



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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PROPOSED REORGANISATION OF HONGKONG AND SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION

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COMMENTING ON THE HONG KONG BANK'S ANNOUNCEMENT TODAY (MONDAY) OF ITS INTENTIONS TO REORGANISE, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, SIR PIERS JACOBS, SAID:

"THE PROPOSED REORGANISATION IS A COMMERCIAL RESPONSE TO COMMERCIAL PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY THE BANK AND IS DESIGNED TO ASSIST IT TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP INTERNATIONALLY. THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WAS INFORMED OF THE PROPOSED REORGANISATION. THE SCHEME DOES NOT INVOLVE THE HONGKONG BANK MOVING ITS HEAD OFFICE OR DOMICILE OUT OF HONG KONG. THE OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE GROUP WILL NOT BE AFFECTED. WE ARE SATISFIED THAT THE REORGANISATION WILL NOT AFFECT THE BANK'S OPERATIONS IN HONG KONG. THE GOVERNMENT THEREFORE TOLD THE HSBC THAT IT SUPPORTED THE PROPOSED REORGANISATION."

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID HE DID NOT THINK THAT THE REORGANISATION WOULD UNDERMINE CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG.

"ON THE CONTRARY, THE BANK HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT ITS HEAD OFFICE - AND THAT OF ITS NEW HOLDING COMPANY - WILL REMAIN IN HONG KONG, THAT ITS SHAREHOLDERS' INTERESTS WILL NOT BE DILUTED, AND THAT THE GROUP WILL REMAIN INTACT," HE SAID.

"THE NEW STRUCTURE WILL ASSURE INTERNATIONAL CONFIDENCE IN HSBC, AND THEREBY HELP TO ASSURE THAT HONG KONG REMAINS A THRIVING INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE," HE ADDED.

SIR PIERS SAID THE HSBC HAD ASSURED THE GOVERNMENT THAT IT INTENDED TO CONTINUE ITS ROLE AS A NOTE ISSUING BANK, AND AS MANAGEMENT BANK OF THE CLEARING HOUSE.

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BRITISH DEPENDANTS TO LEAVE GULF AREA: FCO ADVISES

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THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE ISSUED THE FOLLOWING ADVICE AT 2030 (LOCAL TIME) TODAY (MONDAY) FOR BRITISH NATIONALS RESIDENT IN BAHRAIN, QATAR, THE EASTERN REGION OF SAUDI ARABIA, AND THE CITIES OF RIYADH AND TABUK.

"FOLLOWING THE ADOPTION OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 678, BRITISH DEPENDANTS ARE ADVISED TO LEAVE THE AREA WELL BEFORE THE DEADLINE OF JANUARY 15 WHICH HAS BEEN SET BY THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF IRAQ FROM KUWAIT. THIS IS A COMMONSENSE PRECAUTION, AND DOES NOT IMPLY ANY WORSENING OF THE SITUATION IN THE LAST FEW DAYS.

ADVICE TO VISITORS REMAINS UNCHANGED. TOURISTS SHOULD NOT VISIT THE AREA, BUT THOSE WHO HAVE NECESSARY BUSINESS TO CONDUCT SHOULD NOT BE DETERRED. THEY SHOULD REGISTER THEIR ARRIVAL WITH THE NEAREST BRITISH DIPLOMATIC MISSION, AND SHOULD TELL THE MISSION HOW LONG THEY EXPECT TO STAY."

THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT ADVISES BRITISH NATIONALS FROM HONG KONG AND OTHER HONG KONG RESIDENTS TO MAKE SIMILAR ARRANGEMENTS FOR THEIR DEPENDANTS.

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SAFETY IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE IN DAYA BAY PROJECT: SES
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ALL THE PARTIES INVOLVED IN THE DAYA BAY PROJECT REGARD SAFETY AS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ANSON CHAN, SAID TODAY (MONDAY).

SPEAKING AT A LUNCHEON MEETING BY THE ASSOCIATION OF CHAIRMEN OF THE TUNG WAH GROUP OF HOSPITALS, MRS CHAN SAID WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF ALL PARTIES CONCERNED, THE SAFETY ASPECT OF THE PROJECT WOULD CONTINUE TO BE GIVEN THE HIGHEST CONSIDERATION AS IT HAD BEEN RECEIVING IN THE PAST.

