CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE AND IN LINE WITH WHO GUIDELINES," SHE STATED.

"IT IS NOT CORRECT TO SAY THAT OUR STANDARDS ARE LESS STRINGENT THAN THOSE OF MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE OR AUSTRALIA.

"THERE IS NO SINGLE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD AND THE MAXIMUM PERMITTED CONCENTRATIONS VARY FROM PLACE TO PLACE, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT LOCAL CONSIDERATIONS."

CITING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 31 THIS YEAR, MRS WONG SAID THE GOVERNMENT CARRIED OUT 161 BACTERIOLOGICAL AND 46 METALLIC TESTS ON SAMPLES OF CRUSTACEANS AND FOUND FIVE AND ONE SAMPLES RESPECTIVELY NOT COMPLYING WITH STANDARDS.

DURING THE SAME PERIOD, OF THE 367 BACTERIOLOGICAL AND 61 METALLIC TESTS ON SAMPLES OF MOLLUSCS, 42 AND 12 RESPECTIVELY WERE FOUND NOT COMPLYING WITH THE STANDARDS.

AS REGARDS FRESH VEGETABLES, OUT OF THE 885 SAMPLES TESTED FOR PESTICIDE RESIDUE, 15 WERE FOUND NOT COMPLYING WITH STANDARDS.

MRS WONG ALSO NOTED THAT 14 PROSECUTIONS WERE TAKEN OUT IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, ALL AGAINST SUPPLIERS OF PESTICIDE-TAINTED VEGETABLES.

EIGHT OF THESE CASES SECURED CONVICTION WITH PENALTIES IMPOSED RANGING FROM \$600 TO \$2,000 WHILE THE REMAINING SIX ARE PENDING JUDGMENT.

TO PUBLICISE THE IMPORTANCE OF ADHERING TO GOOD PERSONAL HYGIENE AND FOOD HYGIENE PRACTICES, MRS WONG SAID THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE REGIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH REGULARLY CONDUCTED HEALTH EDUCATION ACTIVITIES.

ON THE PROTECTION AND REGULATION OF CULTURE OF MARINE FISH, MRS WONG SAID THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES WAS EMPOWERED UNDER THE MARINE FISH CULTURE ORDINANCE TO PROSECUTE ANY PERSON WHO POLLUTED THE WATER IN ANY FISH CULTURE ZONE.

DISCHARGES OF EFFLUENT IN WATER CONTROL ZONES ARE ALSO STRICTLY CONTROLLED UNDER THE WATER POLLUTION ORDINANCE VIA A LICENSING SCHEME ADMINISTERED BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

MRS WONG NOTED THAT AT PRESENT, OVER 90 PER CENT OF THE TERRITORY'S WATERS HAD BEEN DECLARED AS WATER CONTROL ZONES WITH TWO MORE ZONES TO BE DECLARED THIS YEAR AND THE FINAL ONE, VICTORIA HARBOUR, SCHEDULED TO BE DECLARED IN PHASES BY 1997.

FURTHERMORE, THE GOVERNMENT HAS EMBARKED ON A COMPREHENSIVE SEWERAGE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME TO ENSURE THAT ALL SIGNIFICANT EFFLUENTS CAN BE COLLECTED, TREATED AND PROPERLY DISPOSED OF.

REFERRING TO DEEP BAY WHICH IS THE ONLY SIGNIFICANT LOCAL OYSTER BREEDING BEDS, MRS WONG SAID IT WAS ALREADY A WATER CONTROL ZONE AND STATUTORY MEANS WERE IN PLACE TO CONTROL DISCHARGES OF EFFLUENTS AND DISPOSAL OF WASTE.

"HOWEVER, THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO POLLUTION IN DEEP BAY IS LIVESTOCK WASTE AND DEEP BAY IS ONE AREA IN WHICH THE ENFORCEMENT OF CONTROLS OVER LIVESTOCK WASTE DISPOSAL IS CURRENTLY SUSPENDED PENDING REVIEW," SHE SAID.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 1993

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LOCALISATION IN CIVIL SERVICE TO ACCELERATE

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THE PERCENTAGE OF OVERSEAS OFFICERS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE STOOD AT 1.2 PER CENT ON JANUARY 1 THIS YEAR AS COMPARED WITH 4.5 PER CENT IN 1952.

MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, 64 PER CENT OF THE DIRECTORATE IS NOW LOCALISED AND JUST OVER HALF OF THE SECRETARIES AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS ARE NOW LOCAL OFFICERS.

