



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 1994

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 1994

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STATEMENT ON ICAC INQUIRIES

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THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT IS ISSUED BY THE DEPUTY TO THE GOVERNOR, MRS ANSON CHAN:

I HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE OF THE RESULT OF POLICE INQUIRIES INTO ALLEGATIONS MADE BY MR ALEX TSUI AGAINST STAFF OF THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION (ICAC).

I AM COMPLETELY SATISFIED THAT A DETAILED AND PROPER INVESTIGATION HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT. THE RESULTS HAVE BEEN FULLY AND INDEPENDENTLY CONSIDERED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS.

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE ICAC AND ITS SENIOR OFFICERS IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE AND I TRUST THAT THIS INVESTIGATION HAS NOW CLEARED THE AIR OVER A MATTER WHICH I KNOW HAS BEEN OF PUBLIC CONCERN.

THE IMPORTANT THING NOW IS TO GIVE OUR FULL SUPPORT TO THE ICAC IN ITS BATTLE AGAINST CORRUPTION. IT HAS MY WHOLEHEARTED SUPPORT AND THAT OF THE GOVERNMENT AND, I AM SURE, OF THE COMMUNITY AS WELL.

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ICAC'S CASE COMPLETED

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WITH REFERENCE TO MR ALEX TSUI'S ALLEGATION OF PERVERTING THE COURSE OF JUSTICE AGAINST OFFICERS IN THE ICAC, AND THE RELATED ALLEGATIONS OF INDECENT ASSAULT AGAINST AN ICAC OFFICER, POLICE ENQUIRIES HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED AT A VERY SENIOR LEVEL, AND A DETAILED INVESTIGATION HAS BEEN MADE.

REPORTS ON THE INVESTIGATION HAVE BEEN FORWARDED TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS WHERE THEY WERE CONSIDERED PERSONALLY BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS WHO HAVE ADVISED THAT NO PROSECUTION BE BROUGHT.

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STATEMENT BY DEPUTY TO GOVERNOR ON MICHAEL GALE'S DEATH

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STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY TO THE GOVERNOR, MRS ANSON CHAN, ON THE DEATH OF MR MICHAEL GALE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF HONGKONG TELECOM.

"I WAS SHOCKED AND SADDENED TO LEARN OF THE SUDDEN DEATH OF MICHAEL GALE. AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF HONGKONG TELECOM, MR GALE WAS ONE OF OUR MOST DYNAMIC AND RESPECTED BUSINESSMEN.

IN HIS MANY YEARS OF SERVICE WITH THE CABLE AND WIRELESS GROUP, HE CONTRIBUTED ENORMOUSLY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY. AS SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, I HAD CLOSE DEALINGS WITH MR GALE. TOGETHER WE TACKLED MANY DIFFICULT AND COMPLEX ISSUES BUT THEY WERE MADE EASIER BY HIS VISION AND UNBOUNDED ENTHUSIASM FOR THE GROWTH OF THE INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG AND THE REGION.

MR GALE HAD GREAT FAITH IN HONG KONG AND ITS FUTURE, AND WAS ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE COMMUNITY, AND IN PROMOTING HONG KONG INTERNATIONALLY. WE SHALL MISS HIS ENERGY AND COMMITMENT.

ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT, I WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND MY CONDOLENCES TO HIS WIFE, JESSAMINE AND TO HIS CHILDREN MARK AND JANETTE. I HOPE THEY WILL DERIVE SOME COMFORT FROM THE FACT THAT SO MANY SHARE THEIR GRIEF."

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BARONESS DUNN'S STATEMENT ON MICHAEL GALE'S DEATH

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THE FOLLOWING IS A STATEMENT BY THE SENIOR MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, BARONESS DUNN, ON HEARING THE DEATH OF MR MICHAEL GALE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF HONG KONG TELECOMMUNICATION:

"I AM DEEPLY SADDENED BY NEWS OF MICHAEL GALE'S UNTIMELY DEATH. MR GALE HAS HAD A LONG AND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE IN HONG KONG CONTRIBUTING TO A PERIOD OF RAPID DEVELOPMENT IN HONG KONG'S TELECOMMUNICATIONS. I SEND MY DEEPEST CONDOLENCE TO HIS FAMILY AND TO THE MANAGEMENT AND STAFF OF THE HONG KONG TELECOMMUNICATION GROUP. HONG KONG TELECOM HAS LOST A CAPABLE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HONG KONG HAS LOST A STAUNCH SUPPORTER. WE SHALL ALL MISS HIM."

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HONG KONG FASHION READY TO FACE NEW CHALLENGE

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THE CREATIVITY OF LOCAL FASHION DESIGNERS AND THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS OF THE MANUFACTURERS SHOULD WELL PREPARE HONG KONG TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF AN EVER MORE COMPETITIVE, QUOTA-FREE ENVIRONMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY.

THE REMARK WAS MADE BY THE DEPUTY TO THE GOVERNOR, MRS ANSON CHAN, WHEN SHE OPENED THE 24TH HONG KONG FASHION WEEK ORGANISED BY THE TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AT THE HONG KONG CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SHE SAID HONG KONG HAD ESTABLISHED AN EXCELLENT REPUTATION AS A PRODUCER OF FASHION GARMENTS OF HIGH QUALITY.

IT IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST CLOTHING EXPORTERS. COMBINED WITH RE-EXPORTS, HONG KONG'S TOTAL EXPORTS OF CLOTHING RANK FIRST IN THE WORLD.

MRS CHAN SAID TO BEAT THE QUOTAS ON THE VOLUME OF TEXTILE AND CLOTHING EXPORTS, HONG KONG HAD DIVERSIFIED INTO HIGHER VALUE-ADDED FASHION ITEMS.

AND TO BEAT EVER-RISING LAND AND LABOUR PRICES, IT HAS DIVERSIFIED THE PRODUCTION BASES AND SET UP MANUFACTURING FACILITIES THE WORLD OVER, SHE ADDED.

"SOME OF OUR MANUFACTURERS HAVE CREATED THEIR OWN DESIGNER LABEL CLOTHING WHICH HAVE BECOME HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL IN MAJOR MARKETS SUCH AS THE U.S. AND CHINA.

"THEIR RESOURCEFULNESS, INGENUITY, SENSITIVITY TO CHANGING FASHION TRENDS, COMMITMENT TO QUALITY AND THE ABILITY TO RESPOND QUICKLY HAVE POSITIONED THEM WELL FOR THE MARKETS OF THE FUTURE," MRS CHAN SAID.

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SWD TO LAUNCH PROGRAMMES TO RE-AFFIRM FAMILY'S ROLE

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THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR IAN STRACHAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES WERE BEING LAUNCHED TO PROMOTE HARMONIOUS FAMILY TIES TO MARK THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY (IYF).

SPEAKING AT A LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF KOWLOON GOLDEN MILE, MR STRACHAN SAID HONG KONG WOULD CELEBRATE IYF TO RE-AFFIRM THE FAMILY'S ROLE AS THE FOUNDATION FOR A STABLE SOCIETY.

THE MAIN THEME ON IYF FOR HONG KONG "FAMILY AND COMMUNITY: UNITY, HARMONY, DEVELOPMENT" CLEARLY REFLECTS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY AND SOCIETY, HE SAID.

TO STRENGTHEN THE FAMILY FOR A MORE COHESIVE SOCIETY, THE IYF CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE SUGGESTED TO AROUSE THE AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY IN RELATION TO PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, HARMONIOUS MARRIAGES, RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD AS WELL AS SUPPORT FOR THE CARERS IN THE FAMILY.

MR STRACHAN SAID HONG KONG ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE FAMILY AND RESPONDED QUICKLY AND POSITIVELY TO THE CALL OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO CELEBRATE IYF.

THE SLOGAN FOR IYF IS "LOVE: FAMILY AND ME".

HE SAID A VARIETY OF PROMOTIONAL ITEMS INCLUDING POSTERS, BUS ADVERTISEMENT, ANNOUNCEMENT IN PUBLIC INTEREST ON TELEVISION, POSTAL SLOGAN ON LOCAL AND OVERSEAS MAIL, A TELEVISION DRAMA SERIES ON FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION WOULD BE USED.

"A THEME SONG WILL BE USED FOR PUBLICITY IN TELEVISION AND RADIO AS WELL AS IN IYF PROGRAMMES," HE ADDED.

HE ALSO SAID THE HONG KONG COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICES HAD STARTED A RESEARCH ON "ROLE OF FAMILY IN COMMUNITY CARE" TO EXAMINE HOW THE FAMILY CARRIED OUT ITS CARING FUNCTION TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ITS VULNERABLE MEMBERS.

MR STRACHAN SAID MORE THAN 500 PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES WOULD BE ORGANISED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR TO SPREAD THE MESSAGES OF IYF.

THESE INCLUDED FAMILY PICNICS, BARBECUES, OUTINGS, KARAOKE CONTESTS, ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION, COOKING CONTEST, TALKS AND SEMINARS.

MORE, A FAMILY CARE DEMONSTRATION AND RESOURCE CENTRE, 19 FAMILY ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCE CENTRES AND SIX PARENT RESOURCE CENTRES WOULD BE OPEN LATER THIS YEAR.

MR STRACHAN STRESSED THAT WITH THESE NEW CENTRES TO FILL THE SERVICE GAP, A COMPREHENSIVE NETWORK OF PREVENTIVE, SUPPORTIVE AND REMEDIAL SERVICES FOR FAMILIES WOULD BE IN PLACE TO CATER FOR THE DIFFERENT NEEDS OF FAMILIES IN HONG KONG.