MRS CHAN SAID SHE WAS AWARE THAT PUBLIC CONCERN HAD BEEN RE-AWAKENED RECENTLY BY PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT OF THE ELECTRICITE DE FRANCE (EDF) TO THE EFFECT THAT THEY HAD BEEN INVITED TO SUBMIT PLANS FOR NEW NUCLEAR GENERATING FACILITIES TO BE LOCATED SOMEWHERE IN GUANGDONG PROVINCE.

"WE KNOW FROM A RECENT VISIT BY THE CHINESE ENERGY MINISTER, MR HUANG YICHENG, THAT THE CENTRAL PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT (CPG) IS WELL AWARE OF THE STRONG FEELINGS OF HONG KONG PEOPLE ON THIS MATTER.

"DURING MY RECENT VISIT TO GUANGDONG LAST WEEK, WE WERE BRIEFED BY THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR, MR KUANG JI, ON GUANGDONG'S PLANS FOR ENERGY PROVISION IN THIS DECADE.

"OF THE 12 POWER PLANTS BEING PLANNED, NONE WILL BE NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS. EIGHT WILL BE THERMAL AND FOUR HYDRO-ELECTRIC," SHE SAID.

TURNING TO THE SAFETY ASPECT OF THE PRESSURIZED WATER REACTOR SUCH AS DAYA BAY, MRS CHAN POINTED OUT THAT SUCH WATER REACTOR, WHICH HAD BEEN USED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOME 200 PLANTS WORLDWIDE, HAD AN EXCELLENT SAFETY RECORD.

"THE CONTAINMENT BUILDING, ONE OF THE USUAL KEY SAFETY FEATURES FOR THIS DESIGN, HAS NEVER FAILED IN A PRESSURISED WATER REACTOR ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD," MRS CHAN SAID.

"EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE UNITED KINGDOM ATOMIC ENERGY AUTHORITY COMPLETED A VERY DETAILED STUDY WHICH SOUGHT TO ASSESS THE HEALTH RISKS TO HONG KONG PEOPLE POSED BY THE EXISTENCE OF THE DAYA BAY POWER STATION.

"THE STUDY CONCLUDED THAT THE RISKS TO PUBLIC HEALTH ARE MUCH LOWER, BY A VERY LARGE MARGIN, THAN ANALOGOUS RISKS ENCOUNTERED BY HONG KONG PEOPLE IN EVERYDAY LIFE," SHE SAID.

"THE CONSULTANTS ALSO CONFIRMED THAT THERE WERE NO SPECIFIC WEAKNESSES IN THE DESIGN OF THE PLANT," MRS CHAN SAID.

"THESE CONCLUSIONS ARE VERY REASSURING BUT THEY DO NOT JUSTIFY COMPLACENCY. WE THEREFORE ACCEPT THAT THERE IS A NEED TO DRAW UP FOR HONG KONG A CONTINGENCY PLAN TO DEAL WITH AN EMERGENCY AT DAYA BAY, HOWEVER REMOTE THE PROBABILITY OF ITS OCCURENCE," SHE SAID.

ON THE PART OF THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY (GNPJVC), MRS CHAN SAID THE COMPANY AS THE OPERATORS WERE DOING NO LESS.

"THROUGH THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT'S REPRESENTATION ON THE BOARD OF THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO KEEP TRACK OF THE PROGRESS OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PLANT AND THE VARIOUS EFFORTS THE JOINT VENTURE COMPANY HAS PUT IN TO ENHANCE THE SAFETY OF THE PLANT," SHE SAID.

"IT IS CLEAR THAT THE GNPJVC, WHICH WILL OWN AND OPERATED THE PLANT, ARE ACCORDING TOP PRIORITY TO SAFETY ASPECTS," SHE SAID.

"FOR EXAMPLE A COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING PROGRAMME HAS BEEN DEvised FOR THE STAFF WHO WILL OPERATE THE FUTURE PLANT.

"THIS PROGRAMME IS ORGANISED JOINTLY AND SUPERVISED BY THE JOINT VENTURE COMPANY AND EDF, THE TECHNICAL CONSULTANT FOR THE PROJECT.

"ALL THE OPERATIONAL STAFF HAVE TO UNDERGO THREE TO FIVE YEARS OF RIGOROUS TRAINING. THIS INCLUDES 12 TO 18 MONTHS OF TRAINING IN FRENCH NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS, AT THE END OF WHICH A QUALIFICATION CERTIFICATE WOULD BE AWARDED SUBJECT TO PASSING AN EXAMINATION ADMINISTERED BY EDF.

"UNDER THE FRENCH SYSTEM, THE HOLDER OF SUCH A CERTIFICATE IS QUALIFIED TO OPERATE A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN FRANCE," SHE NOTED.

