DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30, 1991

CONTENTS

PAGE NO.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING:

BILL TO GIVE POWER OF SUSPENSION AND REVIVAL OF TRS INTRODUCED 1

BILL TO REPLACE FAULTY PRESUMPTIONS ON DRUG OFFENCES 2

MOTION TO EFFECT TRANSFER OF MINES DIVISION FROM LD TO CESD PASSED 4

SALE OF PUBLIC RENTAL FLATS INVOLVES 'NEW LAND' 5

THREE APPROACHES IDENTIFIED TO TACKLE UNATTENDED CHILDREN PROBLEM 6

DRAFTING OF AMENDMENTS TO MULTI-STOREY BUILDING (OWNER'S INCORPORATION) ORDINANCE IN FINAL STAGE 7

NO PLAN TO BAN TOBACCO ADS ALTOGETHER 8

GOVT SPONSORS A SPEAKERS PROGRAMME TO PROMOTE HK OVERSEAS 9

GOVT'S CAMPAIGN FOR ORGAN DONATIONS IN FULL SWING 10

COMPENSATION TERMS TO PNEUMOCONIOTIC PATIENTS IS UNDER REVIEW 11

NO DOUBLE STANDARD IN COMMUNITY FACILITY ALLOCATION FOR PUBLIC HOUSING AND HOS ESTATES 13

PART-TIME NURSE SCHEME IS WORKING WELL 14

WATER TO MA ON SHAN PURE AND CLEAN 14

FIVE BILLS PASSED IN LEGCO TODAY 15

BORDER LIAISON MEETING IN ZHONGSHAN 16

FRANCHISED BUS ROUTES TO BE TENDERED 16

IMPORTANCE OF CAI TECHNOLOGY STRESSED 17

DB CANDIDATES' FORUMS IN SOUTHERN DISTRICT 18

ELECTION FORUM IN YAU TSIM 19

GOVT CONCERNED ABOUT VILLAGERS' WELFARE 20

DTC REGISTRATION REVOKED 21

ACTION ON ILLEGAL STRUCTURES IN QUARRY BAY 21

BILL TO GIVE POWER OF SUSPENSION AND REVIVAL OF TRS INTRODUCED

* * * * *

IT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION THAT THE TRIAD RENUNCIATION SCHEME (TRS) SHOULD BE SUSPENDED FROM APRIL 1 THIS YEAR FOLLOWING THE ENACTMENT OF THE SOCIETIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, MR ASPREY SAID THE PURPOSE OF THE BILL WAS TO GIVE THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL THE POWER TO ORDER THE SUSPENSION AND SUBSEQUENT REVIVAL OF THE TRS.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE SCHEME, WHICH CAME INTO OPERATION ON DECEMBER 8, 1988, PROVIDED A MEANS WHEREBY A PERSON COULD RENOUNCE HIS MEMBERSHIP OF A TRIAD SOCIETY IN RETURN FOR A STAY OF PROSECUTION FOR OFFENCES RELATED TO TRIAD MEMBERSHIP UNDER THE SOCIETIES ORDINANCE.

HE SAID THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE REVIEWED THE SCHEME LAST YEAR AND RECOMMENDED THAT IT SHOULD BE SUSPENDED FROM APRIL 1, 1991.

"THE COMMITTEE CONSIDERED THAT A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS WAS LONG ENOUGH FOR THOSE WHO HAVE THE DESIRE TO RELINQUISH THEIR TRIAD INVOLVEMENT TO MAKE USE OF THE SCHEME.

"FURTHERMORE, REGULAR EXTENSION OF THE SCHEME WOULD RUN THE RISK OF SENDING THE WRONG MESSAGE TO EXISTING AND POTENTIAL TRIAD MEMBERS THAT THEY WOULD ALWAYS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF RENOUNCING AT A LATER STAGE," MR ASPREY SAID.

HE SAID SUSPENSION, AS OPPOSED TO REPEAL, OF THE SCHEME WOULD ALLOW IT TO BE REACTIVATED WITHOUT THE NEED FOR NEW LEGISLATION, IF THIS WAS FELT NECESSARY IN FUTURE.

"HOWEVER, I WOULD EMPHASISE THAT THERE ARE CURRENTLY NO PLANS TO REACTIVATE THE SCHEME ONCE IT IS SUSPENDED," MR ASPREY ADDED.

FIGURES RELEASED BY THE SECRETARY SHOWED THAT UP TO THE END OF LAST MONTH, A TOTAL OF 959 APPLICATIONS HAD BEEN RECEIVED.

OF THESE, 549 APPLICATIONS HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL, EIGHT UNSUCCESSFUL, 92 HAD BEEN WITHDRAWN AND 237 WERE HELD IN ABEYANCE AS IT HAD NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO CONTACT THE APPLICANTS.

"AS IT IS LIKELY THAT SOME APPLICATIONS WILL BE SUBMITTED CLOSE TO THE DATE OF SUSPENSION, THE TRIAD RENUNCIATION TRIBUNAL WILL NEED TO CONTINUE ITS OPERATIONS UNTIL ALL OUTSTANDING APPLICATIONS HAVE BEEN CLEARED.

"AFTER ALL APPLICATIONS HAVE BEEN CLEARED, THE TRIBUNAL WILL BE DISSOLVED," THE SECRETARY SAID.

MR ASPREY SAID CLAUSE 3 OF THE BILL PROVIDED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRIAD RENUNCIATION SECRETARIAT TO TAKE OVER THE ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF THE TRIBUNAL WHEN THE LATTER CEASED TO EXIST.

/THE TRIAD .....

THE TRIAD RENUNCIATION SECRETARIAT WOULD TAKE OVER THE CUSTODY OF RENUNCIATION RECORDS AND THE ISSUE OF CERTIFICATES TO COURTS, MAGISTRATES, THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE AND THE COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES.

"ALL RECORDS WILL BE KEPT IN CONFIDENCE AND THE SECRETARIAT WILL BE INDEPENDENT OF ANY OF THE LAW ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENTS," MR ASPREY SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT SINCE THE WORKLOAD OF THE TRIBUNAL SECRETARIAT WAS EXPECTED TO BE VERY LIGHT, THE DUTIES WOULD BE ASSUMED BY THE SECRETARIATS OF OTHER STATUTORY BOARDS IN ADDITION TO THEIR CURRENT DUTIES AND THE EXISTING EIGHT POSTS CREATED TO SERVICE THE TRIBUNAL WOULD BE DELETED.