"THESE FIGURES ARE EXPECTED TO INCREASE FURTHER IN THE NEAR FUTURE AS MORE AND MORE LOCAL OFFICERS MOVE UP THROUGH THE RANKS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE," THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MRS ANSON CHAN, SAID IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON LEONG CHE-HUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

DESCRIBING THE LOCALISATION POLICY AS "BROADLY SUCCESSFUL", MRS CHAN SAID IT APPLIED TO ALL CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS IN ALL DEPARTMENTS.

PREFERENCE IS GIVEN TO SUITABLY QUALIFIED LOCAL CANDIDATES AND OVERSEAS OFFICERS ARE ONLY APPOINTED IF QUALIFIED LOCAL CANDIDATES ARE UNAVAILABLE.

SINCE EARLY 1985 OVERSEAS OFFICERS HAVE ONLY BEEN APPOINTED ON AGREEMENT (CONTRACT) TERMS AND THE CONTRACT OF AN OVERSEAS OFFICER WILL NOT BE RENEWED IF A QUALIFIED LOCAL OFFICER IS AVAILABLE TO TAKE HIS PLACE.

HOWEVER, MRS CHAN SAID THERE WAS NO GENERAL TARGET OR TIMESCALE TO PHASE OUT DELIBERATELY ALL OVERSEAS OFFICERS.

"INDEED THE JOINT DECLARATION AND THE BASIC LAW MAKE SPECIFIC PROVISION FOR THE CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT OF OVERSEAS OFFICERS, WITH ONE EXCEPTION.

"THESE ARE THE FUTURE PRINCIPAL OFFICIAL POSTS WHICH MUST BE HELD BY CHINESE NATIONALS WHO ARE HONG KONG RESIDENTS WITHOUT FOREIGN RIGHT OF ABODE.

"USING OUR PRESENT TERMINOLOGY WE BELIEVE THAT THE FUTURE PRINCIPAL OFFICIAL POSTS CORRESPOND TO OUR EXISTING POSTS OF CHIEF SECRETARY, FINANCIAL SECRETARY, ATTORNEY GENERAL, SECRETARIES, COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, COMMISSIONER, ICAC, COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE, DIRECTOR OF IMMIGRATION AND DIRECTOR OF AUDIT.

"WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A SUFFICIENTLY LARGE POOL OF QUALIFIED LOCAL OFFICERS TO FILL ALL THESE POSTS IN GOOD TIME BEFORE 1997," SHE STATED.

MRS CHAN ALSO TOLD COUNCILLORS THAT THERE WAS NO GOVERNMENT IMPOSED LOCALISATION OBJECTIVE FOR MAJOR PUBLIC BODIES AND ORGANISATIONS OUTSIDE THE CIVIL SERVICE.

/SHE SAID

SHE SAID THESE ORGANISATIONS WERE FREE TO SELECT WHOEVER THEY CONSIDERED THE BEST PERSON FOR THE JOB THOUGH THE GOVERNMENT WOULD LIKE TO SEE THESE BODIES GIVING PRIORITY TO SUITABLY QUALIFIED LOCAL CANDIDATES WHERE AVAILABLE.

"I UNDERSTAND THAT MANY OF THESE ORGANISATIONS NOW FOLLOW SUCH A POLICY THEMSELVES," SHE ADDED.

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CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES UNIT STRENGTHENED
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THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT HAS STRENGTHENED THE CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES UNIT WHICH HANDLES CHILD ABUSE CASES BY DEPLOYING MORE EXPERIENCED SOCIAL WORKERS TO IT, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, SAID.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON CONRAD LAM KUI-SHING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MRS WONG SAID THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNIT HAD BEEN INCREASED FROM EIGHT TO NINE CASEWORKERS SINCE JANUARY 1991.

THE RANKING OF THE CASEWORKERS HAS ALSO BEEN UPGRADED FROM THE ASSISTANT SOCIAL WORK OFFICER RANK TO THE SOCIAL WORK OFFICER RANK, IN VIEW OF THE INCREASING COMPLEXITY OF THE CASES HANDLED AND THE NEED FOR OUTREACHING INVESTIGATION DUTIES.

"AT PRESENT, THE AVERAGE CASELOAD OF A CASEWORKER IN THE UNIT IS 39.

"THIS CASELOAD IS IN LINE WITH THE APPROVED MANNING RATIO OF ONE CHILD PROTECTIVE CASEWORKER TO 40 CHILD ABUSE CASE, AND IS CONSIDERED REASONABLE," MRS WONG SAID.