"UPON THEIR RETURN TO DAYA BAY, THE TRAINEES HAVE TO UNDERGO FURTHER TRAINING AND TO PASS THE CHINESE NATIONAL NUCLEAR SAFETY ADMINISTRATION'S EXAMINATION TO OBTAIN THE LICENCE BEFORE THEY ARE EVENTUALLY QUALIFIED TO WORK IN THE DAYA BAY PLANT," MRS CHAN ADDED.

"SIDE BY SIDE WITH TRAINING IS THE PROVISION OF EDF'S SERVICES AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT DURING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PLANT," SHE SAID.

"UP TO 130 TECHNICAL STAFF FROM EDF, INCLUDING 30 EXPERTS ON OPERATION WORK, HAVE NOW BEEN INTEGRATED INTO THE MANAGEMENT FOR THE PROJECT.

"WE FURTHER UNDERSTAND THAT AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE HAS BEEN REACHED BETWEEN THE GNPJVC AND EDF ON THE CONTINUATION OF EDF SERVICES AND SUPPORT FOLLOWING COMMISSIONING OF THE POWER STATION.

TURNING TO THE RECENT COMPLETION OF A PRE-OPERATIONAL SAFETY REVIEW BY THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA), MRS CHAN POINTED OUT THAT IN A PRESS RELEASE FOLLOWING THE INSPECTION, THE TEAM HAD STATED THAT THEY OBSERVED HIGH STANDARD OF CONSTRUCTION AND VIGOROUS QUALITY CONTROLS BY THE MAIN CONTRACTORS.

"THEY ALSO MADE RECOMMENDATIONS ON WAYS OF IMPROVING INDUSTRIAL SAFETY AND ON THE NEED TO EXPEDITE THE RECRUITMENT OF CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF STAFF," MRS CHAN SAID.

/"WE UNDERSTAND

"WE UNDERSTAND THAT FURTHER REVIEWS WILL BE ARRANGED AFTER COMMISSIONING OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT," SHE ADDED.

REGARDING THE EFFECT OF THE CURRENT CRISIS IN THE GULF ON OIL SUPPLY, MRS CHAN SAID THE PHYSICAL SUPPLY OF OIL PRODUCTS HAD SO FAR NOT BEEN SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY THE TENSIONS IN THE GULF AREA EXCEPT THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME FLUCTUATIONS IN PRICE.

"ALTHOUGH THE CURRENT OIL SUPPLY SITUATION DOES NOT CALL FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF EMERGENCY MEASURES AT THIS STAGE, I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS FULLY PREPARED TO DEAL WITH ANY POSSIBLE DETERIORATION IN THE GULF SITUATION WHICH MAY LEAD TO A SHORTAGE OF OIL PRODUCTS," SHE SAID.

"IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT MAY MAKE USE OF THE POWERS CONTAINED IN THE OIL (CONSERVATION AND CONTROL) ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE CONTROL OF THE SUPPLY AND USE OF OIL.

"THE POWERS ARE EXTENSIVE, BUT ARE DESIGNED FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS ONLY. WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF RESORTING TO THEM SO LONG AS THE MARKET CONTINUES TO OPERATE NORMALLY," SHE SAID.

"BUT THIS TIME ROUND, WE HAVE THE BENEFIT OF THE LESSONS WE LEARNT DURING THE TWO PREVIOUS CRISES IN 1973 AND 1979," MRS CHAN SAID.

"AS A RESULT, WE ARE MUCH LESS DEPENDENT ON OIL FOR OUR BASIC ENERGY REQUIREMENTS, SHOWN BY THE FACT THAT SOME 98 PER CENT OF OUR ELECTRICITY IS NOW GENERATED BY BURNING COAL RATHER THAN OIL.

"AS A RESULT OF THE SWITCH OVER TO COAL AS THE MAIN SOURCE OF ENERGY FOR ELECTRICITY GENERATION, HONG KONG HAS BENEFITTED FROM SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTIONS IN THE REAL COST OF POWER," MRS CHAN NOTED.

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SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE FACE OF HONG KONG
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THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HEADQUARTERS BUILDING CAN BE SEEN AS A SYMBOL OF THE SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE HOUSING AUTHORITY AND THE URBAN COUNCIL WHICH IS HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE FACE OF HONG KONG, THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, SAID TODAY (MONDAY).

SIR DAVID SAID THIS WHILE OFFICIATING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HEADQUARTERS AND THE URBAN COUNCIL'S FAT KWONG STREET INDOOR GAMES HALL.