MEANWHILE, CLAUSE 4 ENABLED THE TRIBUNAL TO TERMINATE FURTHER PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS WHICH HAD BEEN ABANDONED BY THE APPLICANTS.

THESE INCLUDED APPLICATIONS NOW HELD IN ABEYANCE AND WHICH WERE NOT REACTIVATED BEFORE THE SUSPENSION OF THE SCHEME, MR ASPREY SAID.

CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO OTHER PROVISIONS IN THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE TO INCLUDE REFERENCES TO THE TRIAD RENUNCIATION SECRETARIAT WERE MADE IN CLAUSES 5 TO 10.

AT THE SAME TIME, CLAUSE 11 ADDED A NEW SECTION 26N TO GIVE THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL THE POWER TO SUSPEND AND REVIVE THE TRIAD RENUNCIATION SCHEME, AND THE GOVERNOR THE POWER TO SUSPEND THE PROVISIONS ESTABLISHING THE TRIAD RENUNCIATION TRIBUNAL AFTER ALL OUTSTANDING APPLICATIONS HAD BEEN DETERMINED.

HE ALSO SAID A SPECIAL CAMPAIGN IS BEING LAUNCHED TO PUBLICISE THE SUSPENSION OF THE SCHEME WITH EFFECT FROM APRIL 1, 1991 AND TO ENCOURAGE AS MANY POTENTIAL RENOUNCERS AS POSSIBLE TO COME FORWARD BEFORE THAT DEADLINE.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

BILL TO REPLACE FAULTY PRESUMPTIONS ON DRUG OFFENCES

* * * * *

THE PURPOSE OF THE DANGEROUS DRUGS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991 IS TO REPLACE UNRELIABLE AND INADEQUATE PRESUMPTIONS RELATING TO THE POSSESSION OF DANGEROUS DRUGS FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRAFFICKING, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, MR ASPREY SAID SECTION 46 OF THE DANGEROUS DRUGS ORDINANCE PROVIDED THAT ANY PERSON FOUND IN POSSESSION OF MORE THAN A SPECIFIED QUANTITY OF A DANGEROUS DRUG WAS PRESUMED TO HAVE BEEN IN POSSESSION OF THE DRUG FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRAFFICKING.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID THE QUANTITIES SPECIFIED FOR VARIOUS DRUGS HAD HISTORICALLY BEEN SET ON THE BASIS OF THE AMOUNT OF THE DRUG FORMING A SINGLE DOSE; 10 DOSES FOR THE LESS ADDICTIVE DRUGS, AND FIVE DOSES FOR THE MORE ADDICTIVE ONES.

"TWO OF THE PRESUMPTIVE LEVELS REFER RESPECTIVELY TO THE NUMBER OF PACKETS AND TO THE WEIGHT OF A MIXTURE CONTAINING HEROIN," MR ASPREY SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THESE LEVELS WERE SET BASED ON THE DRUG SITUATION IN THE EARLY 1970'S, WHEN HIGH PURITY "NO. 4" HEROIN WAS VIRTUALLY NON-EXISTENT IN HONG KONG, THE HEROIN CONSUMED LOCALLY BEING THE "NO. 3" MIXTURE, WITH A STABLE HEROIN CONTENT OF ABOUT 30 PER CENT. "NO. 3" HEROIN WAS NORMALLY SOLD IN SINGLE DOSE PACKETS EACH WEIGHING BETWEEN 0.3 AND 0.4 OF A GRAM, AND THE AVERAGE ADDICT WOULD USE ABOUT FIVE PACKETS A DAY.

HENCE, THE PRESUMPTIVE LEVELS WERE SET AT "FIVE PACKETS" AND "TWO AND A HALF GRAMS OF MIXTURE", BOTH EQUATING TO A DAILY CONSUMPTION OF ABOUT HALF A GRAM OF PURE HEROIN, HE SAID.

HE SAID THE SIGNIFICANT DECLINE IN THE PURITY OF "NO. 3" HEROIN SINCE THE EARLY 1980'S (TO ABOUT THREE PER CENT TODAY), AND THE EMERGENCE OF NO. 4 HEROIN, OF ABOUT 75 PER CENT PURITY, AT STREET LEVEL IN THE LAST TWO YEARS, HAD CHANGED THE LOCAL DRUG ABUSE PATTERN.

"MOST LOCAL ADDICTS NOW CONSUME EITHER 'NO. 4' HEROIN OR A MIXTURE OF 'NO. 3' AND 'NO. 4'.

"THOSE WHO CONSUME 'NO. 3' HEROIN WILL NORMALLY USE IN ONE DAY MORE THAN THE TWO AND A HALF GRAMS OF MIXTURE REQUIRED TO TRIGGER THE PRESUMPTION THAT THEY ARE IN POSSESSION OF THE DRUG FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRAFFICKING.

MR ASPREY SAID THERE HAD ALSO BEEN CHANGES IN RETAIL PRACTICE.

IN ADDITION TO PACKETS, HEROIN WAS NOW OFTEN SOLD IN SEALED DRINKING STRAWS OR IN SYRINGES.

THE SECRETARY SAID CLAUSE 2(A) OF THE BILL AMENDED SECTION 46(C) OF THE ORDINANCE BY RAISING THE PRESUMPTION OF POSSESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRAFFICKING WHERE A PERSON WAS IN POSSESSION OF MORE THAN FIVE CONTAINERS OF DANGEROUS DRUGS.

"THE REFERENCE TO 'CONTAINERS' IS TO RECOGNISE THE CHANGES IN RETAIL PRACTICE," HE SAID.

ON THE OTHER HAND, HE SAID CLAUSE 2(B) AMENDED SECTION 46(D) BY RAISING THE PRESUMPTION WHERE MORE THAN ONE OF THE DANGEROUS DRUGS LISTED WERE POSSESSED AND THE TOTAL WEIGHT OF THE DANGEROUS DRUGS WAS HALF A GRAM OR MORE.

THE SECTION AS PRESENTLY WORDED WOULD APPEAR NOT TO COVER HALF A GRAM OF A MIXTURE CONTAINING, FOR EXAMPLE, A QUARTER GRAM OF DIACETYL MORPHINE HYDROCHLORIDE AND A QUARTER GRAM OF MONOCETYL MORPHINE HYDROCHLORIDE, BOTH OF WHICH WERE DANGEROUS DRUGS.