HOWEVER, SHE STRESSED THAT THE DEPARTMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE CASELOAD OF THE CASEWORKERS.

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CONTRACT FOR STRATEGIC LANDFILL PROJECTS
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THE CHINESE SIDE ARE BEING CONSULTED ON THE CONTRACTS FOR THE STRATEGIC LANDFILL PROJECTS WHICH WOULD GO BEYOND JUNE 30, 1997.

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

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MR EASON EXPLAINED THAT THESE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS WERE DEVELOPED BY CONSULTANTS COMMISSIONED BY THE GOVERNMENT SPECIFICALLY FOR THE TASK.

IN THE COURSE OF THEIR WORK, THE CONSULTANTS DREW ON PROFESSIONAL AND SPECIALIST EXPERTISE FROM VARIOUS FIELDS INCLUDING WASTE MANAGEMENT, ENGINEERING, LEGAL AND FINANCIAL AND WHERE APPROPRIATE, ADAPTED PRACTICES FOLLOWED ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD TO SUIT HONG KONG.

THE PROCESS WAS SUPERVISED BY A STEERING GROUP CONSISTING OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM GOVERNMENT BRANCHES AND DEPARTMENTS.

MR EASON SAID BIDS FOR STRATEGIC LANDFILL PROJECTS WERE EVALUATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE CENTRAL TENDER BOARD.

"THE EVALUATION CRITERIA ARE DRAWN UP AND AGREED BY A TENDER SELECTION PANEL CONSISTING OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM GOVERNMENT BRANCHES AND DEPARTMENTS AND APPROVED BY THE CENTRAL TENDER BOARD BEFORE TENDERS ARE RECEIVED," HE SAID.

THE CONSULTANTS ASSESSED EACH TENDER AGAINST THESE CRITERIA AND PUT FORWARD THEIR EVALUATION FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE TENDER SELECTION PANEL, WHICH THEN MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CENTRAL TENDER BOARD FOR APPROVAL, HE SAID.

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ACCESS FOR THE DISABLED
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A BUILDING TO WHICH DISABLED PERSONS HAVE OR MAY REASONABLY BE EXPECTED TO HAVE ACCESS SHOULD BE DESIGNED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SPECIFIED STANDARDS TO FACILITATE THEIR ACCESS.

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

MR EASON EXPLAINED THAT THE PROVISION OF ACCESS TO AND SPECIAL FACILITIES FOR DISABLED PERSONS IN BUILDINGS WAS GOVERNED BY THE BUILDING (PLANNING) REGULATIONS.

THE TYPES OF BUILDINGS COVERED INCLUDE HOTELS, PLACES OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT AND SCHOOLS BUT NOT PRIVATE DOMESTIC BUILDINGS.

MR EASON SAID THE GREEN PAPER ON REHABILITATION PUBLISHED IN MARCH 1992 RECOMMENDED THAT CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO EXTENDING THE REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE REGULATION TO PRIVATE DOMESTIC BUILDINGS.

"THE ADMINISTRATION IS CONSIDERING THE WAY FORWARD ON THIS AND OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE GREEN PAPER IN THE LIGHT OF PUBLIC VIEWS," HE SAID.

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COSMETICS PRICE FALL EXPLAINED
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THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MISS DENISE YUE, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) EXPLAINED TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WHY THE ABOLITION OF A 30 PER CENT DUTY ON COSMETICS CAN ONLY BE TRANSLATED INTO A LESSER PERCENTAGE REDUCTION IN THE RETAIL PRICES.

THIS IS BECAUSE THE DUTY ON COSMETIC PRODUCTS WAS BASED ON THE IMPORTED PRICE OF THE PRODUCTS OR, IN THE CASE OF LOCALLY MANUFACTURED COSMETICS, ON THE PRODUCTION VALUE, AND NOT ON THE RETAIL PRICES, SHE SAID.

MISS YUE SAID THE IMPORTED OR PRODUCTION VALUE OF COSMETICS WAS LESS THAN THE RETAIL PRICE BECAUSE IT DID NOT INCLUDE COSTS FOR LOCAL DISTRIBUTION, ADVERTISING AND SALES PROMOTION, NOR DID IT INCLUDE A PROFIT ELEMENT.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HENRY TANG YING-YEN, SHE SAID THE PROPORTION OF THE SALE PRICE OF COSMETICS PREVIOUSLY REPRESENTED BY THE 30 PER CENT DUTY RANGED FROM ABOUT 3 PER CENT TO 13 PER CENT.