"ALREADY HALF OF OUR POPULATION LIVES IN PUBLIC HOUSING AND NEARLY HALF A MILLION MORE PUBLIC HOUSING FLATS WILL BE BUILT BY THE TURN OF THE CENTURY," HE SAID.

"BUT IT IS NOT JUST NUMBERS THAT MATTER. QUALITY, DESIGN AND THE LIVING ENVIRONMENT MATTER TOO.

/"DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENTS

"DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE IN RECENT YEARS AND MODERN, WELL-EQUIPPED HOUSING BLOCKS, PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, FOUNTAINS, SHOPPING CENTRES AND CULTURAL FACILITIES ARE NOW PART OF EVERY DAY LIFE IN HONG KONG."

SIR DAVID SAID THESE IMPROVEMENTS WERE ATTRIBUTABLE TO BOTH THE HOUSING AUTHORITY AND THE URBAN COUNCIL WHICH HAD WORKED TO MAKE THE CITY A MUCH MORE ATTRACTIVE PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE AND WORK.

WELCOMING THE GOVERNOR, THE CHAIRMAN OF HOUSING AUTHORITY, SIR DAVID AKERS-JONES, SAID THE NEW BUILDING HAD ENABLED THE AUTHORITY TO REHOUSE ITS HEADQUARTERS SECTIONS UNDER ONE ROOF.

THE LARGE INCREASE IN THE AUTHORITY'S HOUSING STOCK AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTY OVER THE YEARS HAD LED TO NECESSARY EXPANSION OF STAFF AND OFFICES HAD TO BE FOUND IN OTHER PREMISES, SIR DAVID SAID.

"THE ANNUAL HOUSING PRODUCTION WAS ABOUT 12 000 FLATS WHEN THE FORMER HOUSING AUTHORITY HEADQUARTERS BUILDING WAS COMPLETED IN 1976; THIS YEAR OUR PRODUCTION WILL BE OVER 50 000 FLATS," HE SAID.

"FORTUNATELY, WE FOUND A HELPFUL PARTNER IN THE URBAN COUNCIL AND THIS BUILDING IS THE RESULT."

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SURVEY OF HK'S MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES PUBLISHED
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OVER HALF (53.1 PER CENT) OF HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURERS CONSIDER THE OVERALL MANUFACTURING INVESTMENT ENVIRONMENT IN HONG KONG FAVOURABLE, ACCORDING TO THE LATEST SAMPLE SURVEY CARRIED OUT BY THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT.

THE "SURVEY OF HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES 1990" IS THE SECOND OF ITS KIND TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE DEPARTMENT'S DATA AND SERVICES DIVISION.

CONDUCTED BETWEEN JUNE AND AUGUST THIS YEAR, IT COVERED 2,967 ESTABLISHMENTS IN 14 SELECTED MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES: CLOTHING, ELECTRONICS, WATCHES AND CLOCKS, TEXTILES, PLASTICS, TOYS, JEWELLERY, METAL PRODUCTS, HOUSEHOLD ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES, PHOTOGRAPHIC GOODS, OPTICAL GOODS, PRINTING, INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY, AND FOOD AND BEVERAGES.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT SAID THE INTENTION OF THE SURVEY WAS TO DISCOVER HOW MANUFACTURERS SAW THEIR BUSINESS PROSPECTS; WHAT THEY THOUGHT OF HONG KONG'S INVESTMENT ENVIRONMENT; AND WHETHER THEY SAW ANY CONSTRAINTS ON THE GROWTH OF THEIR INDUSTRIES.

ITS FINDINGS ARE BASED ON 1,954 VALID QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED.

/SURVEYED FACTORIES

SURVEYED FACTORIES WERE ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE IMPORTANCE AND FAVOURABILITY OF 20 FACTORS WHICH DETERMINED THE INVESTMENT ENVIRONMENT OF HONG KONG AS A MANUFACTURING BASE.

THESE INCLUDED ASPECTS OF GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC POLICY, HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE, BUSINESS LAW AND TAX SYSTEM, MANPOWER RESOURCES AND POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT.

LABOUR COST WAS CONSIDERED TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THE 20 FACTORS, FOLLOWED BY LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY, POLITICAL STABILITY, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND COST OF FACTORY SPACE.