"TO RE-AFFIRM GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TOWARDS THE FAMILY, I AM PLEASED TO SAY THAT ADDITIONAL RESOURCES WOULD BE ALLOCATED TO IMPROVE BOTH THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF SERVICES FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN."

THESE INCLUDE THE IMPROVEMENT OF CASELOAD IN FAMILY SERVICE CENTRES, EXPANSION IN THE CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICE AS WELL AS HOME HELP TEAMS AND FAMILY AIDE WORKERS.

DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS VISIT CARITAS LOK YI SCHOOL

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DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) MET STAFF AND STUDENTS OF A SPECIAL SCHOOL IN THE SECOND IN A SERIES OF FAMILIARISATION VISITS TO EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES.

HEADING THE PARTY WERE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT BOARD, MR AMBROSE LAU; AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WAN CHAI DISTRICT BOARD, MRS PEGGY LAM.

OTHER MEMBERS WERE MR HUNG WING-TAT (CENTRAL AND WESTERN); MR TENG CHONG-TAI (WAN CHAI); MR KO TAM-KAN, MS MAR YUET-HAR AND MS YEUNG CHUI-CHUN (SOUTHERN).

THEY TOURED THE CARITAS LOK YI SCHOOL IN LEI KING WAN, SAI WAN HO, WHERE THEY WERE BRIEFED BY THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (SERVICES), MRS GRACE YUNG, AND THE PRINCIPAL, MRS SZE WONG SHUI-HAR.

THE PURPOSE-BUILT SCHOOL FOR SEVERELY MENTALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN STARTED OPERATION LAST YEAR. THERE ARE 24 BOARDERS AT THE SCHOOL.

THE BOARD MEMBERS WERE TOLD THAT STUDENTS WERE ENCOURAGED TO LEARN ABOUT AND INTEGRATE WITH THE COMMUNITY.

THERE IS ALSO A PARENTS' RESOURCE GROUP TO ENHANCE MUTUAL SUPPORT AND TO SHARE EXPERIENCE AMONG PARENTS, TEACHERS AND SPECIALISTS.

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15 CAUGHT FOR BREAKING IMMIGRATION LAW

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THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT ARRESTED NINE TWO-WAY PERMIT VISITORS AND SIX IMPORTED WORKERS FROM CHINA FOR SUSPECTED BREACHES OF THE IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE ON LAMMA TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

ACTING ON INFORMATION, IMMIGRATION INVESTIGATORS CONDUCTED IDENTITY CHECKS ON ABOUT 200 PEOPLE.

THE ARRESTED MEN, AGED BETWEEN 25 AND 40, WERE FOUND WORKING AS CASUAL WORKERS ON A CONSTRUCTION SITE.

THEY ADMITTED TO HAVE WORKED THERE FOR A PERIOD RANGING FROM A FEW DAYS TO THREE WEEKS WITH DAILY WAGES OF \$400.

A HONG KONG RESIDENT WHO IS THE SUB-CONTRACTOR OF THE CONSTRUCTION SITE IS ASSISTING WITH THE INVESTIGATION.

"YESTERDAY WE HAD CONDUCTED ANOTHER SERIES OF OPERATIONS. SIX TWO-WAY PERMIT VISITORS, FOUR PAKISTANIS AND ONE BANGLADESHI WERE ARRESTED FOR SUSPECTED BREACHES OF CONDITION OF STAY," A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID.

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"AN ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT FROM CHINA WAS ALSO ARRESTED. HE WAS FOUND USING A HONG KONG IDENTITY CARD RELATING TO ANOTHER PERSON.

"SEVEN SUSPECTED AIDERS AND ABETTORS INCLUDING THREE EMPLOYERS ARE HELPING IN THE INVESTIGATION," HE SAID.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID VISITORS WERE NOT ALLOWED TO TAKE UP ANY EMPLOYMENT, WHETHER PAID OR UNPAID, WITHOUT THE PERMISSION FROM THE DIRECTOR OF IMMIGRATION.

THOSE WHO BREACH THEIR CONDITIONS OF STAY ARE LIABLE TO PROSECUTION AND UPON CONVICTION TO A MAXIMUM FINE OF \$5,000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR TWO YEARS.

PEOPLE WHO AID AND ABET OTHERS TO COMMIT THESE OFFENCES ARE ALSO LIABLE TO PROSECUTION AND PENALTY, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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#### FINANCE COMMITTEE TO MEET ON FRIDAY

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THE FINANCE COMMITTEE WILL HOLD A MEETING AT 2.30 PM ON FRIDAY (JANUARY 21) AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO OBSERVE THE PROCEEDINGS FROM THE CHAMBER'S PUBLIC GALLERY. THEY MAY RESERVE SEATS BY CALLING 869 9492.

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ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE MEETING.

ADVANCE COPIES OF THE COMMITTEE'S PAPERS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR THE MEDIA FROM 2.30 PM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AT THE PRESS ROOM ON THE FIRST FLOOR OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BUILDING. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CONTENT OF THE PAPERS WILL BE EMBARGOED FOR USE UNTIL THE MEETING IS OVER.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND  
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION
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OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	2,045
REVERSAL OF LAF	+1,955
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	4,000
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-2,235
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,765
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	19.1.94
TWI 127.1 *-0.2*	

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS

EF NOTES/HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS

TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.28	13 MONTHS	2502	4.75	101.38	3.46
1 MONTH	2.54	16 MONTHS	2505	3.75	100.18	3.64
3 MONTHS	2.87	19 MONTHS	2508	4.625	101.26	3.83
6 MONTHS	3.04	22 MONTHS	2511	4.15	100.30	4.02
12 MONTHS	3.36	33 MONTHS	3610	4.20	99.32	4.51

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 25,260 MN

CLOSED 19 JANUARY 1994

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GOVT PLEDGES SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL COMMITMENT TO OPS

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THE GOVERNMENT UNDERTAKES TO PLOUGH BACK ALL POSSIBLE SAVINGS ON OLD AGE ALLOWANCES AND BASIC SOCIAL SECURITY PAYMENTS FOR THE ELDERLY, AMOUNTING TO BETWEEN \$3 AND \$4 BILLION IN 1993/94, INTO THE OLD-AGE PENSION SCHEME (OPS).

IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT AS AN EMPLOYER WILL CONTRIBUTE AT LEAST \$700 MILLION FOR EVERY PER CENT OF CONTRIBUTION.

"IF WE ALSO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN TAX FOREGONE IF EMPLOYERS' CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TO BE MADE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE, AS IS THE CASE UNDER VOLUNTARY RETIREMENT SCHEMES, IT IS VERY CLEAR THAT GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY PLEDGED TO TAKE ON A SUBSTANTIAL SHARE OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITMENT SHOULD THE SCHEME BE IMPLEMENTED," SAID MR W K LAM, ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER.

MR LAM WAS REPLYING TO REMARKS MADE BY LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS DURING A MOTION DEBATE ON OPS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE EMPHASISED THAT ANY CALL FOR FURTHER GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION MUST BE ASSESSED IN THE CONTEXT OF WHAT OUGHT TO BE THE FAIR SHARE OF THE BURDEN AMONG TAXPAYERS, EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES.

"WE HAVE TO BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL NOT TO LET TAXPAYERS SHOULDER A DISPROPORTIONATELY LARGE SHARE OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS AS THE MORE THE SCHEME RELIES ON CONTRIBUTION FROM TAX REVENUE, THE HIGHER THE RISK OF WEAKENING THE IRON LINK THAT WE SEEK TO ESTABLISH BETWEEN PENSION PAYOUTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMPLOYMENT EARNINGS," HE ADDED.

ON THE PROPOSED OLD-AGE PENSION SCHEME, MR LAM REVEALED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE APPOINTING CONSULTANTS IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS TO ADVISE ON THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS WHICH WERE OF KEY CONCERN TO THE PUBLIC:

- \* HOW THE OPS COULD BE ESTABLISHED IN PRACTICE;
- \* THE CONTRIBUTION LEVELS UNDER DIFFERENT SCENARIOS;
- \* HOW CONTRIBUTIONS MAY BE COLLECTED FROM THE WORKING POPULATION, IN PARTICULAR THE SELF-EMPLOYED AND THOSE CURRENTLY OUTSIDE THE TAX NET;
- \* WHETHER THERE SHOULD BE A MAXIMUM AND MINIMUM SALARY LEVEL FOR CONTRIBUTION PURPOSES; AND
- \* HOW OPS FUNDS SHOULD BE MANAGED IN THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE MANNER POSSIBLE.

OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE OPS HAVE ALSO BEEN RAISED.

/THESE INCLUDE .....

THESE INCLUDE WHETHER THE SCHEME SHOULD COVER IMPORTED WORKERS AND FOREIGN DOMESTIC HELPERS; WHETHER PENSION BENEFITS CAN BE PAID TO HONG KONG RESIDENTS WHO EMIGRATE; WHAT HAPPENS TO THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THOSE PERSONS WHO DIE BEFORE RECEIVING THEIR PENSION; WHETHER THERE SHOULD BE AN INCOME DECLARATION OR A MEANS TEST FOR ELIGIBILITY TO BENEFITS UNDER THE SCHEME, PARTICULARLY IN THE CASE OF NON-CONTRIBUTORS; AND WHETHER THERE SHOULD BE A MINIMUM RESIDENCE PERIOD BEFORE AN ELDERLY PERSON BECOMES ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS UNDER THE OPS.

MR LAM ASSURED MEMBERS THAT ALL THESE ISSUES WOULD BE COVERED IN GOVERNMENT'S DELIBERATIONS.