/IN LINE .....

IN LINE WITH THE AMENDMENT TO SECTION 46(D), MR ASPREY SAID CLAUSES 2(D) TO (H) AMEND SECTION 46(F), (I), (J), (K), AND (L) RESPECTIVELY, TO RAISE THE PRESUMPTION THAT POSSESSION WAS FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRAFFICKING ON THE MORE RELIABLE BASIS OF SPECIFIED AMOUNTS OF DANGEROUS DRUGS POSSESSED, WHETHER THEY WERE ALONE OR IN A PREPARATION OR OTHER MATERIAL.

"IN EACH CASE, THE PRESUMPTION IS ALSO RAISED WHERE THE COMBINED WEIGHT OF MORE THAN ONE OF THE DANGEROUS DRUGS LISTED REACHES THE PRESCRIBED LEVEL."

FINALLY, HE SAID CLAUSE 2(C) REPEALED SECTION 46(E), SINCE IT WAS NO LONGER APPROPRIATE TO USE THE WEIGHT OF A MIXTURE TO RAISE THE PRESUMPTION THAT POSSESSION WAS FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRAFFICKING.

"THE WEIGHT OF THE MIXTURE HAS BEEN FOUND TO BE A CONSTANTLY FLUCTUATING FACTOR.

"THIS PROVISION HAS BECOME OBSOLETE SINCE THE MIXTURE IS OFTEN SO WEAK THAT LARGE QUANTITIES ARE REQUIRED TO SUPPORT AN ADDICT'S PERSONAL CONSUMPTION," HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

MOTION TO EFFECT TRANSFER OF MINES DIVISION FROM LD TO CESD PASSED

* * * * *

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) PASSED A RESOLUTION THAT IT APPROVES THE TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS FROM OFFICERS OF THE MINES DIVISION OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT (LD) TO OFFICERS OF THE MINES DIVISION OF THE CIVIL ENGINEERING SERVICES DEPARTMENT (CESD).

MOVING A MOTION TO EFFECT THE TRANSFER OF STATUTORY POWERS UNDER SECTION 12(1) OF THE DANGEROUS GOODS ORDINANCE, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON K.Y. YEUNG, SAID THE MINES DIVISION OF THE LD AND THE GEOTECHNICAL CONTROL OFFICE OF THE CESD HAD A CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP.

THEY WORKED CLOSELY IN THE REGULATION OF QUARRY OPERATIONS, THE EXTRACTION OF QUARRY PRODUCTS AND THE USE OF EXPLOSIVES IN QUARRYING, SITE FORMATION AND OTHER CIVIL ENGINEERING WORKS.

"A REVIEW IN 1989 CONCLUDED THAT THE MINES DIVISION SHOULD BE BROUGHT UNDER THE GEOTECHNICAL CONTROL OFFICE OF THE CESD.

"THIS WOULD IMPROVE THE CO-ORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES, ALLOW BETTER USE OF RESOURCES AND RENDER MORE EFFICIENT THE DELIVERY OF RELATED SERVICES," HE SAID.

AS A RESULT, MR YEUNG SAID THE MINES DIVISION WAS ADMINISTRATIVELY PLACED UNDER THE GEOTECHNICAL CONTROL OFFICE AS FROM APRIL 1 LAST YEAR.

/HE ADDED .....

HE ADDED THAT REFERENCES TO THE MINES DIVISION IN THE MINES (SAFETY) REGULATIONS AND THE DANGEROUS GOODS (GENERAL) REGULATIONS WOULD ALSO NEED TO BE AMENDED FROM THE MINES DIVISION OF THE LD TO THE MINES DIVISION OF THE CESD.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE TRANSFER OF STATUTORY POWERS WOULD TAKE PLACE ON MARCH 1 THIS YEAR.

"ON THAT DAY, THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL ENGINEERING SERVICES AND THE PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEER WILL BE APPOINTED AS THE COMMISSIONER OF MINES AND THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF MINES RESPECTIVELY.

"ON THE SAME DAY, THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR WILL ALSO TRANSFER HIS POWERS UNDER THE QUARRIES (SAFETY) REGULATIONS TO THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL ENGINEERING SERVICES AND HIS STAFF, BY WAY OF A DELEGATION UNDER THE INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES ORDINANCE," MR YEUNG SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

SALE OF PUBLIC RENTAL FLATS INVOLVES 'NEW LAND'

* * * * * *

THE LAND TO BE INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSALS BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY ON SELLING SELECTED PUBLIC RENTAL FLATS TO SITTING TENANTS WOULD BE CONSIDERED "NEW LAND" IN THE SENSE OF ANNEX III TO THE JOINT DECLARATION.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, THE HON GRAHAM BARNES, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TAI CHI WAH.

HE SAID THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HAD YET TO SUBMIT FORMAL PROPOSALS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

"IF THE SCHEME DOES PROCEED ON THE BASIS OF THE PUBLISHED PROPOSALS THE LAND ON WHICH THE CONCERNED HOUSING BLOCKS NOW STAND WILL BE 'NEW LAND' IN THE SENSE OF ANNEX III TO THE JOINT DECLARATION," MR BARNES SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE LAND WOULD ALSO HAVE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE ANNUAL LAND DISPOSAL PROGRAMME WHICH DID, OF COURSE, AND REQUIRED REFERENCE TO THE SINO-BRITISH LAND COMMISSION.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/6 .....

THREE APPROACHES IDENTIFIED TO TACKLE UNATTENDED CHILDREN PROBLEM

* * * * *

THREE POSSIBLE APPROACHES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM OF PARENTS LEAVING YOUNG CHILDREN UNATTENDED AT HOME, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON MICHAEL CARTLAND, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG, MR CARTLAND SAID THE APPROACHES WERE LEGISLATION, PUBLIC EDUCATION AND THE PROVISION OF CHILD CARE FACILITIES AND SUPPORT SERVICES.

"ACTION MAY BE CONTEMPLATED UNDER EXISTING LEGISLATION.

"PROSECUTION FOR WILFUL NEGLECT MAY BE TAKEN UNDER THE OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSONS ORDINANCE (CAP. 212) IN THE CASE OF CHILDREN LEFT UNATTENDED AT HOME IF THE ACT IS LIKELY TO CAUSE UNNECESSARY SUFFERING OR INJURY TO HEALTH," HE SAID.

THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND JUVENILES ORDINANCE (CAP. 213) ALSO PROVIDED FOR THE CARE OR PROTECTION OF YOUNG CHILDREN IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, HE SAID.

"WHETHER OR NOT LEGISLATION MAKING IT A SPECIFIC OFFENCE TO LEAVE YOUNG CHILDREN UNATTENDED ON ANY OCCASION SHOULD ALSO BE INTRODUCED IS PRESENTLY BEING RE-EXAMINED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE," HE ADDED.

MR CARTLAND SAID PUBLICITY TO SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF HOME SAFETY AND TO WARN OF THE DANGERS OF LEAVING YOUNG CHILDREN UNATTENDED AT HOME WAS UNDERTAKEN THROUGH TELEVISION, RADIO, NEWSPAPERS, POSTERS AND PAMPHLETS.

HE NOTED THAT FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES WERE PROVIDED TO FOCUS ON PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDING THAT OF ARRANGING FOR PROPER SUPERVISION OF THEIR CHILDREN.

HOME SAFETY PROGRAMMES WERE ALSO ORGANISED TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC, INCLUDING PARENTS, ON THE DANGERS OF LEAVING CHILDREN UNATTENDED AT HOME, HE ADDED.

"THESE EFFORTS WILL CONTINUE AND WILL BE STRENGTHENED," HE SAID.

MR CARTLAND SAID FOR FAMILIES WHO FACED DIFFICULTIES IN CARING, AT ALL TIMES, FOR THEIR CHILDREN A WIDE RANGE OF SUPPORT FACILITIES WERE PROVIDED AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE EXPANDED.

"FAMILY MAY MAKE USE OF DAY NURSERIES AND CRECHES, AND THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS MAY RECEIVE HELP UNDER THE FEE ASSISTANCE SCHEME.

"A NUMBER OF NURSERIES, UNDER THE EXPERIMENTAL OCCASIONAL CHILD CARE SCHEME, OFFER FLEXIBLE FULL DAY OR HALF DAY CARE FOR CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS HAVE AN URGENT OR SUDDEN NEED TO BE AWAY FROM HOME," HE SAID.

/ADDITIONALLY, HOME .....

ADDITIONALLY, HOME HELP AND FAMILY AIDE SERVICES WERE AVAILABLE TO FAMILIES IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, HE ADDED.

"WE WILL ALSO CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE VOLUNTARY MUTUAL-HELP PROGRAMMES WHEREBY NEIGHBOURS LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER'S CHILDREN ON A TEMPORARY BASIS," HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

DRAFTING OF AMENDMENTS TO MULTI-STOREY BUILDING (OWNER'S INCORPORATION) ORDINANCE IN FINAL STAGE

* * * * * *

DRAFTING OF THE NECESSARY AMENDMENTS TO THE MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS (OWNERS INCORPORATION) ORDINANCE IS NOW IN ITS FINAL STAGE AND AN AMENDMENT BILL WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION VERY SOON, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON PETER TSAO, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LEUNG WAI-TUNG, MR TSAO SAID CERTAIN CLAUSES IN THE AMENDMENT BILL WOULD BE CONTROVERSIAL, PARTICULARLY AS THEY WOULD APPLY TO EXISTING DEEDS OF MUTUAL COVENANT (DMC).

"THIS WAS REFLECTED IN SOME HIGHLY DIVIDED COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY TO MAY 1989 ON THOSE PROPOSED CHANGES.

"IN VIEW OF THIS, IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE THAT FURTHER PUBLIC CONSULTATION BE UNDERTAKEN ON THE CONTENTS OF THE LEGISLATION BEFORE IT IS PUT BEFORE THIS COUNCIL," MR TSAO SAID.

HE ADDED THAT SUBJECT TO THE ADVICE OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, THE AMENDMENT BILL WOULD THEREFORE BE PUBLISHED IN THE FORM OF A WHITE BILL FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION AND TO PROVIDE ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO THE AFFECTED PARTIES TO GIVE THEIR COMMENTS.

MR TSAO SAID A MAJOR PART OF THE EXERCISE TO STREAMLINE THE LEGISLATION ON PRIVATE BUILDING MANAGEMENT WAS TO ENACT A CODE OF CLAUSES TO REDRESS CERTAIN UNFAIRNESS IN DMC'S.

"THE INTENTION IS TO MAKE RETROSPECTIVE AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING DMC'S.

"IT WOULD BE PROVIDED THAT TO THE EXTENT THAT EXISTING DMC PROVISIONS CONTRAVENE THE CODE, THEY WOULD BE SUPERSEDED, AND THAT TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY OMIT OBLIGATIONS INCLUDED IN THE CODE, THEY WOULD BE SUPPLEMENTED ACCORDINGLY," HE ADDED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

NO PLAN TO BAN TOBACCO ADS ALTOGETHER

* * * * *

THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO PLAN, FOR THE TIME BEING, TO BAN ALL TOBACCO ADVERTISING EVENTUALLY.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON MICHAEL CARTLAND, SAID THIS WHEN REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON JIMMY MCGREGOR IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"IT HAS BEEN GOVERNMENT'S POLICY SINCE 1975 TO DISCOURAGE SMOKING, TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC (PARTICULARLY THE YOUNG) ON THE HEALTH HAZARDS OF SMOKING AND TO REDUCE THE INFLUENCE OF TOBACCO PROMOTION AS FAR AS POSSIBLE," MR CARTLAND SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS A LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT THAT A PRESCRIBED HEALTH WARNING SHOULD BE PROPERLY DISPLAYED IN ALL CIGARETTE ADVERTISEMENTS.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALSO INTRODUCED MEASURES PROGRESSIVELY TO REDUCE THE SCOPE FOR CIGARETTE ADVERTISING, ESPECIALLY THOSE FORMS TO WHICH THE YOUNG WERE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE.

"ADVERTISING ON TELEVISION AND RADIO HAS BEEN BANNED SINCE DECEMBER 1, 1990. WE AIM TO IMPOSE A SIMILAR BAN IN CINEMAS BY DECEMBER 1991," THE SECRETARY SAID.

FURTHERMORE, THE GOVERNMENT HAD PROHIBITED, BY WAY OF LICENSING CONDITIONS, CIGARETTE ADVERTISEMENTS ON TAXI ROOFS, BUS STOP SHELTERS, HULLS OF FERRY VESSELS, AND IN THE STAR FERRY CONCOURSES, HE ADDED.