THE FOUR FACTORS FELT TO BE MOST FAVOURABLE WERE HONG KONG'S INFRASTRUCTURE (CITED BY 80.1 PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS), BANKING AND FINANCIAL FACILITIES (78.3 PER CENT), GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC POLICY (67.7 PER CENT), AND REGIONAL LOCATION (66.6 PER CENT).

THREE FACTORS WERE CONSIDERED BY MORE THAN HALF THE RESPONDENTS TO BE UNFAVOURABLE: LABOUR COST (64.3 PER CENT), COST OF FACTORY SPACE (58 PER CENT) AND POLITICAL FUTURE (51 PER CENT).

"OVERALL, 11 OF THE 20 FACTORS WERE CONSIDERED BY HALF OR MORE OF THE 1,954 RESPONDENTS TO BE FAVOURABLE," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID CERTAIN INDUSTRIES HAD MORE POSITIVE VIEWS ABOUT HONG KONG THAN OTHERS.

"A HIGHER PROPORTION OF FAVOURABLE OPINIONS WAS FOUND IN THE HOUSEHOLD ELECTRICAL APPLIANCE INDUSTRY (63 PER CENT), THE PHOTOGRAPHIC GOODS INDUSTRY (60 PER CENT), THE WATCHES AND CLOCKS INDUSTRY (59.9 PER CENT), THE ELECTRONICS, PRINTING AND INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY INDUSTRIES (57.8 EACH), AND THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY (57.7 PER CENT)," HE SAID.

AS REGARDS BUSINESS PROSPECTS IN 1991, 25.8 PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS EXPECTED THAT BUSINESS IN 1991 WOULD BE BETTER OR MUCH BETTER THAN IN 1990; 26.3 PER CENT SAID IT WOULD BE MUCH THE SAME; AND 15.6 PER CENT CONSIDERED IT WOULD BE WORSE OR MUCH WORSE. THE REMAINING 32.4 PER CENT WERE UNCERTAIN.

AMONG THE 1,320 RESPONDENTS WHO HAD A MORE DEFINITE VIEW OF THE FUTURE (THAT IS EXCLUDING THOSE WITH UNCERTAIN RESPONSES), 38.1 PER CENT FELT THAT BUSINESS WOULD BE BETTER OR MUCH BETTER IN 1991, AND 38.9 PER CENT FELT THAT IT WOULD BE MUCH THE SAME, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

ON BUSINESS PROSPECTS IN 1992-93, 1,291 (66.1 PER CENT) OF RESPONDENTS FELT UNCERTAIN, WHEREAS 14.6 PER CENT EXPECTED THEM TO BE BETTER OR MUCH BETTER THAN IN 1990; 10.6 PER CENT MUCH THE SAME; AND 8.8 PER CENT WORSE OR MUCH WORSE.

OF THE 663 COMPANIES WHICH DID NOT GIVE AN "UNCERTAIN" RESPONSE, 491 (74.1 PER CENT) EXPECTED THAT BUSINESS IN 1992-93 WOULD NOT BE WORSE THAN IN 1990, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY WILL BE INCORPORATED IN "HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES 1990", WHICH WILL BE RELEASED BY THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT NEXT MAY.

COPIES OF THE SURVEY REPORT ARE AVAILABLE FREE OF CHARGE FROM THE INDUSTRIAL DATA SECTION, INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT, ROOM 1412, OCEAN CENTRE, 5 CANTON ROAD, TSIM SHA TSUI.

REGISTRATION OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS AIMED TO PROTECT CONSUMERS
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THE RESPONSE FOR THE REGISTRATION OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS UNDER THE NEW ELECTRICITY (REGISTRATION) REGULATIONS 1990 WHICH BEGAN ON NOVEMBER 2 HAS BEEN POSITIVE, THE DIRECTOR OF ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES, MR MIAO CHI, SAID TODAY (MONDAY).

ADDRESSING A SEMINAR ORGANISED BY THE INSTITUTION OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS (HONG KONG CENTRE), MR MIAO SAID ABOUT 4,000 APPLICATIONS HAD BEEN RECEIVED SO FAR.

"IN THE PAST, THERE WAS NO STATUTORY REQUIREMENT FOR ELECTRICAL WORK TO BE CARRIED OUT UNDER PROPER SUPERVISION.

"THIS HAS RESULTED IN SUBSTANDARD ELECTRICAL WORK AND THERE WAS DEFINITELY A LACK OF PROTECTION FOR THE CONSUMERS," MR MIAO SAID.

IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT FUTURE ELECTRICAL WORK COULD ONLY BE UNDERTAKEN BY TRAINED AND QUALIFIED ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS AND WORKERS, THE COMPULSORY REGISTRATION SYSTEM WAS SET UP UNDER THE NEW LEGISLATION, HE SAID.

THE NEW REGULATIONS ALSO REQUIRE CONSUMERS TO ENGAGE REGISTERED WORKERS THROUGH REGISTERED CONTRACTORS FOR PERFORMING ELECTRICAL WORK ON THEIR FIXED ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS, INCLUDING THE PERIODIC INSPECTIONS, TESTINGS AND CERTIFICATIONS OF SOME 80,000 INSTALLATIONS THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY.

ACCORDING TO MR MIAO, THE REGISTRATION OF CONTRACTORS IS SCHEDULED TO START IN NOVEMBER NEXT YEAR AND TAKE ABOUT 18 MONTHS TO COMPLETE.

"IN AROUND MID-1992, THE STATUTORY REQUIREMENT THAT ELECTRICAL WORK ON FIXED ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS CAN ONLY BE CARRIED OUT OR SUPERVISED BY REGISTERED CONTRACTORS AND WORKERS WILL BE BROUGHT INTO EFFECT," HE SAID.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE ELECTRICITY (WIRING) REGULATIONS 1990, WHICH SET OUT THE MINIMUM SAFETY REQUIREMENTS OF FIXED ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS, WILL ALSO COME INTO OPERATION.

OTHER SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION UNDER PREPARATION INCLUDING THE ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS (SAFETY) REGULATIONS AND THE ELECTRICITY (SUPPLY VOLTAGE) REGULATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO BE ENACTED SOON.

STUDENTS BEST EDUCATED IN MEDIUM
WHICH WILL BRING ABOUT COGNITIVE, ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT
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THE EDUCATION COMMISSION FIRMLY BELIEVES THAT EACH STUDENT IN HONG KONG'S BILINGUAL EDUCATION SYSTEM SHOULD BE EDUCATED IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE MEDIUM WHICH WILL BEST BRING ABOUT EFFECTIVE COGNITIVE AND ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT.

THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, MR LI YUET-TING, SAID THIS TODAY (MONDAY) WHEN OPENING THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE STUDIES AND LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION.

MR LI SAID THE COMMISSION WAS ALSO OF THE OPINION THAT:

- * THE TEACHING OF CHINESE AND ENGLISH AS SUBJECTS SHOULD DIRECTLY SUPPORT THE USE OF CHINESE OR ENGLISH AS MEDIUMS OF INSTRUCTION;
- * THE USE OF A MIXTURE OF CHINESE AND ENGLISH SHOULD BE REDUCED IN FAVOUR OF CLEAR AND CONSISTENT USE IN EACH CLASS OF CHINESE OR ENGLISH IN RESPECT OF TEACHING, TEXTBOOKS AND EXAMINATIONS; AND
- * STUDENTS SHOULD BE ASSISTED TO SWITCH FROM CHINESE TO ENGLISH AS MEDIUMS OF INSTRUCTION, AT CERTAIN STAGES IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

"THE ASSISTANCE TO BE GIVEN WOULD INCLUDE REGULAR REVIEWS TO MONITOR PROGRESS; RE-DESIGNED INITIAL AND IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES; ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION AND VIDEO PROGRAMMES IN ENGLISH, AND BRIDGING COURSES TO HELP STUDENTS AT VARIOUS STAGES IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

"THE PLANNING THAT HAS BEEN DONE AND THE ACTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN TAKEN SO FAR TO DESIGN SUCH A COURSE FOR THE FIRST SECONDARY SCHOOL YEAR WILL BE DISCUSSED IN THE CONFERENCE EXTRA SESSIONS TO BE HELD ON THURSDAY," HE EXPLAINED.

OTHER SESSIONS WILL ALSO BE HELD ON THURSDAY TO DISCUSS THE INITIAL STEPS BEING TAKEN TOWARDS THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COURSES FOR STUDENTS EDUCATED THROUGH THE CHINESE MEDIUM WHO WILL BE LEAVING SCHOOL AFTER THE FIFTH SECONDARY YEAR AND GOING INTO THE WORKPLACE.

THERE WILL ALSO BE SOME DISCUSSION OF WAYS AND MEANS OF HELPING STUDENTS WHO HAVE STUDIED IN THE MEDIUM OF CHINESE TO IMPROVE THEIR ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS PRIOR TO THEIR ENTRY INTO ENGLISH-MEDIUM TERTIARY EDUCATION.