"VIEWS EXPRESSED IN RESPECT OF FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE OPS WILL BE CONSIDERED VERY CAREFULLY AND THOSE THAT RECEIVE BROAD PUBLIC ENDORSEMENT WILL BE ADOPTED WHERE PRACTICABLE AND AFFORDABLE," HE STATED.

ON THE TIME TABLE OF THE CONSULTANCY STUDY, MR LAM SAID THE GOVERNMENT PLANNED TO COMPLETE THE STUDY AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE.

"WE SHALL PUBLISH A CONSULTATION DOCUMENT TO SEEK FURTHER PUBLIC VIEWS, HOPEFULLY BY THE SUMMER.

"WE SHALL THEN TAKE INTO ACCOUNT PUBLIC VIEWS, INCLUDING THE OUTCOME OF OUR CONSULTATION WITH CHINA, AND MAKE THE DECISION ON WHETHER TO PROCEED WITH THE SCHEME BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR," HE SAID.

TURNING TO CALLS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MANDATORY EMPLOYMENT-RELATED SAVING SCHEMES, MR LAM REITERATED THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE THE ELDERLY WITH ADEQUATE RETIREMENT PROTECTION NOW OR IN THE FUTURE; NOR WOULD THEY COVER OR PROVIDE MEANINGFUL BENEFITS TO THE BULK OF THE POPULATION.

HE POINTED OUT THAT A PRIVATELY-RUN MANDATORY SAVING SCHEME WOULD BE VERY COMPLEX TO OPERATE AND IMPOSE A SUBSTANTIAL ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN ON THE COMMUNITY WITHOUT THE GUARANTEE OF COMMENSURATE BENEFITS.

A CENTRALLY-RUN SAVING SCHEME, OR A CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND, WOULD BE EVEN MORE INEFFECTIVE GIVEN THE FACT THAT THEY TYPICALLY YIELD LOWER-THAN-AVERAGE RETURNS.

"GIVEN THESE CONSIDERATIONS, IT IS CLEAR THAT NEITHER OF THE TWO MANDATORY SAVING SCHEMES WOULD BE AN EFFECTIVE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF FINANCIAL SECURITY FOR OLD AGE," MR LAM SAID.

A DUAL AIM IN DETERMINING BUS FARE INCREASES

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THE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE A DUAL AIM OF ENSURING THAT BUS SERVICES MEET PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS FOR EFFICIENT AND ACCEPTABLE STANDARD OF SERVICES WITH REASONABLE FARE ON ONE HAND AND ON THE OTHER HAND ENSURING THAT FARE LEVELS ARE PITCHED AT A LEVEL THAT GIVES THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS A REASONABLE RETURN IF IT WERE TO PIN DOWN FARE INCREASES TO INFLATION LEVELS.

SPEAKING AT A MOTION DEBATE ON FARE INCREASE APPLICATIONS FROM KMB AND CMB, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, SAID, IT WOULD BE FOOLHARDY TO ADHERE TO SUCH A SACROSANCT DOCTRINE BECAUSE THIS MAY BE A VERY TEMPTING SHORT-TERM PALLIATIVE BUT, IN THE LONG RUN, COULD SERIOUSLY UNDERMINE THE PROVISION OF BUS SERVICES.

MR BARMA SAID THE GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED MRS MIRIAM LAU'S AMENDED MOTION WHICH RECOGNISED THE DILEMMA, BUT WOULD CONTINUE TO VET APPLICATIONS FOR FARE INCREASES METICULOUSLY.

HE SAID THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA WOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN CONSIDERING AND PROCESSING APPLICATIONS FOR FARE INCREASES:

- (A) THE INCREASE IN OPERATING COSTS SINCE THE LAST FARE ADJUSTMENT;
- (B) EFFORTS MADE TO REDUCE COSTS AND INCREASE REVENUE E.G. ECONOMY MEASURES AND EFFORTS TO INCREASE NON-FAREBOX REVENUE SUCH AS ADVERTISING;
- (C) THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF SERVICE PROVIDED HAVING REGARD TO PASSENGER DEMAND AND FEEDBACK;
- (D) FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME;
- (E) FORECAST OF FUTURE COSTS, REVENUE AND RETURN;
- (F) PUBLIC AFFORDABILITY AND ACCEPTABILITY INCLUDING IMPACT ON LIVELIHOOD; AND
- (G) ELDERLY CONCESSIONARY FARES.

"IN ADDITION INFLATION IS A KEY ELEMENT THAT IS ALL-ENCOMPASSING," HE ADDED.

MR BARMA SAID: "BUS OPERATIONS ARE LABOUR INTENSIVE AND LABOUR COSTS ALONE CONSTITUTE ABOUT 60% OF THE OPERATING EXPENSES.

"SALARIES HAVE RISEN HIGHER THAN INFLATION. OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS, THE NOMINAL WAGE INDEX HAS INCREASED BY AN AVERAGE 9.7% PER ANNUM COMPARED WITH THE AVERAGE ANNUAL INCREASE OF 7.6% IN CONSUMER PRICE INDEX."

MAINTENANCE IS THE OTHER MAJOR AND EXPENSIVE EXPENDITURE ITEM AND A LARGE PROPORTION OF THE MAINTENANCE COSTS IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE NEED FOR BUSES TO UNDERGO RIGOROUS INSPECTION AND OVERHAULING, HE SAID.

THEN, THERE IS THE QUESTION OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS RELATED TO THE OPENING OF THE NEW TOWNS AND NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS IN THE URBAN AREAS, AND IN RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY DEMAND FOR QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENTS, HE SAID.

"THESE IMPROVEMENTS THAT THE PUBLIC WANT AND EXPECT HAVE TO BE FUNDED AND PAID FOR AND THUS CONTRIBUTE SOME WAY TOWARDS THE JUSTIFICATION FOR HIGHER FARES. INFLATION ALONE DOES NOT COVER SUCH EXPENDITURE," MR BARMA SAID.

"THE COST OF ELDERLY CONCESSIONARY FARES IS, LIKEWISE, NOT COVERED BY THE GENERAL LEVEL OF INFLATION," HE SAID.

ON THE RECENT PROFIT OF SOME \$1.7 BILLION ACCRUING TO KMB'S SHAREHOLDERS THROUGH THE SALE OF TWO BUS DEPOTS, MR BARMA SAID: "THE SITES IN QUESTION WERE OBTAINED BY KMB AT FULL MARKET VALUE. IT WAS PAID FOR BY THEIR SHAREHOLDERS.

"THESE TWO SITES WERE NO LONGER REQUIRED FOR BUS OPERATIONS AND, HENCE, PERMISSION WAS GIVEN FOR THEIR DISPOSAL."

ON THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT FARE INCREASES ON LIVELIHOOD, MR BARMA SAID OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS, PUBLIC TRANSPORT FARE INCREASES ONLY ACCOUNTED FOR HALF A PERCENTAGE POINT OF INCREASE IN THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX.

MR BARMA ALSO POINTED OUT THAT KMB HAS A SCHEME OF CONTROL THAT IS LEGALLY BINDING ON BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COMPANY.

HOWEVER, THERE IS NO OBLIGATION ON THE GOVERNMENT'S PART TO AGREE TO PITCH BUS FARES AT A LEVEL WHICH WOULD ENABLE THE COMPANY TO ACHIEVE THE MAXIMUM RETURN OF 16%.

HE ALSO SAID A REVIEW OF THE SCHEME WILL BE UNDERTAKEN.

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DIFFERENT RACES LIVE IN HARMONY IN HK

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HONG KONG CAN PRIDE ITSELF AS A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT RACES AND CULTURES LIVE IN PEACE AND HARMONY, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SUEN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR SUEN SAID THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF WIDESPREAD RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE TERRITORY.

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IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MARTIN BARROW, MR SUEN POINTED OUT THAT UNDER THE BILL OF RIGHTS ORDINANCE, ALL PERSONS WERE EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW AND WERE ENTITLED WITHOUT ANY DISCRIMINATION TO THE EQUAL PROTECTION OF THE LAW.

IN VIEW OF THIS, MR SUEN SAID THE GOVERNMENT FOUND IT UNNECESSARY TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO GOVERN THIS ASPECT OF INTER-CITIZEN RELATIONSHIPS, WHETHER IN APARTMENT BUILDINGS OR ELSEWHERE.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THE ADMINISTRATION WAS AWARE OF ISOLATED INCIDENTS INVOLVING DISCRIMINATION.

BUT THESE INCIDENTS, HE SAID, HAVE ALWAYS BEEN RESOLVED RAPIDLY AMONG THE PRIVATE PARTIES CONCERNED PROBABLY DUE TO THE STRONG PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE VIEW THAT RACIAL DISCRIMINATION HAD NO PLACE IN AN OPEN, PROGRESSIVE AND DYNAMIC SOCIETY SUCH AS HONG KONG.

ON RACIAL EQUALITY EDUCATION, MR SUEN STRESSED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO CULTIVATE A SPIRIT OF APPRECIATION FOR RACIAL DIVERSITY THROUGH SUSTAINED HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION.

"THIS IS BEING CARRIED OUT IN SCHOOLS BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND IN THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE WITH PARTICULAR VIGOUR BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE PROMOTION OF CIVIC EDUCATION," HE SAID.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE HAD RECENTLY PUBLISHED A TEACHING KIT FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND ONE OF ITS CENTRAL MESSAGE WAS THE CONCEPT OF EQUALITY AND THE RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION.