SHE SAID: "IT WAS ON THIS BASIS THAT WE NEGOTIATED THE PROMISED PRICE REDUCTIONS OF 10 PER CENT TO 12 PER CENT WITH THE COSMETICS TRADE.

"IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE DO NOT SEE THE NEED TO ASK THE CONSUMER COUNCIL TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER," SHE ADDED.

IN THIS YEAR'S BUDGET SPEECH, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO ABOLISH THE 30 PER CENT DUTY ON COSMETICS.

HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED AN UNDERTAKING FROM THE COSMETICS TRADE ASSOCIATIONS THAT, IF THE DUTY WERE ABOLISHED, RETAIL PRICES OF COSMETIC PRODUCTS WOULD BE REDUCED IN THE COMING YEAR BY AN AVERAGE OF BETWEEN 10-12 PER CENT.

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FEW TEENAGERS ABUSE SOLVENTS
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THE NUMBER OF TEENAGERS INVOLVED IN SOLVENT ABUSE IS VERY SMALL ALTHOUGH IT IS INCREASING, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

ACCORDING TO THE GOVERNMENT'S CENTRAL REGISTRY OF DRUG ABUSE, THERE WERE THREE REPORTS INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER 21 IN 1990, 17 IN 1991, AND 25 LAST YEAR.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON FUNG CHI-WOOD, MR ASPREY SAID PUBLICITY AND PREVENTIVE EDUCATION WAS THE PRINCIPAL MEASURE TO REDUCE SOLVENT ABUSE.

IN ALL SUCH PROGRAMMES UNDERTAKEN BY THE ACTION COMMITTEE AGAINST NARCOTICS, THE DANGER OF SOLVENT ABUSE WAS INCLUDED.

"A NUMBER OF INITIATIVES ARE BEING TAKEN TO EDUCATE YOUNGSTERS, PARENTS, EDUCATORS AND OTHERS WHO HAVE AN INTEREST IN THE MATTER, ABOUT THE DANGER OF DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE," HE SAID.

THESE INCLUDE A NEW SERIES OF ANNOUNCEMENTS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST ON TELEVISION AND RADIO, A POSTER AND LEAFLET.

THERE ARE TALKS FOR PARENTS OF SECONDARY STUDENTS, AND WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS FOR STUDENTS OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION.

IN SEPTEMBER, A NEW DRUG EDUCATION TALKS PROGRAMME WOULD BE INTRODUCED FOR PRIMARY SIX STUDENTS.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO PLANS TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATIVE CONTROLS ON THE SALE OF SOLVENTS BECAUSE OF THE LIMITED EXTENT OF SOLVENT ABUSE AND THEIR WIDESPREAD AND LEGITIMATE USES.

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COMMUNITY HALLS ARE PROPERLY MAINTAINED

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COMMUNITY HALLS ARE PROPERLY RUN UNDER MAINTENANCE PROGRAMMES AND IMPROVEMENTS TAKE PLACE AS AND WHEN APPROPRIATE, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR ALBERT LAM, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LEE WING-TAT, MR LAM SAID THE ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT HAD A ROLLING PROGRAMME FOR MAINTAINING THE EXTERNAL FACADE OF THE COMMUNITY HALLS.

FOR COMMUNITY HALLS WITHIN HOUSING ESTATES, THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT HAS A SIMILAR MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME, HE ADDED.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS HAVE INCLUDED INSTALLATION OF AIR-CONDITIONING IN ALL HALLS, UPGRADING FLOORING, AND ENHANCEMENT OF SECURITY INSTALLATIONS.

MR LAM POINTED OUT THAT SINCE 1987, COMMUNITY HALLS HAVE INCLUDED FACILITIES FOR THE DISABLED SUCH AS SPECIAL ACCESS, TOILETS AND EMERGENCY ESCAPE ROUTES. FACILITIES HAVE ALSO BEEN INTRODUCED IN THE OLDER HALLS WHERE TECHNICALLY FEASIBLE.

THE PRESENT SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION OF COMMUNITY HALLS INCLUDES A MULTI-PURPOSE HALL WITH A STAGE AND DRESSING ROOMS FOR HOLDING CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AS WELL AS A CONFERENCE ROOM FOR MEETINGS.

MR LAM ALSO SAID FROM APRIL 1, DISTRICT BOARDS (DB'S) WILL BE FULLY CONSULTED ON OPERATIONAL AND MANAGEMENT MATTERS AFFECTING THE 34 COMMUNITY HALLS.