MR LI DESCRIBED THE LAST AS AN "INTRICATE ISSUE", BUT ADDED THAT FOLLOWING A RECENT MEETING INVOLVING THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER AND HIMSELF, AND THE HEADS OF HONG KONG'S TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS, A FORMULA HAS BEEN REACHED WHEREBY PART OF AN EXAMINATION WHICH TESTS THE STUDENTS' ABILITY TO USE ENGLISH WILL BE TAKEN IN THE SEVENTH SECONDARY YEAR AND THE OTHER PART WILL FOLLOW A BRIDGING COURSE OFFERED PRIOR TO TERTIARY EDUCATION BEGINS.

"THIS IS AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND IT IS POSSIBLE THAT OUR DOMESTIC CONCERNS MAY NOT BE OF INTEREST TO ALL DELEGATED," MR LI SAID.

"MOST COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES, HOWEVER, ARE CONCERNED TO STRENGTHEN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR LANGUAGE POLICIES AND THERE ARE, OF COURSE, ALWAYS DIFFERENT WAYS OF ACHIEVING THE SAME RESULT."

HONG KONG, MR LI NOTED, HAD LOOKED AT A RANGE OF POSSIBILITIES BEFORE MOVING TO THE PRESENT PHASE OF AWAITING GOVERNMENT'S DECISION ON THE EDUCATION COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS.

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TRADING OF SNAKES AND CORALS TO COME UNDER CONTROL

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THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT (AFD) TODAY (MONDAY) ADVISED THE PUBLIC, ESPECIALLY TRADERS IN LIVE SNAKES, SNAKE PRODUCTS AND CORALS, THAT THREE SPECIES OF SNAKE AND ALL STONY CORALS WILL SOON COME UNDER STRICT LICENSING CONTROL.

THE THREE SNAKE SPECIES ARE THE ORIENTAL RAT SNAKE, THE ASIATIC COBRA AND THE KING COBRA. THESE SNAKES ARE CONSUMED AS FOOD IN HONG KONG AND THEIR SKINS USED AS LEATHER.

THE STONY CORALS INCLUDE THE STAGHORN CORALS AND BRAIN CORALS WHICH ARE COMMONLY USED IN AQUARIA AND FOR DECORATIVE PURPOSES.

AN AFD SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED THAT THE SNAKE SPECIES AND CORALS HAD BEEN ADDED TO APPENDIX II OF THE CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA (CITES), WHICH MEANS THAT IMPORT AND EXPORT OF THESE SPECIES THROUGH MEMBER COUNTRIES HAVE TO BE CONTROLLED TO PREVENT OVER EXPLOITATION.

THERE ARE OTHER SPECIES ADDED TO APPENDIX II APART FROM SNAKES AND CORALS. AMONG THEM ARE THE CHINESE CROCODILE LIZARD AND THE SLOTH BEAR. THESE SPECIES WILL ALSO COME UNDER LICENSING CONTROL BUT THEY ARE NOT WIDELY TRADED IN THE TERRITORY.

"THE AMENDMENT, WHICH TAKES THE FORM OF THE ANIMALS AND PLANTS (PROTECTION OF ENDANGERED SPECIES) ORDINANCE (REPLACEMENT OF SCHEDULES) ORDER 1990, WAS ENDORSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL LAST WEEK AND WILL COME INTO EFFECT AS SOON AS IT IS GAZETTED," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE ADDED THAT IT WOULD THEN BE AN OFFENCE TO IMPORT OR EXPORT THE SCHEDULED SPECIMENS, SUCH AS SNAKES OR THEIR PARTS AND DERIVATIVES, AND CORALS OR THEIR SKELETONS, EXCEPT UNDER AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH A LICENCE ISSUED BY AFD IN ADVANCE.

"OFFENDERS ARE LIABLE TO A MAXIMUM FINE OF \$25,000 FOR THE FIRST OFFENCE AND \$50,000 PLUS SIX MONTHS' JAIL SENTENCE FOR A REPEATED OFFENCE IN ADDITION TO THE MANDATORY FORFEITURE OF THE SPECIMENS," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

APPLICATIONS FOR THE IMPORT OR EXPORT LICENCES SHOULD BE MADE TO THE DEPARTMENT'S FAUNA CONSERVATION SECTION AND ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED WITH DOCUMENTARY PROOF THAT THE SPECIMENS TO BE TRADED ARE DERIVED FROM LEGAL AND CITES APPROVED SOURCES.