EARLIER, MR SUEN ASSURED MEMBERS THAT THE GOVERNMENT FULLY SUBSCRIBED TO THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY BETWEEN PERSONS OF DIFFERENT RACE, COLOUR, SEX, LANGUAGE, RELIGION, POLITICAL OR OTHER OPINION, NATIONAL OR SOCIAL ORIGIN, PROPERTY, BIRTH OR OTHER STATUS.

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EXCHANGES OF VIEW ON DRAFT BASIC LAW CONFIDENTIAL

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THE SINO-BRITISH EXCHANGES OF VIEW ON THE DRAFT BASIC LAW WERE CONFIDENTIAL AND IT WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE TO DISCLOSE THE CONTENTS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS, MR PETER LAI, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHRISTINE LOH.

MR LAI SAID THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS AND SUGGESTIONS ON THE DRAFT BASIC LAW WERE CONVEYED TO THE CHINESE SIDE THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS.

"AS THESE EXCHANGES WERE CONFIDENTIAL, IT WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE TO DISCLOSE THE CONTENTS," HE SAID.

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## USE OF MOVEMENT INFORMATION RESTRICTED

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THE USE OF MOVEMENT INFORMATION OF A PERSON IS RESTRICTED TO IMMIGRATION CLEARANCE PURPOSES AND THE PREPARATION OF STATISTICAL RECORDS.

THIS INFORMATION INCLUDES THE IDENTITY CARD NUMBER, THE NATIONALITY OF THE PERSON CONCERNED, THE DATE AND TIME OF IMMIGRATION CLEARANCE, THE CONTROL POINT, THE PERSON'S DESTINATION AND THE CARRIER.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, IN A REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PETER WONG HONG-YUEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IT WILL BE RELEASED TO OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS ONLY IN CONNECTION WITH CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS.

THE FORMER CASE IS GUIDED BY THE DATA PROTECTION PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES ISSUED BY THE GOVERNMENT IN 1988, AND THE LATTER ONE IS MADE IN RESPONSE TO THE REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE THROUGH CONSULATES OR THROUGH INTERPOL.

HE SAID THERE WERE STRINGENT MEASURES TO GUARD AGAINST UNAUTHORISED ACCESS, ALTERATION, OR DISCLOSURE OF INDIVIDUALS' MOVEMENT INFORMATION.

## THESE MEASURES INCLUDED:

- \* LIMITING ACCESS TO COMPUTER DATA THROUGH THE USE OF APPLICATION CODES AND USER PASSWORDS;
- \* LOGGING COMPUTER TRANSACTIONS FOR MONITORING AND AUDIT PURPOSES;
- \* ADOPTING PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS TO ENSURE DATA PROTECTION; AND
- \* INSTALLING PHYSICAL SECURITY SAFEGUARDS AT COMPUTER SITES AND TERMINAL AREAS.

## OWNERS REQUIRED TO CONTROL THEIR DOGS IN PUBLIC

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OWNERS ARE REQUIRED TO CONTROL THEIR DOGS PROPERLY IN PUBLIC AREAS UNDER THE DOGS AND CATS REGULATIONS, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION CONCERNING COUNTRY PARKS BY THE HON LEE WING-TAT, MR EASON SAID COUNTRY PARK TRAILS WERE REGULARLY PATROLLED BY PARK WARDENS AND ONE OF THEIR DUTIES WAS TO ADVISE NEARBY VILLAGE RESIDENTS TO KEEP THEIR DOGS UNDER CONTROL.

/"DOG CATCHING .....

"DOG CATCHING TEAMS ARE DEPLOYED TO CATCH STRAY DOGS FOUND IN COUNTRY PARKS," HE SAID.

AS REGARDS THE ENTRY OF VEHICLES TO COUNTRY PARKS, MR EASON SAID, THIS IS SUBJECT TO CONTROL UNDER THE COUNTRY PARKS AND SPECIAL AREAS REGULATIONS.

"PERMISSION IS NORMALLY GIVEN TO THE RESIDENTS OF AN AREA AND THEIR VISITORS, AND TO GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND OTHERS ON DUTY."

OTHERWISE, HE SAID, RESTRICTIONS TO KEEP VEHICLES IN COUNTRY PARKS TO THE MINIMUM ARE APPLIED ON WEEKDAYS AS WELL AS SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS.

FOR EXAMPLE, A DAILY QUOTA OF ONLY 30 COACHES IS ALLOWED TO ENTER THE SAI KUNG COUNTRY PARKS THROUGH THE PAK TAM CHUNG BARRIER FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES.

MR EASON ADDED THAT THE SIGNPOSTS, TRAIL SURFACES AND OTHER FEATURES IN COUNTRY PARKS WERE ALSO REGULARLY CHECKED AND PROPERLY MAINTAINED.

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NO SERIOUS DISAGREEMENT OVER CASES BETWEEN COMAC AND DEPTS

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THERE HAS BEEN NO SERIOUS DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS (COMAC) AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS ON THE FORMER'S JURISDICTION.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON MRS ANSON CHAN, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON JAMES TO KUN-SUN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MRS CHAN SAID THERE WERE NO SEPARATE RECORD OF COMPLAINTS THAT WERE CONSIDERED BY THE COMMISSIONER TO BE WITHIN HIS JURISDICTION TO INVESTIGATE BUT WERE CONSIDERED OTHERWISE BY THE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS UNDER COMPLAINT.

HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO THE EXPERIENCE OF THE COMAC OFFICE, THE NUMBER SHOULD BE VERY SMALL, SHE SAID.

"IN THOSE FEW CASES, THE DIFFERENCES OF VIEWS WERE USUALLY RESOLVED THROUGH FURTHER DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE COMAC OFFICE AND THE DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED AND BY THE PROVISION OF MORE INFORMATION ON THE CASES," THE CHIEF SECRETARY SAID.

MRS CHAN ALSO SAID SO FAR, NO COMPLAINT HAD NOT BEEN INVESTIGATED DUE TO THE LACK OF PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE IN THE COMAC OFFICE.

/"TO ENSURE .....

"TO ENSURE THAT ALL COMPLAINTS ARE HANDLED PROFESSIONALLY, ALL COMPLAINTS RECEIVED ARE SCRUTINISED PERSONALLY BY THE COMMISSIONER AS TO WHETHER THEY FALL WITHIN HIS JURISDICTION UNDER THE COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS ORDINANCE, AND SUBSEQUENT INVESTIGATIONS ARE UNDERTAKEN BY A TEAM OF FULL-TIME INVESTIGATORS SECONDED FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE."

THEY ARE ALL EXPERIENCED CIVIL SERVANTS WHO ARE CONVERSANT WITH THE PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES OF THE GOVERNMENT.

THEY ARE WELL-QUALIFIED TO HELP COMAC'S WORK GIVEN THE REMIT OF COMAC, THAT IS, THE INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED MALADMINISTRATION, SHE SAID.

THE NUMBERS OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS BUT NOT INVESTIGATED BY THE COMAC BECAUSE THEY RELATED TO CIVIL OR CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS BEFORE A COURT OF LAW ARE: 11 IN 1990/91, TWO IN 1991/92, FIVE IN 1992/93 AND SIX IN 1993/94 (UP TO JANUARY 8 THIS YEAR).

THE NUMBERS OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS BUT NOT INVESTIGATED BY THE COMAC FOR REASONS OTHER THAN THOSE RELATED TO CIVIL OR CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS ARE: 40 IN 1990/91, 36 IN 1991/92, 65 IN 1992/93 AND 48 IN 1993/94 (UP TO JANUARY 8 THIS YEAR).

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NO PLAN TO CONTROL PRIVATE CAR PARK CHARGES

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO PLANS TO CONTROL PARKING CHARGES IN PRIVATE CAR PARKS, THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR T H CHAU, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"THESE MUST BE DETERMINED BY MARKET FORCES," MR CHAU SAID, IN A REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ZACHARY WONG WAI-YIN.

THE SECRETARY ALSO SAID THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT CONSIDER IT NECESSARY TO PROVIDE THE CONSUMER COUNCIL WITH ADDITIONAL POWERS TO INVESTIGATE AND STUDY COMPLAINTS OVER CAR PARK RENT INCREASES.

"THE COUNCIL HAS, AS THE RESULT OF PUBLIC COMPLAINTS, CONDUCTED STUDIES ON THE OPERATION OF GOVERNMENT AND COMMERCIAL CAR PARKS IN THE PAST AND HAS NOT FOUND THAT IT NEEDS ADDITIONAL POWERS TO PERFORM THESE TASKS SATISFACTORILY," MR CHAU SAID.

HE ALSO SAID THE COUNCIL HAD DECIDED TO CONDUCT A STUDY OVER THE RECENT COMPLAINTS ON CAR PARK RENT INCREASES IN SOME PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL ESTATES.

THE LEVEL OF PROVISION FOR PARKING SPACES IN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENTS IS STIPULATED IN THE HONG KONG PLANNING STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES.

THESE PLANNING STANDARDS ARE BEING REVIEWED AS PART OF A PARKING DEMAND STUDY RECENTLY COMMISSIONED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT.

MR CHAU SAID THE REVIEW OF THE PLANNING STANDARD WOULD HELP TO ENSURE THAT CONSUMERS' INTERESTS WERE SAFEGUARDED THROUGH THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE PARKING FACILITIES.