"WE WILL BE TAKING EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW LICENSING CONDITIONS TO EXTEND SUCH PROHIBITIONS," MR CARTLAND SAID.

HE STRESSED THAT THE APPROACH HAD BEEN, AND WOULD REMAIN, ONE OF STEADILY REDUCING THE INFLUENCE OF CIGARETTE PROMOTION.

THE MEASURES ADOPTED WERE REGULARLY REVIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF COMMUNITY REACTIONS, HE ADDED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/9 .....

GOVT SPONSORS A SPEAKERS PROGRAMME TO PROMOTE HK OVERSEAS

* * * * * *

THE GOVERNMENT HAS FOR SEVERAL YEARS RUN A SPONSORED SPEAKERS PROGRAMME AS PART OF ITS OVERALL OVERSEAS PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORT, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID FORD, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HUI YIN-FAI, SIR DAVID SAID UNDER THE PROGRAMME, SENIOR OFFICIALS AND LEADING HONG KONG PERSONALITIES WERE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE TIME ON THEIR OVERSEAS TRIPS TO TALK TO INFLUENTIAL GROUPS ABOUT HONG KONG AND THE OPPORTUNITIES IT OFFERED.

THE PROGRAMME IS CO-ORDINATED BY THE INFORMATION WING OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE AND COMPLEMENTS THE EFFORTS OF THE MANY OTHER ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO PROMOTE HONG KONG'S INTERESTS OVERSEAS.

SIR DAVID SAID ON THE GOVERNMENT SIDE, HIS OFFICE KEPT TRACK OF SENIOR OFFICERS' TRAVEL PLANS - BOTH DUTY VISITS AND HOLIDAYS - AND ENDEAVOURED TO MATCH THESE WITH INVITATIONS AND SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE OVERSEAS OFFICES.

"MY OFFICE ALSO LIASES CLOSELY WITH THE OMELCO SECRETARIAT, THE TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, THE TOURIST ASSOCIATION AND THE VARIOUS CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE SO THAT WHEREVER POSSIBLE, PROMINENT PRIVATE SECTOR PERSONALITIES CAN BE FIELDED TO SPEAK ABROAD," HE ADDED.

SIR DAVID SAID THE NEED FOR A SPEAKER COULD COME ABOUT IN A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT WAYS.

"OUR OVERSEAS OFFICES CULTIVATE THE MORE INFLUENTIAL PLATFORMS. SOMETIMES ORGANISATIONS COME TO THEM, OR TO THEIR COUNTERPARTS AT THE HKTDC AND HKTA.

"NOT INFREQUENTLY THEY APPROACH MY OFFICE, OMELCO'S SECRETARIAT OR THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE DIRECT, EITHER FOR A PARTICULAR INDIVIDUAL TO ADDRESS THEM, OR FOR A PARTICULAR EXPERTISE," HE SAID, ADDING THAT IT WAS NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE TO FIELD THE SPEAKER OF THEIR CHOICE, BUT THE BEST WAS DONE TO PLEASE.

OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS THE GOVERNMENT HAD MADE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE MORE PEOPLE TO HELP IN PROMOTING HONG KONG OVERSEAS, SIR DAVID SAID, AND WITH SOME SUCCESS.

"OVER THE PERIOD ROUGHLY DOUBLING THE NUMBER OF PREVIOUS YEARS," HE SAID.

AS REGARDS THE STATUS OF SPEAKERS, SIR DAVID SAID IT DEPENDED LARGELY ON THE OCCASION.

"OFFICIALS SPEAKING AT MEETINGS OF INTERNATIONAL BODIES DO SO IN AN OFFICIAL CAPACITY.

/"OFTEN, NON-OFFICIALS .....

"OFTEN, NON-OFFICIALS HAVE A STANDING OF THEIR OWN IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS.

"GENERALLY SPEAKING, HOWEVER, THOSE WHO SPEAK AS PART OF THE GOVERNMENT SPONSORED SPEAKERS PROGRAMME HAVE NO OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE STATUS. THEY SPEAK IN THEIR OWN CAPACITY AND THEIR AUDIENCES ACCEPT THEM IN THIS CAPACITY," HE SAID.

"THAT BEING SAID, ALL FROM HONG KONG WHO SPEAK FOR HONG KONG ARE, IN THE BROADEST SENSE OF THE WORD, 'AMBASSADORS' FOR HONG KONG," HE ADDED.

SIR DAVID ALSO TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO THANK ALL OF THOSE WHO HAD GIVEN THEIR TIME AND THEIR ENERGY TO PROMOTING HONG KONG.

- - - - 0 - - - -

GOVT'S CAMPAIGN FOR ORGAN DONATIONS IN FULL SWING

* * * * *

THE GOVERNMENT IS STEPPING UP CAMPAIGNS TO GENERATE PUBLIC INTEREST AND TO ENCOURAGE MORE ORGAN DONATIONS, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON MICHAEL CARTLAND, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON POON CHI-FAI, MR CARTLAND SAID THESE MEASURES INCLUDED ANNOUNCEMENTS IN THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA, ARTICLES IN NEWSPAPERS AND MEDICAL JOURNALS, TALKS AND APPEARANCES ON TELEVISION AND RADIO AND TALKS TO COMMUNITY GROUPS.

THEY ALSO INCLUDED DISPLAY OF POSTERS AND DISTRIBUTION OF ORGAN DONATION CARDS AND EDUCATIONAL PAMPHLETS IN MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS AND PUBLIC PLACES, AND INSTALLATION OF A 24-HOUR TELEPHONE HOTLINE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S CENTRAL HEALTH EDUCATION UNIT.

HE SAID A GREATER SUPPLY OF KIDNEYS WOULD HELP TO SHORTEN THE WAITING TIME FOR TRANSPLANT.

IN 1988, THE SECRETARY SAID THE GOVERNMENT APPOINTED TWO TRANSPLANT CO-ORDINATORS WHOSE MISSION WAS TO APPROACH THE NEXT-OF-KIN OF POTENTIAL DONORS AND LIAISE BETWEEN RENAL CENTRES AND TRANSPLANT HOSPITALS.

"THESE CONCERTED EFFORTS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF DONATED CADAVERIC KIDNEYS FROM 12 IN 1986 TO 17 IN 1988 AND 32 IN 1990," HE SAID.