THE LICENCE FEES FOR IMPORTING SCHEDULED LIVE ANIMALS AND ANIMAL PARTS ARE \$300 AND \$50 RESPECTIVELY WHILE THE LICENCE FEE FOR EXPORTING SCHEDULED SPECIMENS IS \$50.

ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON TEL. 733 2144 OR 733 2124.

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USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT DURING HOLIDAYS: CNTA
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THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION TODAY (MONDAY) APPEALED TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO MAKE GOOD USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT WHEN THEY GO OUT TO VIEW FESTIVE LIGHTINGS DURING CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS.

SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON MAJOR EVENTS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE HOLIDAY PERIOD, PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY (HONG KONG AND KOWLOON), MR CHRIS WAN, SAID THE ILLUMINATED AND COLOURFUL DECORATIONS WERE EXPECTED TO PULL LARGE CROWDS.

HE SAID THE MOST PROMINENT DISPLAYS WERE FOUND IN TSIM SHA TSUI AND CENTRAL DISTRICTS.

"PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES HAD SHOWED THAT MOST PEOPLE VIEWED THE SEASON OF LIGHTINGS ON CHRISTMAS EVE AND TSIM SHA TSUI EAST WAS THE MOST POPULAR DESTINATION.

"FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY, I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAL TO THOSE, SPECIALLY WITH OLD PEOPLE AND YOUNG CHILDREN, TO EXERCISE CARE AND RESTRAINT IN CONGESTED AREAS ON CHRISTMAS EVE," HE SAID.

MR WAN REMINDED THE PUBLIC THAT MOST CHRISTMAS LIGHTS WILL BE ON DISPLAY FOR A LONG DURATION AND THEY COULD ENJOY THEM MORE LEISURELY ON OTHER DAYS.

HE POINTED OUT THAT APART FROM THE ATTRACTIONS IN TSIM SHA TSUI AND CENTRAL, THERE WERE ALSO CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND NUMEROUS PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMMES IN OTHER DISTRICTS SUCH AS SHA TIN AS WELL.

HE ALSO SAID A SERIES OF ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMMES INCLUDING SHOWS AND CARNIVALS HAVE BEEN ORGANISED FOR HONG KONG PEOPLE.

"INTERESTED PERSONS CAN APPROACH THEIR LOCAL DISTRICT OFFICES FOR DETAILS," MR WAN SAID.

/ALSO SPEAKING

ALSO SPEAKING AT THE CONFERENCE, CHIEF TRANSPORT OFFICER, MR YUEN LAP-PUN, SAID SPECIAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED DURING THE HOLIDAYS.

THESE WILL INCLUDE PEDESTRIANISATION SCHEMES AND ROAD CLOSURES, HE SAID.

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CHRISTMAS CARNIVALS IN EASTERN DISTRICT
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RESIDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO SHARE THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS AT EIGHT CARNIVALS TO BE HELD THROUGHOUT EASTERN DISTRICT FROM DECEMBER 21 TO CHRISTMAS DAY.

THE CARNIVALS ARE ORGANISED BY THE EASTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, AREA COMMITTEES AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS, WITH A SUBSIDY OF OVER \$130,000 FROM THE DISTRICT BOARD.

THE PROGRAMMES WILL INCLUDE ACROBATIC AND MAGIC PERFORMANCES, VARIETY SHOWS, STALL GAMES, DISTRIBUTION OF GIFTS BY SANTA CLAUS AND LUCKY DRAWS.

DETAILS OF THE CARNIVALS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

DATE/TIME -----	VENUE -----
DECEMBER 21 (FRIDAY) 10 AM	HING WAH COMMUNITY HALL, CHAI WAN
DECEMBER 23 (SUNDAY) NOON	CAUSEWAY BAY KAIFONG WELFARE ADVANCEMENT ASSOCIATION BRADBURY CENTRE
DECEMBER 23 (SUNDAY) 2 PM	CHAI WAN COMMUNITY CENTRE
DECEMBER 23 (SUNDAY) 2.30 PM	FACTORY STREET PLAYGROUND, SHAU KEI WAN
DECEMBER 23 (SUNDAY) 7.30 PM	TIN CHIU STREET PLAYGROUND, NORTH POINT
DECEMBER 24 (MONDAY) 2 PM	HING WAH ESTATE, CHAI WAN
DECEMBER 24 (MONDAY) 6 PM	CAUSEWAY BAY COMMUNITY CENTRE
DECEMBER 25 (TUESDAY) 1 PM	TAIKOO PRIMARY SCHOOL, QUARRY BAY

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