DB'S WILL HAVE A GREATER INFLUENCE OVER THE OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THESE FACILITIES WHILE CNTA DISTRICT OFFICERS WILL CONTINUE TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DAY-TO-DAY OPERATION OF THE HALLS.

AND IN FUTURE, DB'S WILL ALSO BE INVITED TO ADVISE THE DISTRICT OFFICERS ON HOW THESE FACILITIES SHOULD BE OPERATED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THEIR COMMUNITY.

THIS WILL INCLUDE ADVISING ON UPGRADING THE STANDARDS OF MAINTENANCE, THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW OR DIFFERENT USES FOR THESE FACILITIES, BOOKING ARRANGEMENTS AND OPERATING HOURS, HE SAID.

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NAMES OF GOVT DEPARTMENTS TO BE ADAPTED

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NOMENCLATURE OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, DEPARTMENTAL EMBLEMS AND LOGOS, UNIFORMS, BADGES AND INSIGNIA WHICH ARE NOT COMPATIBLE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE BASIC LAW AND THE FUTURE STATUS OF HONG KONG AS A SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION OF CHINA WILL NEED TO BE ADAPTED.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS, MR LEUNG CHIN-MAN, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON GILBERT LEUNG KAM-HO IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"ADMINISTRATION IS EXAMINING THE CHANGES THAT ARE NECESSARY AND SUITABLE ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE IN DUE COURSE," MR LEUNG SAID.

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COMPLAINT CHANNELS FOR CONSUMERS

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THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MISS DENISE YUE, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) SPELT OUT THE CHANNELS AVAILABLE TO CONSUMERS FOR LODGING COMPLAINTS AGAINST ORGANISATIONS THAT FALL OUTSIDE THE PURVIEW OF THE CONSUMER COUNCIL.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LAU CHIN-SHEK IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SHE ALSO EXPLAINED THE LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS THAT WERE IN PLACE FOR MONITORING THE RELEVANT PROCEDURES IN HANDLING COMPLAINTS.

TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCASTING LICENSEES

THE LICENSEES INCLUDE ASIA TELEVISION LTD, HONG KONG COMMERCIAL BROADCASTING CO LTD, HUTCHIVISION HONG KONG LTD, METRO BROADCAST CORP LTD AND TELEVISION BROADCASTS LTD.

ANY PERSON WISHING TO LODGE A COMPLAINT AGAINST A BROADCASTING LICENSEE MAY WRITE TO THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY OR CALL THE AUTHORITY'S COMPLAINTS TELEPHONE HOTLINE.

IN ADDITION, A COMPLAINANT MAY LODGE COMPLAINTS DIRECT TO THE BROADCASTERS CONCERNED.

AS A CONDITION OF LICENCE, ALL TERRESTRIAL BROADCASTERS ARE REQUIRED TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER COMPLAINTS AND TO MAINTAIN A COMPLETE AND UP-TO-DATE COMPLAINTS RECORD FOR SUBMISSION TO THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY REGULARLY AND ON DEMAND.

HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY

TENANTS MAY LODGE THEIR COMPLAINTS DIRECT OR THROUGH ESTABLISHED CHANNELS WITH HOUSING MANAGERS IN CHARGE OF RESPECTIVE ESTATE OFFICES OR THE HOUSING AUTHORITY.

THE COMPLAINANT WILL RECEIVE FROM THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT A REPLY. IF HE IS NOT SATISFIED WITH THE REPLY, HE MAY PUT HIS CASE TO THE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE SET UP UNDER THE HOUSING ORDINANCE.

TENANTS MAY ALSO APPEAL IN WRITING TO THE APPEAL PANEL AGAINST TENANCY DECISIONS MADE BY THE DEPARTMENT.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND TUNNEL COMPANIES

THE COMPANIES INCLUDE CHINA MOTOR BUS CO LTD, THE CROSS-HARBOUR TUNNEL CO LTD, THE HONG KONG AND YAUMATEI FERRY CO LTD, HONG KONG TRAMWAYS LTD, KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORP, KOWLOON MOTOR BUS CO (1933) LTD, MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORP, NEW HONG KONG TUNNEL CO LTD, NEW LANTAU BUS CO (1973) LTD, STAR FERRY CO LTD AND TATE'S CAIRN TUNNEL CO LTD.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS IN RESPECT OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND TUNNEL COMPANIES MAY BE MADE TO THE COMPANIES THEMSELVES, THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT AND THE TRANSPORT COMPLAINTS UNIT OF THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

SOME PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS HAVE PASSENGER HOTLINES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRES TO HANDLE PUBLIC COMPLAINTS.