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HEAVIER PENALTIES AGAINST TAXI MALPRACTICES WILL BE CONSIDERED  
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SUGGESTION TO IMPOSE HEAVIER PENALTIES FOR REFUSING HIRE AND CHARGING EXCESSIVE FARES BY UNSCRUPULOUS TAXI DRIVERS WILL CERTAINLY BE CONSIDERED BY THE ADMINISTRATION, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHIM PUI-CHUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR BARMA SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS ALSO CONSIDERING THE FEASIBILITY OF MAKING THESE OFFENCES PUNISHABLE BY FIXED PENALTY TICKETS.

THE POLICE HAD STEPPED UP ENFORCEMENT AND PROSECUTION ACTION AGAINST TAXI MALPRACTICES, HE SAID.

A TOTAL OF 132 LARGE-SCALE OPERATIONS WERE MOUNTED IN THE LAST FOUR MONTHS, RESULTING IN AN AVERAGE OF 255 PROSECUTIONS PER MONTH.

THIS COMPARES WITH AN AVERAGE OF 12 OPERATIONS AND 52 PROSECUTIONS PER MONTH IN THE FIRST EIGHT MONTHS OF LAST YEAR.

THE COURTS DID TAKE INTO ACCOUNT PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS, MR BARMA SAID, ADDING THAT THREE TAXI DRIVERS HAD HAD THEIR TAXI LICENCES SUSPENDED.

"THIS INTENSIFIED ENFORCEMENT ACTION HAS RESULTED IN A FALL IN THE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS AGAINST TAXIS FROM A PEAK OF 299 IN JULY 1993 TO 203 IN DECEMBER 1993," HE SAID.

MR BARMA SAID THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT MONITORED THE QUALITY OF TAXI SERVICES THROUGH REGULAR SURVEYS OF PASSENGER WAITING TIMES AND TIMES BETWEEN EMPTY TAXIS AT POPULAR LOCATIONS, AS WELL AS THROUGH COMPLAINTS AGAINST TAXI SERVICES RECEIVED BY THEMSELVES, THE TRANSPORT COMPLAINTS UNIT AND THE POLICE.

REGULAR MEETINGS BETWEEN THE TAXI OPERATORS AND THE DEPARTMENT ARE ALSO HELD TO DISCUSS TAXI SERVICES AND POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT MEASURES, HE SAID.

TAXI SERVICES ARE REGULATED BY LAW, COVERING THE STANDARD AND QUALITY OF THE VEHICLES, THE ACCURACY OF THE TAXI METRES, THE STANDARD OF DRIVING AND THE CONDUCT OF THE DRIVERS.

MR BARMA SAID THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE WAS FINALISING ITS REVIEW ON TAXI POLICY, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF TAXI SERVICES AND IT SHOULD COMPLETE ITS DELIBERATIONS BY THE END OF THIS MONTH.

"A GUIDE TO TAXI SERVICE", WHICH CONTAINS INFORMATION ON HOW TO HIRE TAXIS AND WHERE TO MAKE COMPLAINTS, WAS PUBLISHED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT AS AN INFORMATION BOOKLET.

THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO REVISE THE BOOKLET THIS YEAR AND UPDATE THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR TAXI DRIVERS, MR BARMA SAID, ADDING THAT A SUGGESTION TO PROVIDE SUCH A CODE TO BE POSTED INSIDE TAXI COMPARTMENTS WOULD BE CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE EXERCISE.

MR BARMA NOTED THAT A NUMBER OF TAXI ASSOCIATIONS HAD ALREADY TAKEN THE INITIATIVE TO ORGANISE TRAINING COURSES FOR POTENTIAL AND NEW TAXI DRIVERS BUT THESE ONLY COVERED DRIVERS' MANNER AND NOT PRACTICAL ENGLISH.

THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT HELPS IN THE ORGANISATION OF THESE TRAINING COURSE AND THE SUGGESTION TO INCLUDE SOME ENGLISH IN THESE COURSES WILL CERTAINLY BE FOLLOWED UP, HE SAID.

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ROUTE 3 (CPS) PROJECT TARGETED FOR COMPLETION IN 1998  
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CONSTRUCTION WORK ON THE TAI LAM TUNNEL AND YUEN LONG APPROACH ROAD OF THE ROUTE 3 (COUNTRY PARK SECTION) PROJECT IS TARGETED TO START IN EARLY 1995, FOR COMPLETION IN LATE 1998.

HOWEVER, THE EXACT STARTING DATE WILL DEPEND ON THE PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH TENDERERS, CONSULTATION, LAND RESUMPTION, AND THE ENACTMENT OF THE ENABLING LEGISLATION.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON SAMUEL WONG PING-WAI.

MR BARMA EXPLAINED THAT THE TIMING FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE TAI LAM TUNNEL AND YUEN LONG APPROACH ROAD WOULD DEPEND NOT ONLY ON THE PROGRESS WITH LAND RESUMPTION, BUT ALSO ON A NUMBER OF OTHER EQUALLY IMPORTANT STEPS WHICH HAD TO BE TAKEN BEFORE A FRANCHISE COULD BE AWARDED.

AFTER THE CLOSE OF TENDERS ON APRIL 8 THIS YEAR, MR BARMA SAID, THE BIDS WILL NEED TO BE CAREFULLY EVALUATED. AFTER THAT, THE GOVERNMENT WILL NEED TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE TENDERERS.

"IN PARALLEL, WE SHALL WORK ON THE DRAFT LEGISLATION FOR THE AWARD OF THE FRANCHISE WITH A VIEW TO INTRODUCING AN ENABLING BILL TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BY THIS OCTOBER OR NOVEMBER AND ENACTMENT BY THE END OF THIS YEAR."

NOTING THAT ALL THE STEPS WERE COMPLICATED AND COULD TAKE UP TO NINE MONTHS TO COMPLETE ACCORDING TO THE EXPERIENCE OF THE WESTERN HARBOUR CROSSING EXERCISE, MR BARMA SAID THE PROGRAMME WAS ALREADY TIGHT AND THE SCOPE OF COMPRESSION WAS VERY LIMITED.

"IN ADDITION, SINCE THE FRANCHISE FOR THE NEW ROAD WILL SPAN 1997, IT WILL ALSO BE NECESSARY TO CONSULT THE CHINESE SIDE OF THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP," HE ADDED.

AS REGARDS LAND RESUMPTION, MR BARMA SAID THE CURRENT LAND RESUMPTION PROGRAMME ALLOWED FOR THE HANDOVER OF THE SITE FOR THE PROJECT IN PHASES, SO THAT LAND WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO TIE IN WITH THE CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME.

HANDOVER OF THE FIRST SITE IS SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FRANCHISED PERIOD, WHICH WILL ENABLE WORK TO BEGIN AS SOON AS THE FRANCHISE IS AWARDED.

"PRELIMINARY WORK, FOR EXAMPLE, IDENTIFYING LAND THAT HAS TO BE RESUMED, HAS ALREADY COMMENCED AND WE BELIEVE THAT THE LAND RESUMPTION TIMETABLE IS REALISTIC," HE SAID.

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MINIMUM PENALTY FOR MANSLAUGHTER OFFENCE INAPPROPRIATE

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IT WOULD BE CONTRARY TO LEGAL POLICY FOR THE LAW TO ATTEMPT TO LAY DOWN A MINIMUM PENALTY FOR THE OFFENCE OF MANSLAUGHTER, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LAU WONG-FAT, MR MATHEWS TOLD LEGISLATORS THAT THE OFFENCE OF MANSLAUGHTER COVERED KILLINGS IN A WIDE VARIETY OF CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MADE THE OFFENCE LESS BLAMEWORTHY THAN MURDER.

"IT INCLUDES A KILLING THAT IS PROVOKED, A KILLING BY A PERSON SUFFERING FROM AN ABNORMALITY OF MIND, AND A KILLING WHERE THERE WAS NO INTENTION TO KILL OR DO GRIEVOUS HARM BUT WHERE THE DEFENDANT ACTED RECKLESSLY.

"THE MAXIMUM PENALTY IN ALL CASES IS LIFE IMPRISONMENT," HE SAID.

NONETHELESS, MR MATHEWS STRESSED THAT A MINIMUM PENALTY FOR THE OFFENCE WOULD INEVITABLY CREATE UNFAIRNESS BECAUSE A JUDGE, WHEN SENTENCING, SHOULD BE ABLE TO DECIDE WHAT SENTENCE WITHIN THE STATUTORY MAXIMUM WAS JUST AND APPROPRIATE HAVING REGARD TO ALL THE FACTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES.

HE SAID: "SOME CASES OF MANSLAUGHTER DO NOT INVOLVE SERIOUS MISCONDUCT, FOR EXAMPLE WHERE THE DEFENDANT MERELY PUNCHED ANOTHER, BUT THE VICTIM FELL, STRUCK HIS HEAD, AND DIED AS A RESULT.

"IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, IF THE DEFENDANT IS OF GOOD CHARACTER A FAIRLY LIGHT SENTENCE IS APPROPRIATE."

IN ADDITION, IN CASES WHERE THE DEFENDANT IS SUFFERING FROM MENTAL ILLNESS A HOSPITAL ORDER, NOT A PRISON SENTENCE, IS APPROPRIATE.

"OTHER CASES MAY BE VERY SERIOUS. IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE FACTS AND ONE SHOULD NOT FETTER THE DISCRETION OF THE SENTENCING JUDGE," MR MATHEWS ADDED.

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NO PLAN TO EXPAND LABOUR IMPORT SCHEME

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO PLAN AT PRESENT TO FURTHER EXPAND THE GENERAL LABOUR IMPORTATION SCHEME, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR W K LAM, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON JAMES TIEN, MR LAM SAID IN CONSIDERING WHETHER THE SCHEME SHOULD BE EXPANDED, THE GOVERNMENT TOOK INTO ACCOUNT A NUMBER OF FACTORS.

"UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IS JUST ONE OF THEM," HE SAID.

"THE PURPOSE OF THE GENERAL LABOUR IMPORTATION SCHEME IS TO HELP RELIEVE BOTTLENECKS IN THE EMPLOYMENT MARKET DUE TO LABOUR SHORTAGE AT THE TECHNICIAN, CRAFTSMAN, SUPERVISOR AND EXPERIENCED OPERATIVE LEVELS SO THAT ECONOMIC GROWTH IS NOT IMPEDED," MR LAM ADDED.

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DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES  
NORMALLY FOLLOW DISTRICT BOARDS' ADVICE

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AS DISTRICT BOARDS (DBS) ARE IN THE BEST POSITION TO ADVISE ON THE IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, THEIR ADVICE IS NORMALLY FOLLOWED BY THE DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES (DMCS) PROVIDED IT DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH ESTABLISHED GOVERNMENT POLICIES OR PRACTICES.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SUEN, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MRS SELINA CHOW ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DBS AND DMCS.

MR SUEN SAID DBS WERE SET UP UNDER THE DISTRICT BOARDS ORDINANCE TO ADVISE THE ADMINISTRATION ON MATTERS AFFECTING THE WELL-BEING OF THE PEOPLE IN THE DISTRICTS.

ON THE OTHER HAND, DMCS WERE ESTABLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO ENABLE REPRESENTATIVES OF DEPARTMENTS WORKING IN THE DISTRICT TO DISCUSS HOW BEST TO PROVIDE SERVICES IN THE DISTRICTS EFFICIENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY.

IN PRACTICE, HE SAID, DEPARTMENTS WORKING IN THE DISTRICTS MAKE FULL USE OF THE DMCS AS FORUMS FOR DISCUSSING AND RESOLVING DISTRICT PROBLEMS.

"THEY CO-ORDINATE DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS AND SERVICES IN THE DISTRICTS AND RESPOND POSITIVELY TO DISTRICT NEEDS.

"IN THIS CONNECTION, DMCS DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A CLOSE, CORDIAL AND EFFECTIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DBS," HE SAID.

BUT WHERE THE ADVICE OF A DB IS AT VARIANCE WITH EXISTING POLICIES OR PRACTICES, MR SUEN SAID THE RELEVANT POLICY BRANCH OR DEPARTMENT WOULD BE ASKED TO CAREFULLY EXAMINE THE MERITS OF THIS ADVICE TO SEE IF EXISTING POLICIES AND PRACTICES COULD BE REFINED, REVISED, OR APPLIED FLEXIBLY TO ACCOMMODATE IT.

"IF IT IS DECIDED NOT TO ACCEPT THE ADVICE OF THE DISTRICT BOARD, A FULL EXPLANATION OF THE REASONS FOR NOT ACCEPTING THE DISTRICT BOARD'S ADVICE WOULD BE GIVEN TO IT," HE SAID.

AT PRESENT, DMCS ARE CHAIRED BY DISTRICT OFFICERS WHILE DB CHAIRMEN ARE INVITED TO ATTEND DMC MEETINGS AS OBSERVERS.

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5 CASES OF UNLAWFUL SALES/LETTING  
OF HOS AND PSPS FLATS DETECTED

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THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT HAS TO DATE REFERRED FIVE CASES OF UNLAWFUL LETTING OR SALES OF HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME (HOS) AND PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION SCHEME (PSPS) UNITS TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR PROSECUTION.

THE OFFENDERS IN THREE CASES HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY PROSECUTED AND CONVICTED AND LEGAL ACTION IS IN PROGRESS ON THE OTHER TWO CASES.

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

MR EASON SAID THE SALE OF HOS AND PSPS FLATS WAS SUBJECT TO THE TERMS, COVENANTS AND CONDITIONS IN THE SCHEDULE TO THE HOUSING ORDINANCE.

THE SCHEDULE STATES THAT A PURCHASER SHALL NOT ALIENATE, CONVEY, PURPORT TO ALIENATE OR CONVEY OR PART WITH POSSESSION OF HIS FLAT UNLESS A PERIOD OF 10 YEARS HAS ELAPSED FROM THE DATE OF THE ASSIGNMENT AND HE HAS PAID TO THE HOUSING AUTHORITY A PREMIUM.

IT IS A CRIMINAL OFFENCE UNDER THE HOUSING ORDINANCE FOR A HOS OR PSPS FLAT OWNER TO BREACH THESE RESTRICTIONS AND THIS CAN LEAD TO A MAXIMUM FINE OF \$200,000 AND MAXIMUM IMPRISONMENT FOR ONE YEAR.

MR EASON SAID HOS AND PSPS OWNERS WERE REGULARLY REMINDED OF THESE RESTRICTIONS BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT THROUGH NOTICES IN ESTATE MANAGEMENT OFFICES, ESTATE NEWSLETTERS, AND REGULAR MEETINGS BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS.

THOUGH UNLAWFUL LETTING OR SALES WERE NOT EASY TO DETECT, MR EASON SAID THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO MONITOR AND REVIEW THE SITUATION AND INITIATE APPROPRIATE ACTION WHERE IRREGULARITIES WERE DETECTED.

HE POINTED OUT THAT ANY UNLAWFUL SALE OR LETTING OF HOS OR PSPS FLATS WAS VOID.

PURCHASERS AND TENANTS WHO SUFFER LOSS AS A RESULT OF THE UNLAWFUL SALES OR LETTING OF THESE FLATS MAY SUE THE VENDOR OR LANDLORD AND ANY ESTATE AGENT OR SOLICITOR INVOLVED FOR DAMAGES THROUGH CIVIL PROCEEDINGS.

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MTRC CHAIRMAN CUM MANAGING DIRECTOR IS IN ORDER

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THE ARRANGEMENT OF APPOINTING THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION AS ALSO THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE CORPORATION IS IN ORDER LEGALLY, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON STEVEN POON KWOK-LIM, MR BARMA SAID SECTION 4 OF THE MTRC ORDINANCE DID PROVIDE FOR THE CORPORATION TO HAVE BOTH A CHAIRMAN AND MANAGING DIRECTOR, WHICH WERE CURRENTLY HELD BY MR HAMISH MATHERS.

"THIS IS QUITE IN ORDER AND LEGAL ADVICE WAS OBTAINED BEFORE THIS ARRANGEMENT WAS INTRODUCED IN NOVEMBER 1986."

MR BARMA SAID IN EARLIER YEARS OF THE CORPORATION, THE MANAGING DIRECTOR HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CO-ORDINATION OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MASS TRANSIT SYSTEM.

FOLLOWING THE COMPLETION OF THE SYSTEM IN 1986 AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH REQUIREMENT TO OPERATE THE CORPORATION BUSINESS ON PRUDENT COMMERCIAL PRINCIPLES, THE CHAIRMAN WAS ALSO APPOINTED MANAGING DIRECTOR.

THIS ARRANGEMENT REMAINS IN PLACE TODAY.

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MEANS OF CURBING DRUNKEN DRIVING

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THE GOVERNMENT SEEKS TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS CAUSED BY DRIVING UNDER INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL BY MEANS OF POLICE ENFORCEMENT ACTION, DRIVER EDUCATION, PUBLICITY, AND, IN FUTURE, THROUGH ENHANCED LEGISLATIVE PROVISION.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ROGER LUK KOON-HO, MR BARMA SAID THERE WERE 38 PROSECUTIONS FOR THE OFFENCE OF DRIVING UNDER INFLUENCE OF DRINK OR DRUGS LAST YEAR.

IT HAS BEEN DIFFICULT TO TAKE ENFORCEMENT ACTION SINCE EXISTING LEGISLATION ON THE SUBJECT IS INADEQUATE, HE SAID.

"PRESENT LEGISLATION DOES NOT SET LIMITS FOR ALCOHOL CONCENTRATIONS IN BREATH, BLOOD OR URINE BEYOND WHICH DRIVERS WILL BE PROSECUTED, NOR DOES IT REQUIRE DRIVERS TO BE SUBJECTED TO TESTS TO ESTABLISH SUCH ALCOHOL LEVELS.

"PROPOSALS FOR AMENDING THE LEGISLATION SO AS TO REMEDY THESE DEFICIENCIES ARE NOW BEING CONSIDERED BY ROAD SAFETY COUNCIL, WHICH IS CHAIRED BY THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF POLICE (OPERATIONS) AND INCLUDES REPRESENTATIVES OF RELEVANT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND OUTSIDE BODIES CONCERNED WITH ROAD SAFETY."

IN ADDITION, HE SAID, PUBLICITY ON TELEVISION TO REMIND THE PUBLIC OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF DRIVING WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL ARE BROADCAST REGULARLY, PARTICULARLY BEFORE MAJOR FESTIVALS.

"OPPORTUNITIES ARE ALSO TAKEN AT ROAD SAFETY CAMPAIGNS TO HIGHLIGHT THE DANGERS OF DRUNKEN DRIVING."

MR BARMA ADDED THAT THE SUBJECT HAD ALSO BEEN GIVEN COVERAGE IN THE LATEST ISSUE OF "ROAD SAFETY QUARTERLY" PRODUCED BY TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT.