MR CARTLAND POINTED OUT THAT THE NUMBER OF KIDNEYS AVAILABLE FOR TRANSPLANT STILL FELL FAR SHORT OF DEMAND AND ADDITIONAL MEASURES WERE BEING CONSIDERED, WITH A VIEW TO PROGRESSING TOWARDS AN "OPTING-OUT" SCHEME FOR ORGAN DONATION IN THE LONG TERM.

/ON THE .....

ON THE NUMBER OF RENAL FAILURE PATIENTS WHO HAD UNDERGONE KIDNEY TRANSPLANT IN HONG KONG, HE SAID THEY WERE 59 FOR 1988, 51 FOR 1989 AND 57 FOR 1990.

THEY CONSTITUTED ABOUT 10 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF LOCAL PATIENTS CONSIDERED TO BE SUITABLE FOR THIS OPERATION, MR CARTLAND ADDED.

"THE AVERAGE WAITING TIME FOR PATIENTS WHO HAD TRANSPLANTATION FROM CADAVERIC KIDNEYS WAS 3.8 YEARS.

"FOR PATIENTS WHO HAD RECEIVED KIDNEYS FROM LIVING-RELATED DONORS, THE AVERAGE WAITING TIME WAS 1.4 YEARS," HE SAID.

ON THE QUESTION OF FOLLOW-UP MEDICAL CARE FOR PATIENTS WHO HAD UNDERGONE THEIR KIDNEYS TRANSPLANTATION IN CHINA, MR CARTLAND SAID THE GOVERNMENT ACCEPTED THE ADVICE OF THE CENTRAL RENAL COMMITTEE NOT TO ENCOURAGE PATIENTS TO SEEK TRANSPLANTATION OUTSIDE HONG KONG.

"THIS IS BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS AND RISKS TO THE HEALTH OF THE PATIENTS.

"PRIORITY TREATMENT IS GIVEN TO THOSE PATIENTS WHO RECEIVE TRANSPLANTS LOCALLY. PATIENTS AWAITING TRANSPLANT ARE FULLY APPRISED OF THIS," HE SAID.

MR CARTLAND SAID ANY PATIENT WHO HAD OBTAINED A TRANSPLANT OUTSIDE HONG KONG AND WHO SOUGHT FOLLOW-UP AT A PUBLIC HOSPITAL WOULD NOT BE DENIED TREATMENT.

"IT IS NOT THE POLICY TO 'PENALISE' SUCH PATIENTS.

"HOWEVER, THOSE THAT CAN AFFORD TO PAY FOR IT WILL BE REQUIRED TO DO SO," HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

COMPENSATION TERMS TO PNEUMOCONIOTIC PATIENTS IS UNDER REVIEW

* * * * * * *

THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR HAS APPOINTED AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING PARTY TO REVIEW THE EXISTING COMPENSATION ARRANGEMENTS TO PNEUMOCONIOTIC PATENTS, WITH A VIEW TO IDENTIFYING AND, IF NECESSARY, FORMULATING IMPROVEMENTS.

THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON K.Y. YEUNG SAID THIS WHEM REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"I EXPECT THAT THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR WILL BE REPORTING TO ME WITH PROPOSALS BY THE MIDDLE OF THIS YEAR," MR YEUNG SAID.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID THERE WAS ON THE FACE OF IT A CASE FOR THE 50 PER CENT SUPPLEMENT TO BE RE-CONSIDERED.

UNDER THE EXISTING ARRANGEMENT, MR YEUNG SAID THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR MADE AN OFFER OF COMPENSATION TO PNEUMOCONIOTIC PATENTS WHOSE DISABILITY HAS BEEN DETERMINED.

THIS OFFER ALLOWED THE PATIENT TO ELECT TO RECEIVE EITHER

* A ONCE-AND-FOR-ALL PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION BASED ON THE ASSESSED LOSS OF EARNING CAPACITY, WHICH MIGHT BE AND WAS USUALLY INCREASED BY UP TO 50 PER CENT TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE FACT THAT THE CONDITION OF PNEUMOCONIOTIC PATIENTS USUALLY DETERIORATED OVER TIME, OR

* A FIRST PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION ON THE INITIALLY ASSESSED

  LOSS OF EARNING CAPACITY, WHIHC WAS THEN INCREASED HAVING REGARD TO THE CONDITION OF THE PATIENT AS ASSESSED A SECOND TIME SEVEN TO EIGHT YEARS LATER.

HE SAID IT DEPENDED ON WHETHER A PATIENT WHO SETTLED FOR A ONCE-AND-FOR-ALL PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION PLUS THE 50 PER CENT SUPPLEMENT WOULD HAVE LOST OUT, HAD THEY ELECTED TO GO FOR AN INITIAL PAYMENT FOLLOWED SEVERAL YEARS LATER BY A SECOND ASSESSMENT.

TO DATE, ONLY 67 OUT OF 2,095 PATIENTS HAD OPTED FOR TWO ASSESSMENTS AND ONLY 18 HAD BEEN FULLY COMPENSATED.

AMONG THESE 18, EIGHT HAD CHANGED THEIR OCCUPATIONS, HE SAID.

THE AVERAGE DEGREE OF DISABILITY DETERMINED THE SECOND TIME AMOUNTED TO 22.5 PER CENT, WHICH COMPARED WITH AN AVERAGE DEGREE OF EXPECTED DISABILITY OF 16.7 PER CENT HAD THEY SETTLED FOR THE ONCE-AND-FOR-ALL PAYMENT PLUS THE SUPPLEMENT, HE ADDED.

AS REGARDS THE REMAINING 10 PATIENTS WHO CONTINUED WITH THEIR ORGINIAL OCCUPATIONS, THE AVERAGE DEGREE OF DISABILITY DETERMINED THE SECOND TIME AMOUNTED TO 44.5 PER CENT, WHICH COMPARED WITH AN AVERAGE DEGREE OF EXPECTED DISABILITY OF 18.5 PER CENT HAD THEY SETTLED FOR THE ONCE-AND-FOR-ALL PAYMENT PLUS THE SUPPLEMENT.

"ON THE BASIS OF THESE COMPARISONS, I AM BOUND TO SAY THAT HAVING TWO ASSESSMENTS RESULTS IN LARGER AMOUNTS OF COMPENSATION BEING PAID, AND TO THIS EXTEND PROVIDES A BETTER DEAL FOR PATIENTS INVOLVED.