MOST OF THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS ALSO CONDUCT SURVEYS FROM TIME TO TIME TO GAUGE CONSUMERS' OPINION ON THEIR SERVICE STANDARD.

THE CHINA MOTOR BUS COMPANY LTD IS REQUIRED UNDER ITS NEW FRANCHISE TO ESTABLISH PASSENGER LIAISON GROUPS TO LIAISE WITH THE PUBLIC.

THE HONGKONG AND YAUMATEI FERRY COMPANY LTD AND THE KOWLOON MOTOR BUS COMPANY LTD HAVE ALSO TAKEN INITIATIVES TO ESTABLISH SUCH GROUPS.

"WE SHALL CONSIDER MAKING THIS A REQUIREMENT IN THE FRANCHISES OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS WHEN THESE ARE DUE FOR RENEWAL," MISS YUE SAID.

TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES

THESE COMPANIES INCLUDE HONG KONG TELECOM INTERNATIONAL LTD (HKTI) AND HONG KONG TELEPHONE LTD (HKTC).

CONSUMERS MAY LODGE COMPLAINTS WITH THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY.

HKTC IS OBLIGED TO "PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY A GOOD, EFFICIENT AND CONTINUOUS SERVICE OF PUBLIC TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION WITH MODERN APPLIANCES, INCLUDING ALL REASONABLE MODERN INVENTIONS".

UNDER THE HKTI'S LICENCE, THE LICENSEE IS OBLIGED TO "OPERATE, MAINTAIN AND PROVIDE IN A MANNER SATISFACTORY TO THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY, THE SERVICES SPECIFIED IN THE FIRST AND SECOND SCHEDULES HERETO".

FISH AND VEGETABLE MARKETING ORGANISATIONS

THESE ORGANISATIONS INCLUDE FISH MARKETING ORGANISATION AND VEGETABLE MARKETING ORGANISATION.

ANY PERSON ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY A DECISION OF THE FISH MARKETING ORGANISATION MAY NOTIFY THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES IN WRITING TO REQUEST SUCH DECISION TO BE REVIEWED.

THE REQUEST WILL BE REFERRED TO THE FISH MARKETING ADVISORY BOARD WHICH MAY HOLD AN INQUIRY TO HEAR THE COMPLAINT AND WILL SUBMIT ITS ADVICE TO THE GOVERNOR FOR FINAL DECISION.

AS FOR THE VEGETABLE MARKETING ORGANISATION, A CHANNEL OF APPEAL TO THE DIRECTOR OF MARKETING IS ALSO AVAILABLE.

POWER COMPANIES

THESE COMPANIES INCLUDE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER CO LTD AND THE HONG KONG ELECTRIC CO LTD.

THE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY LTD OPERATES A CUSTOMER TELEPHONE SERVICE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES CENTRES WITH WHICH CUSTOMERS CAN LODGE COMPLAINTS. ITS CUSTOMER CONSULTATIVE GROUP MONITORS THE HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS.

SIMILARLY, THE HONG KONG ELECTRIC COMPANY LTD OPERATES A CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE, AN EMERGENCY REPORTING CENTRE AND TRENCHING WORK COMPLAINTS HOTLINE TO WHICH CUSTOMERS CAN DIRECT COMPLAINTS. THE COMPANY ALSO RECEIVES COMPLAINTS FROM ITS CUSTOMER LIAISON GROUP.

A PERSON AGGRIEVED BY A DECISION/ACTION OF THE COMPANIES MAY APPEAL TO THE DIRECTOR OF ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES.

IN ADDITION, CUSTOMERS MAY ALSO LODGE COMPLAINTS WITH THE DIRECTOR AGAINST THE COMPANIES FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

HONG KONG AIR CARGO TERMINALS LTD

CUSTOMERS MAY LODGE THEIR COMPLAINTS DIRECT WITH THE COMPANY OR CHANNEL THEM THROUGH THEIR TRADE BODIES - THE CARRIER LIAISON GROUP AND THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF FREIGHT FORWARDING AGENTS.

IN ADDITION, THE FRANCHISE AGREEMENT SIGNED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COMPANY PROVIDES THAT THE COMPANY SHALL OPERATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL AIR INDUSTRY STANDARDS TO THE GENERAL SATISFACTION OF ITS CUSTOMERS AND THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION.