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AUTOTOLL SYSTEM AT CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL EFFECTIVE

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THE AUTOTOLL SYSTEM AT THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL HAS SO FAR PROVEN TO BE EFFECTIVE AND VARIOUS STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY THE TUNNEL COMPANY TO PROMOTE THE USE OF IT, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MIRIAM LAU, MR BARMA SAID THE NUMBER OF AUTOTOLL SYSTEM USERS AT THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL HAD INCREASED FROM ABOUT 10,000 LAST AUGUST TO ABOUT 24,000 BY THE END OF LAST YEAR.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID OPERATION OF THE SYSTEM WAS MONITORED BY BOTH THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL COMPANY AND TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, AND A NUMBER OF IMPROVEMENTS HAD BEEN MADE.

THESE INCLUDED MORE FREQUENT BROADCASTING IN THE TUNNEL OF MESSAGES TO ADVISE MOTORISTS OF THE LOCATION OF AUTOTOLL LANES AND THE STATIONING OF MORE TUNNEL STAFF TO DIRECT THE TRAFFIC.

THE TRAFFIC FLOW AT THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL IS LIMITED BY THE TUNNEL'S CAPACITY, WHICH IS ABOUT 3,200 VEHICLES PER HOUR IN EACH DIRECTION, HE SAID.

"AUTOTOLL CANNOT IN ITSELF REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION SINCE THE TUNNEL IS OPERATING BEYOND ITS CAPACITY DURING PEAK HOURS AND THE APPROACH ROADS AND EXIT POINTS ARE ALSO CONSTRAINING FACTORS.

BUT USERS OF THE SYSTEM DO ENJOY THE BENEFIT OF A QUICKER PASSAGE THROUGH THE TOLL BOOTHS AND THEREFORE SAVE A LITTLE TIME, HE ADDED.

THE AUTOTOLL SYSTEM IS PROVIDED BY THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL COMPANY WHICH HAS TAKEN STEPS TO PROMOTE IT, PARTICULARLY BEFORE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SYSTEM LAST AUGUST.

PUBLICITY MEASURES INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF POSTERS, LEAFLETS AND BROCHURES, AS WELL AS RADIO AND NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING.

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#### MEASURES TO PREVENT FLOODING IN TUEN MUN

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL IMPROVE THE DRAINAGE CHANNELS ON THE SLOPES TO THE EAST OF ALPINE GARDEN IN TUEN MUN BEFORE THE ONSET OF THE NEXT WET SEASON TO PREVENT A RECURRENCE OF THE SERIOUS FLOODING WHICH OCCURRED THERE ON NOVEMBER 5 LAST YEAR.

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

MR BLAKE NOTED THAT THE INVESTIGATION SO FAR BY THE GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEERING OFFICE OF THE CIVIL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT HAD SHOWN THAT THE INCIDENT WAS IN PART RELATED TO THE OVERFLOWING OF THE TAI LAM CHUNG CATCHWATER DUE TO HEAVY RAINFALL.

HE SAID FIELD OBSERVATIONS SUGGESTED THAT SOME OF THE DRAINAGE CHANNELS IN THE AREA COULD NOT COPE WITH THE WATER FLOW BECAUSE THEY WERE BLOCKED IN PLACES, PARTLY AS A RESULT OF SQUATTER ACTIVITIES ON THE SLOPE.

PARTIAL BLOCKAGE OF THE CHANNELS AND A CATCHPIT RESULTED IN THE OVERFLOW OF WATER, EROSION OF THE CUT SLOPES AND FLOODING IN ALPINE GARDEN.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID ERODED PARTS OF THE SLOPES WOULD BE REINSTATED AND THE CHANNELS CONCERNED WOULD BE RECONSTRUCTED TO IMPROVE THEIR DRAINAGE CAPACITY.

THE DRAINAGE CHANNELS WILL ALSO BE KEPT IN GOOD WORKING CONDITION BY REGULAR MAINTENANCE, HE SAID.

HE SAID ALONG WITH THE INVESTIGATION OF THE FLOODING INCIDENT, THE CUT SLOPES BEHIND ALPINE GARDEN HAD BEEN FULLY INSPECTED AND THE DESIGNS REVIEWED.

"IT HAS BEEN CONFIRMED THAT THESE SLOPES MEET THE CURRENT STANDARDS OF STABILITY AND SAFETY, AND THEY POSE NO DANGER TO LIFE EVEN DURING EXCEPTIONALLY HEAVY RAINFALL," MR BLAKE SAID.

AN INTERIM REPORT, WHICH DOCUMENTED THE FACTUAL INFORMATION COLLECTED IN THE FIRST STAGE OF THE INVESTIGATION, WAS PREPARED IN EARLY DECEMBER 1993, MR BLAKE SAID, ADDING THAT A FINAL REPORT, WHICH PRESENTED THE FULL FINDINGS OF THE INVESTIGATION, WAS NEARING COMPLETION.

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NO VIEWS ON BUILDING MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

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SINCE THE GAZETTAL OF GUIDELINES PURSUANT TO A SECTION OF THE BUILDING MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE IN JULY LAST YEAR, THE GOVERNMENT HAS RECEIVED NO VIEWS FROM THE PUBLIC ON THE GUIDELINES.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SUEN, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ERIC LI KA-CHEUNG, MR SUEN ALSO SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO APPLICATION FROM ANY BUILDING MANAGER FOR EXCLUSION FROM TERMINATION OF APPOINTMENT BY OWNER'S CORPORATIONS.

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PROPOSALS ON NURSING PROVISION IN SPECIAL SCHOOLS

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A REVIEW BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE HONG KONG SPECIAL SCHOOLS COUNCIL HAS PROPOSED MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE PROVISION OF NURSING STAFF IN SPECIAL SCHOOLS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON SZETO WAH, MRS WONG SAID THE PROPOSALS WERE BASED ON THE SIZE OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED WHEN JUSTIFIED.

/SHE EXPLAINED .....

SHE EXPLAINED THAT THE POLICY OF PROVIDING ONE NURSE FOR EACH SPECIAL SCHOOL WAS TO RECOGNISE THE NEED TO PROVIDE NURSING CARE FOR THESE CHILDREN, PARTICULARLY TO HANDLE EMERGENCY CASES.

CONSIDERING THAT CHILDREN WHO ARE SICK OR HAVE COMPLEX OR ACUTE HEALTH PROBLEMS WILL BE UNDER THE CARE OF A MEDICAL PRACTITIONER INSTEAD OF ATTENDING SCHOOL, MRS WONG SAID THE PROVISION OF ONE NURSE FOR EACH SPECIAL SCHOOL WOULD BE SUFFICIENT FOR RENDERING NURSING CARE AND DEALING WITH EMERGENCIES.

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#### PLAN TO REMOVE SCHOOL FEE GAZETTAL REQUIREMENT

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THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WILL SEEK TO AMEND THE EDUCATION REGULATIONS TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT FOR SCHOOLS TO GAZETTE INCLUSIVE FEES, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR W K LAM, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TIMOTHY HA WING-HO IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR LAM SAID THE PURPOSE OF THE REQUIREMENT WAS TO INFORM STUDENTS AND PARENTS OF THE AMOUNT OF TUITION FEE AND "TONG FAI" AND TO SERVE AS EVIDENCE OF PUBLIC NOTIFICATION.

A RECENT REVIEW BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAS CONCLUDED THAT THE FEES CERTIFICATES ISSUED TO SCHOOLS UNDER REGULATION 67 ALREADY SERVE AS EVIDENCE OF NOTIFICATION.

"STUDENTS AND PARENTS CAN ENQUIRE AT THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ABOUT SCHOOL FEES INSTEAD OF LOOKING UP GAZETTE NOTICES," MR LAM SAID.

THE DEPARTMENT WILL THEREFORE SEEK TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT TO GAZETTE INCLUSIVE FEES.

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#### RELOCATION OF KWUN TONG GOVT OFFICES AND CLINIC

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL MAKE APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT RELOCATION OF THE KWUN TONG GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND JOCKEY CLUB CLINIC, THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY, MR DONALD TSANG, SAID.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LI WAH-MING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY SAID THERE WERE THREE OPTIONS IN CONSIDERING THE FUTURE OF THE KWUN TONG GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND JOCKEY CLUB CLINIC WHICH INCLUDES A HEALTH CENTRE AND A METHADONE CLINIC.

/THESE OPTIONS .....

THESE OPTIONS ARE:

- \* TO MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO;
- \* TO INCORPORATE THE GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND CLINIC IN A NEW GOVERNMENT OR JOINT VENTURE DEVELOPMENT AT FUK TONG ROAD; AND
- \* TO MAKE OTHER APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT RELOCATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND CLINIC.

MR TSANG SAID THE FIRST OPTION WOULD DENY A VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY TO UPGRADE FACILITIES AT THE CLINIC, TO MEET IDENTIFIED SPACE SHORTFALLS IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES IN THE EXISTING BUILDING, AND TO PROVIDE A MODERN PUBLIC TRANSPORT TERMINAL AND COMMERCIAL COMPLEX IN THE KWUN TONG TOWN CENTRE FOR THE BENEFIT OF RESIDENTS.

THE SECOND OPTION WOULD HAVE HAD THE SAME EFFECT, HE SAID.

"THE LIMITED REQUIREMENT FOR ADDITIONAL GOVERNMENT OFFICE SPACE AT FUK TONG ROAD DOES NOT JUSTIFY A SELF-CONTAINED COMPOSITE GOVERNMENT BUILDING DEVELOPED THERE TO THE FULL POTENTIAL OF THE SITE."

THE SECRETARY ALSO SAID THE ALTERNATIVE OF JOINT VENTURE HAD BEEN CONSIDERED.