"THAT SAID IT MUST BE EMPHASISED THAT PATIENTS WERE AND ARE FREE TO CHOOSE EITHER METHOD OF COMPUTING COMPENSATION," HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

NO DOUBLE STANDARD IN COMMUNITY FACILITY ALLOCATION
FOR PUBLIC HOUSING AND HOS ESTATES

* * * * * *

THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CRITERIA FOR ALLOCATING PREMISES FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN PUBLIC RENTAL ESTATES AND THOSE FOR HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME COURTS, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON MICHAEL CARTLAND, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ROSANNA TAM, MR CARTLAND SAID THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES REQUIRED IN BOTH TYPES OF HOUSING WOULD HAVE TO COMPLY WITH THE HONG KONG PLANNING STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THE GOVERNMENT TOOK INTO ACCOUNT A NUMBER OF FACTORS WHEN CONSIDERING APPLICATIONS FROM PRIVATE OR VOLUNTARY WELFARE ORGANISATIONS TO OPERATE COMMUNITY SERVICE FACILITIES IN PUBLIC RENTAL ESTATES AND HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME COURTS.

MR CARTLAND SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SEE IF THE APPLICANT ORGANISATION WAS NON-PROFIT-MAKING; IF IT PROVIDED A USEFUL SERVICE FOR THE DIRECT BENEFIT OF RESIDENTS; AND IF THE PROPOSED FACILITY WAS LIKELY TO BE OBJECTED TO BY RESIDENTS.

"TO QUALIFY FOR CONCESSIONARY RENT, THE APPLICATION ITSELF WILL ALSO NEED THE SUPPORT OF THE RELEVANT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT," HE SAID.

UNDER THE CURRENT DESIGN, MR CARTLAND SAID HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME DEVELOPMENTS WERE NORMALLY BUILT IN THE VICINITY OF OR ADJACENT TO PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES.

"AS A GENERAL PRACTICE, THE WELFARE OR COMMUNITY FACILITIES TO CATER FOR THE NEEDS OF BOTH PUBLIC HOUSING AND HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME RESIDENTS ARE ACCOMMODATED IN THE RENTAL PORTION.

"IN THE CASE OF ISOLATED HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME PROJECTS, ONLY BASIC FACILITIES SUCH AS NURSERIES AND CHILDREN AND YOUTH CENTRES ARE ALLOWED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE HONG KONG PLANNING STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES," HE SAID.

MR CARTLAND POINTED OUT THAT EXPERIENCE IN HOUSING AUTHORITY DEVELOPMENTS HAD SHOWN THAT SOME HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME OWNERS HAD RESISTED THE PROVISION OF CERTAIN TYPES OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES WITHIN THEIR BOUNDARY FOR FEAR OF INTRUSION BY OUTSIDERS AND THE POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE PROPERTY VALUE.

"THEREFORE, IN APPLYING THE CRITERIA FOR ALLOCATING PREMISES FOR WELFARE OR COMMUNITY SERVICE, PARTICULARLY FACILITIES WHICH MAY NOT BE WELL RECEIVED, CARE HAS TO BE TAKEN IN STRIKING A BALANCE BETWEEN COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RESIDENTS' REACTION," HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/14 .....

PART-TIME NURSE SCHEME IS WORKING WELL

* * * * *

THE PART-TIME NURSE SCHEME HAD CONTRIBUTED POSITIVELY TO RELIEVING THE PRESSURE ON FULL-TIME NURSES AND IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF PATIENT CARE IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND CLINICS, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON MICHAEL CARTLAND, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON RONALD CHOW MEI-TAK, MR CARTLAND SAID THIS CONCLUSION WAS BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF MONTHLY REVIEWS UNDERTAKEN BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND THE HOSPITAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT ON THE SCHEME IN TERMS OF BOTH OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND STANDARD OF SERVICE.

HE SAID THE PRESENT SCHEME WAS INTRODUCED IN MARCH 1990 AS ONE OF THE MEASURES TO HELP ALLEVIATE THE ACUTE SHORTAGE OF NURSES IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND CLINICS.

AT PRESENT, THERE WERE 231 PART-TIME FULLY-QUALIFIED REGISTERED NURSES EMPLOYED IN GOVERNMENT AND SUBVENTED HOSPITALS AND CLINICS.

THEY, TOGETHER, PROVIDED SOME 19,000 MAN-HOURS OF SERVICE EACH MONTH, WHICH WAS EQUIVALENT TO 105 FULL-TIME NURSES.

"THE SCHEME IS WORKING SATISFACTORILY," MR CARTLAND SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

WATER TO MA ON SHAN PURE AND CLEAN

* * * * *

THE WATER DELIVERED TO KAM HAY COURT IN MA ON SHAN IS PURE AND CLEAN AND POSES NO HEALTH RISK, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, THE HON GRAHAM BARNES, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LAM WAI-KEUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR BARNES SAID: "IN SEPTEMBER 1990, THE HOUSING ESTATE MANAGEMENT OF KAM HAY COURT IN MA ON SHAN, WHICH IS A HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME PROJECT, INFORMED WATER SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT THAT SOME FLAT OWNERS WERE COMPLAINING ABOUT YELLOW STAINED TAP WATER.

"TESTS SHOWED THAT THE WATER QUALITY DELIVERED TO THE PROPERTY WAS PURE AND CLEAR, THAT IS, THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH THE AREA SUPPLY. THE PROBLEM WAS DEFECTIVE INTERNAL WATER MAINS IN THE BUILDING WHICH RESULTED IN IRON RUST STAINING THE WATER.

HE SAID TESTS OF THE WATER COMING FROM THE TAPS SHOWED THAT THE WATER, ALTHOUGH UNSIGHTLY, POSED NO HEALTH RISK.

/MR BARNES .....

MR BARNES POINTED OUT THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PLUMBING WITHIN A BUILDING IS THAT OF THE REGISTERED CONSUMERS, NOT THE WATER SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT.

THE DEPARTMENT ADVISED THE HOUSING ESTATE MANAGEMENT TO ARRANGE FOR A LICENSED PLUMBER TO CARRY OUT THE NECESSARY INVESTIGATION AND TO TAKE NECESSARY REMEDIAL MEASURES.