WHERE A CUSTOMER FEELS THAT THE STANDARDS REQUIRED ARE NOT MET, HE COULD COMPLAIN DIRECT TO THE DIRECTOR.

HOSPITAL AUTHORITY

AT THE INDIVIDUAL HOSPITAL LEVEL, PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ARE HANDLED BY THE RELEVANT HOSPITAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT ASSISTED BY A PATIENT RELATIONS OFFICER.

AT THE CENTRAL LEVEL, APPEAL CASES AND REFERRALS FROM OTHER BODIES ARE HANDLED BY A PUBLIC COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED UNDER THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY BOARD.

SEPARATELY, THE TRENDS OF COMPLAINTS RELATING TO INDIVIDUAL HOSPITALS OR SPECIALTIES ARE MONITORED BY THE PATIENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE UNDER THE BOARD.

THE HEALTH AND WELFARE BRANCH SCRUTINISES THE QUARTERLY REPORTS PREPARED BY THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY ON THE INCIDENCE OF COMPLAINTS OR EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION, BASED ON THE STATISTICS SUPPLIED BY INDIVIDUAL HOSPITALS.

JUSTICES OF PEACE VISITED PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS MONTHLY AND OTHER HOSPITALS THREE MONTHLY.

GENERAL

MISS YUE ADDED THAT CONSUMERS MAY ALSO LODGE THEIR COMPLAINTS WITH OTHER BODIES LIKE OFFICE OF MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

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DRAFTING OF HOME FOR AGED BILL NEAR COMPLETION

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THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES (ELDERLY PERSONS) BILL IS EXPECTED TO BE INTRODUCED INTO THE COUNCIL IN THE 1993/94 SESSION.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ZACHARY WONG WAI-YIN, MRS WONG SAID THE DRAFTING OF THE BILL WAS NEAR COMPLETION.

"THERE ARE NO LONGER ANY DRAFTING DIFFICULTIES," SHE SAID.

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TIME-TABLE FOR TTRA BEING REVIEWED

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SUITABLE GUIDELINES ON HOW TEXTBOOKS SHOULD BE REVISED TO TIE IN WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THE TARGET AND TARGET-RELATED ASSESSMENT SCHEME (TTRA) WILL BE ISSUED TO LOCAL PUBLISHERS IF THE RESULTS OF A REVIEW CURRENTLY UNDERTAKEN BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WARRANT IT, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, SAID.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ERIC LI KA-CHEUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR CHAN SAID THE DEPARTMENT WAS REVIEWING THE MAY 1993 TIME-TABLE FOR INTRODUCING TTRA TO PRIMARY FOUR IN THE LIGHT OF THE OUTCOME OF THE PILOT PROJECT.

"THIS REVIEW WILL COVER THE NEED FOR TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPORT MATERIALS.

/"IF IT

"IF IT TURNS OUT THAT SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES TO EXISTING PUBLICATIONS ARE WARRANTED, SUITABLE GUIDELINES WILL BE ISSUED AND AMPLE TIME WILL BE ALLOWED FOR THEIR PREPARATION AND PRODUCTION," HE SAID.

IN THE MEANTIME, MR CHAN SAID, PUBLISHERS WERE KEPT INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS ON TTRA AT A MEETING IN JANUARY THIS YEAR.

THE DEPARTMENT WILL ALSO MAINTAIN A DIALOGUE WITH THEM THROUGH REGULAR MEETINGS AND PERIODIC BRIEFING SESSIONS, HE ADDED.

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HK ATHLETES FARE WELL AT INT'L COMPETITIONS

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HONG KONG'S SPORTSMEN AND SPORTSWOMEN HAVE GREATLY IMPROVED THEIR PERFORMANCE IN RECENT YEARS, WINNING MANY MEDALS AT REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS AS WELL AS BREAKING HONG KONG'S OWN RECORDS.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHIM PUI-CHUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR JAMES SO, SAID LOCAL ATHLETES WERE PARTICULARLY GOOD AT A SELECTED NUMBER OF SPORTS.

STATISTICS SHOW THAT THEY HAVE WON MEDALS IN THE FOLLOWING SPORTS EVENTS AT INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS BETWEEN 1988 AND 1993:

	GOLD ----	SILVER -----	BRONZE -----
SWIMMING	33	92	109
TABLE-TENNIS	17	15	20
SQUASH	8	14	4
WINDSURFING	8	1	3
BADMINTON	4	4	5
ROWING	1	5	8

DURING THE SAME FIVE-YEAR PERIOD, DISABLED ATHLETES HAVE ALSO CLAIMED NINE GOLD, SEVEN SILVER AND 15 BRONZE MEDALS.