"HOWEVER, THE INCLUSION OF GOVERNMENT FACILITIES, AND IN PARTICULAR THE NEED TO PLACE THE HEALTH CENTRE ON THE MORE VALUABLE, LOWER FLOORS OF THE BUILDING, WOULD MAKE A JOINT VENTURE COMMERCIALY UNATTRACTIVE."

HE SAID THE POSSIBILITY OF INCLUDING BOTH THE FUK TONG ROAD AND TUNG YAN STREET SITES IN A JOINT-VENTURE HAD ALSO BEEN EXPLORED.

BUT THE REQUIREMENT TO COMPLETE THE FUK TONG ROAD DEVELOPMENT FIRST, BEFORE THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE TUNG YAN STREET SITE COULD PHYSICALLY START, WOULD MAKE SUCH A PROJECT QUITE UNATTRACTIVE TO A PRIVATE DEVELOPER BECAUSE OF THE LONG DELAY - AT LEAST THREE YEARS - IN THE POSSESSION OF THE TUNG YAN STREET SITE, HE ADDED.

MR TSANG SAID: "FOR THESE REASONS, THE GOVERNMENT HAS PURSUED THE THIRD OPTION."

FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH THE KWUN TONG DISTRICT BOARD, AND MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, THE GOVERNMENT NOW INTENDS:

- \* TO HOUSE THE GOVERNMENT OFFICES IN NEARBY ACCOMMODATION. HOWEVER, KEY GOVERNMENT FACILITIES, SUCH AS THE DISTRICT OFFICE AND DISTRICT BOARD SECRETARIAT, WILL BE REPROVISIONED IN DUE COURSE TO THE TUNG YAN STREET REDEVELOPMENT;
- \* TO REPROVISION AND UPGRADE THE HEALTH CENTRE AT FUK TONG ROAD; AND
- \* TO REPROVISION THE METHADONE CLINIC TO A CAR PARK SITE AT THE REAR OF THE EAST KOWLOON GOVERNMENT OFFICES BUILDING. ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE TO SHELTER THE CLINIC FROM RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS.

BILL TO EFFECT LOCALISATION OF CIVIL AVIATION LAW

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A BILL THAT MARKS AN IMPORTANT FIRST STEP IN THE PROCESS OF LOCALISATION OF CIVIL AVIATION LEGISLATION WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

TO DATE, THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR THE REGULATION OF CIVIL AVIATION IN HONG KONG HAS, FOR THE MOST PART, BEEN GOVERNED BY UK ENACTMENTS APPLIED TO HONG KONG.

AS UK ENACTMENTS CANNOT REMAIN IN FORCE AFTER JUNE 30, 1997, THEY MUST BE REPLACED BY A COMPREHENSIVE SET OF CIVIL AVIATION LAWS ENACTED IN HONG KONG.

"THE ENACTMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE BODY OF LOCAL CIVIL AVIATION LEGISLATION IS CRUCIAL TO ENSURING THAT HONG KONG MAINTAINS ITS STATUS AS A CENTRE OF INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL AVIATION.

"THE PROPOSED BILL IS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS THAT OBJECTIVE," THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MR GORDON SIU, SAID WHEN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE CIVIL AVIATION BILL IN LEGCO.

MR SIU SAID THE PURPOSE OF THE BILL WAS TO REPLACE, THROUGH THE ENACTMENT OF LOCAL LEGISLATION, A NUMBER OF PROVISIONS COVERING CIVIL AVIATION MANAGEMENT AND AIR TRANSPORT REGULATIONS WHICH WERE CURRENTLY APPLIED TO HONG KONG BY THE UK CIVIL AVIATION ACT 1949 (OVERSEAS TERRITORIES) ORDER 1969.

HE SAID THE BILL REPLACED A NUMBER OF TECHNICAL PROVISIONS IN THE UK ORDER RELATING TO THE DAY-TO-DAY OPERATION OF CIVIL AVIATION MANAGEMENT.

MODIFICATIONS TO THE UK LAW HAVE BEEN MADE WHERE CONSIDERED NECESSARY TO SUIT HONG KONG'S PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES, HE ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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HELP PROPOSED FOR RELEASED ADULT PRISONERS

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DISCHARGED ADULT PRISONERS WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO REINTEGRATE INTO SOCIETY AS LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS UNDER A BILL INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE BILL PROPOSES TO SET UP AN INDEPENDENT, STATUTORY POST-RELEASE SUPERVISION BOARD, CHAIRED BY A JUDGE, OR A FORMER JUDGE, OF THE HIGH COURT OR DISTRICT COURT, TO ADMINISTER THE SCHEME.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE POST-RELEASE SUPERVISION OF PRISONERS BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID THE BOARD WOULD EXAMINE THE CASE OF EACH PRISONER FALLING UNDER THE SCOPE OF THE SCHEME.

IT WILL DECIDE WHETHER A SUPERVISION ORDER SHOULD BE MADE AND, IF SO, THE APPROPRIATE LENGTH AND CONDITIONS OF SUPERVISION.

MR ASPREY SAID AT THE INITIAL STAGE THE BOARD WOULD CONSIDER PRISONERS SERVING SENTENCES OF SIX YEARS OR MORE AND THOSE PRISONERS SENTENCED TO TWO YEARS OR MORE FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF OFFENCES, SUCH AS TRIAD-RELATED OFFENCES, SEXUAL OFFENCES AND VIOLENT CRIMES.

"CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO AMENDING OR EXTENDING THE SCOPE OF THE SCHEME AT A LATER STAGE IN THE LIGHT OF EXPERIENCE," HE SAID.

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES AND POLICE OFFICERS WILL VISIT THE RELEASED PRISONERS PLACED UNDER SUPERVISION REGULARLY IN THEIR HOMES OR WORKPLACES TO PROVIDE CARE AND GUIDANCE TO THEM.

MR ASPREY ENVISAGED THAT THE SUPERVISION PERIOD RECOMMENDED WOULD NORMALLY BE BETWEEN ONE AND TWO YEARS.

"IN ANY EVENT, THE SUPERVISION PERIOD CANNOT BE LONGER THAN THE REMITTED PART OF A PRISONER'S SENTENCE.

"THE SCHEME WILL NOT, THEREFORE, ALTER THE LENGTH OF A PRISONER'S SENTENCE," MR ASPREY SAID.

AT PRESENT THERE IS A STATUTORY SUPERVISION SCHEME FOR DISCHARGED YOUNG OFFENDERS, WHICH HAS BEEN WORKING SUCCESSFULLY SINCE IT WAS INTRODUCED IN 1980.

MORE THAN 70 PER CENT OF THE YOUNG OFFENDERS PLACED UNDER SUPERVISION HAVE NOT COMMITTED AN OFFENCE AGAIN AFTER THEIR RELEASE.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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REPORT ON HK UNDER INTERNATIONAL COVENANT TABLED IN LEGCO  
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THE SECOND PERIODIC REPORT ON HONG KONG REGARDING ARTICLES 10-15 OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS WAS TABLED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE REPORT COVERS THE MEASURES THAT HAVE BEEN ADOPTED IN HONG KONG TO GIVE EFFECT TO ARTICLES 10-15 OF THE CONVENTION.

THESE ARTICLES RECOGNISE THAT THE WIDEST POSSIBLE PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE ACCORDED TO THE FAMILY, MOTHERS, CHILDREN AND YOUNGER PERSONS; THAT EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING, TO THE ENJOYMENT OF THE HIGHEST ATTAINABLE STANDARD OF PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH, TO AN EDUCATION, AND TO TAKE PART IN CULTURAL LIFE.

THE REPORT IN RESPECT OF HONG KONG WAS PREPARED IN EARLY 1992, AND WAS SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON SEPTEMBER 28, LAST YEAR.

"IT IS PROBABLE THAT THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS WILL CONSIDER THE REPORT IN 1994", A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID.

COPIES OF THE REPORT ON HONG KONG, WHICH IS IN BOTH CHINESE AND ENGLISH, HAVE BEEN PLACED AT ALL PUBLIC LIBRARIES FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION.

COPIES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE MARKETING OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES AT THE FRENCH MISSION BUILDING, 1 BATTERY PATH, CENTRAL, HONG KONG.

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MOTION ON RETIREMENT PROTECTION PASSED

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A MOTION MOVED BY THE HON PANG CHUN-HOI ON RETIREMENT PROTECTION SCHEME WAS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TONIGHT (WEDNESDAY).

TWENTY-TWO MEMBERS SPOKE FOR TWO AND A HALF HOURS IN THE DEBATE AND THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR W K LAM, REPLIED TO THE POINTS RAISED.

AN AMENDMENT MOVED BY THE HON HUANG CHEN-YA TO A MOTION ON FARE INCREASES OF THE KOWLOON MOTOR BUS COMPANY AND CHINA MOTOR BUS COMPANY WAS PASSED. THE ORIGINAL MOTION WAS PROPOSED BY THE HON LEE WING-TAT.

A TOTAL OF 21 COUNCILLORS SPOKE FOR TWO AND A HALF HOURS IN THE DEBATE. THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, REPLIED FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

TWO BILLS - FIXED PENALTY (TRAFFIC CONTRAVENTIONS) (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL 1993 AND PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1993 - WERE PASSED WITH AMENDMENTS.

ANOTHER BILL, FIXED PENALTY (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993, WAS PASSED WITHOUT AMENDMENT.

THREE OTHER BILLS WERE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS AND DEBATES ON THEM WERE ADJOURNED.

THE BILLS ARE POST-RELEASE SUPERVISION OF PRISONERS BILL, CIVIL AVIATION BILL AND A PRIVATE BILL - HONG KONG CHRISTIAN COUNCIL INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993.

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