/AS REGARDS

AS REGARDS FUNDING FOR THE PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS IN HONG KONG, MR SO SAID IT WAS CHANNELLED MAINLY THROUGH DIRECT GOVERNMENT SUBVENTIONS, EXPENDITURE BY THE TWO MUNICIPAL COUNCILS ON SPORTS PROGRAMMES AND EVENTS THEY ORGANISED, AND EXPENDITURE BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ON SCHOOL SPORTS PROGRAMMES AND COMPETITIONS.

DIRECT GOVERNMENT SUBVENTIONS WERE GIVEN, BEFORE 1990, TO THE AMATEUR SPORTS FEDERATION & OLYMPIC COMMITTEE (ASF&OC) AND THE NATIONAL SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS (NSAS) ON THE ADVICE OF THE COUNCIL FOR RECREATION AND SPORTS.

AFTER 1990, SUBVENTIONS ARE PASSED TO THE HONG KONG SPORTS DEVELOPMENT BOARD WHICH THEN PROVIDES FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE ASF&OC AND THE NSAS.

GOVERNMENT SUBVENTIONS ROSE FROM \$10.35 MILLION IN 1988/89 TO \$33.14 MILLION IN 1992/93 WHILE EXPENDITURE BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT INCREASED FROM \$7.52 MILLION TO \$10.75 MILLION DURING THE SAME PERIOD.

IN 1988/89, THE URBAN COUNCIL SPENT \$11.49 MILLION ON SPORTS COMPARED WITH \$23.34 MILLION IN 1992/93.

THE CORRESPONDING FIGURES FOR THE REGIONAL COUNCIL WERE \$7.69 MILLION AND \$13.75 MILLION.

MR SO ALSO TOLD THE COUNCILLORS THAT ASF&OC WAS RECOGNISED BY THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE, THE OLYMPIC COUNCIL OF ASIA AND THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES FEDERATION.

"AS SUCH, IT IS THE ACCREDITATION BODY FOR HONG KONG'S PARTICIPATION IN THESE INTERNATIONAL GAMES," HE SAID.

IN PROMOTING SPORTS IN HONG KONG, THE ASF&OC PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE BY ORGANISING AND ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS.

IN ADDITION, IT SPONSORS LOCAL OR OVERSEAS TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR SPORTS LEADERS, ADMINISTRATORS, COACHES, TECHNICAL OFFICIALS AND ATHLETES; AND ORGANISES A VARIETY OF LOCAL COURSES IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE UNITED STATES SPORTS ACADEMY.

TOGETHER WITH THE NSAS AND THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS, IT ALSO ORGANISES THE ANNUAL HONG KONG FESTIVAL OF SPORTS, WHICH ATTRACTS WIDE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 1993

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MOTION FOR INDEPENDENT BODY ON POLICE COMPLAINTS PASSED
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A MOTION, MOVED BY THE HON JAMES TO KUN-SUN, URGING THE GOVERNMENT TO SET UP AN INDEPENDENT BODY TO HANDLE COMPLAINTS AGAINST POLICE WAS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TONIGHT (WEDNESDAY), AFTER MORE THAN TWO HOURS OF DEBATE.

A TOTAL OF 20 MEMBERS SPOKE. THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, SPOKE ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT. AN AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION BY THE HON MRS PEGGY LAM WAS DEFEATED.

A MOTION MOVED BY THE HON SZETO WAH URGING FOR A REFERENDUM ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT WAS DEFEATED AFTER A THREE-HOUR DEBATE WHILE THE TWO MOTIONS UNDER THE INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES ORDINANCE MOVED BY THE HON MRS ELSIE TU WERE PASSED.

THREE BILLS WERE PASSED, ALL WITH AMENDMENTS.

THEY ARE: COMPUTER CRIMES BILL 1992; CRIMES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 1992; AND PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND JUVENILES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992.

THIRTEEN OTHER BILLS WERE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS. TEN OF THEM WERE BUDGET-RELATED. DEBATES ON THEM WERE ADJOURNED.

THE MOTION RAISED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ELIZABETH BOSHER, UNDER THE MARINE FISH (MARKETING) ORDINANCE WAS PASSED.

TWO MOTIONS MOVED BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY, MR K Y YEUNG, UNDER THE MAGISTRATES ORDINANCE AND MATRIMONIAL CAUSES ORDINANCE RESPECTIVELY, WERE ALSO PASSED.

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