"I UNDERSTAND THAT THE WATER PIPES FOR THE WORST AFFECTED FLATS HAVE NOW BEEN REPLACED, AND THE SITUATION HAS IMPROVED," HE ADDED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

FIVE BILLS PASSED IN LEGCO TODAY

* * * * *

FIVE BILLS AND ONE MOTION WERE PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY(WEDNESDAY).

THE FIVE BILLS WERE LANDS TRIBUNAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1990, SECURITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1990, PROTECTION OF INVESTORS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1990, COMMODITY EXCHANGES (PROHIBITION) (AMRENDMENT) BILL 1990 AND COMMODITIES TRADING (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL 1990.

MEANWHILE, A MOTION UNDER THE INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES ORDINANCE, MOVED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON K.Y. YEUNG, WAS ALSO PASSED.

TWO OTHER BILLS WERE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS.

THEY WERE DANGEROUS DRUGS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991 AND SOCIETIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991.

DEBATES ON THE BILLS WERE ADJOURNED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/16 .....

BORDER LIAISON MEETING IN ZHONGSHAN

* * * * *

AT THE INVITATION OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE GUANGDONG FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICE, MR HUANG QUN, A GROUP OF HONG KONG GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS LED BY THE POLITICAL ADVISER, MR WILLIAM EHRMAN, WILL VISIT ZHONGSHAN FROM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) FOR THE 11TH ANNUAL BORDER REVIEW.

THEY WILL RETURN ON SATURDAY (FEBRUARY 2).

THE BORDER LIAISON SYSTEM, ESTABLISHED IN 1981, PROVIDES FOR REGULAR CHANNELS OF EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE, IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT AND CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT AND THEIR GUANGDONG COUNTERPARTS.

ANNUAL REVIEWS ARE HELD ALTERNATELY IN HONG KONG AND GUANGDONG.

- - - - 0 - - - -

FRANCHISED BUS ROUTES TO BE TENDERED

* * * * *

THE WAY IN WHICH FRANCHISED BUS ROUTES ARE AWARDED TO OPERATORS WILL BE CHANGED TO ALLOW FOR COMPETITIVE TENDERING, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN ANNOUNCED TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

AT PRESENT, THE GOVERNMENT GRANTS FRANCHISED ROUTES THROUGH A FORWARD PLANNING PROGRAMME WHICH WOULD NORMALLY EARMARK A NEW ROUTE TO THE FRANCHISEE ALREADY ESTABLISHED IN THE AREA BEING SERVED.

UNDER THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL, THIS PRACTICE WILL CONTINUE BUT SOME NEW BUS ROUTES WILL BE RELEASED TO THE MARKET THROUGH OPEN TENDER.

THIS IS INTENDED TO PROMOTE QUALITY, EFFICIENCY, INNOVATION AND VARIETY IN PUBLIC BUS SERVICES THROUGH HEALTHY COMPETITION, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE SAID THE 1980'S SAW A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE TOTAL CAPACITY OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT CARRIERS. WITH IT CAME A SHIFT IN PUBLIC DEMAND FOR BETTER QUALITY AND VARIETY RATHER THAN QUANTITY OF BUS SERVICES.

"IF THE GROWING DEMAND FOR BETTER QUALITY SERVICES IS NOT SATISFIED, THE RESULTANT SWITCH OF SOME BUS PASSENGERS TO RAIL OR PRIVATE TRANSPORT MAY ADD TO THE STRAIN ON THE RAIL SYSTEM AND ROAD CONGESTION.

"AT THE SAME TIME, THE PUBLIC BUS INDUSTRY IS FACING INCREASING PRESSURE ON FARES, CAUSED BY A LEVELLING OFF IN RIDERSHIP AND RAPIDLY RISING OPERATING COSTS.

/"IF PRODUCTIVITY .....

"IF PRODUCTIVITY IS NOT IMPROVED TO MINIMISE COSTS, THE EXISTING FRANCHISED COMPANIES MAY HAVE INCREASING DIFFICULTIES IN GAINING PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE OF THE FUTURE FARE RISES NECESSARY FOR SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS," HE SAID.

"WE BELIEVE THAT THE KEY TO SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENTS IN PRODUCTIVITY AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE LIES IN HEALTHY COMPETITION FROM OUTSIDE, RATHER THAN TIGHTER GOVERNMENT CONTROL OVER THE DAILY MANAGEMENT OF THE FRANCHISED BUS COMPANIES," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

THE PROPOSED TENDERING OUT OF BUS ROUTES WILL INITIALLY BE GEARED TOWARDS PROMOTING HIGH QUALITY SERVICES FOR COMMUTERS WHO WOULD OTHERWISE USE TAXIS OR PRIVATE CARS.

"AS AN ATTRACTIVE ALTERNATIVE FOR SOME COMMUTERS, THEY COULD HELP ALLEVIATE ROAD CONGESTION, TO THE BENEFIT OF ALL ROAD-USERS.

"THOSE BUS PASSENGERS WILLING TO PAY MORE FOR BETTER SERVICES WILL BE GIVEN A WIDER CHOICE, AN OBJECTIVE STRESSED IN THE 1990 WHITE PAPER ON TRANSPORT POLICY," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

IN 1990, CITYBUS LIMITED APPLIED TO OPERATE, UNDER FRANCHISE, A BUS SERVICE BETWEEN CENTRAL AND MACDONNELL ROAD. THE FRANCHISED SERVICE SOUGHT BY CITYBUS WILL BE THE FIRST BUS ROUTE TO BE TENDERED OUT.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THIS BUS ROUTE IS EXPECTED TO BE OFFERED TO THE MARKET IN MAY THIS YEAR. THE TERMS OF FRANCHISE AND OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION WILL BE SPECIFIED IN THE TENDER INVITATIONS TO BE ISSUED IN DUE COURSE.

HE STRESSED THAT THE PRESENT POLICY OF REGULATING BUS SERVICES BY FRANCHISES WILL REMAIN GENERALLY UNCHANGED.

"THE OPERATING RIGHTS HELD BY INCUMBENT FRANCHISEES OVER EXISTING FRANCHISED ROUTES WILL NOT BE AFFECTED. CHEAPER MODES OF TRANSPORT WILL CONTINUE TO BE MAINTAINED FOR THOSE WHO PREFER SUCH SERVICES."

- - - - 0 - - - -

IMPORTANCE OF CAI TECHNOLOGY STRESSED

* * * * *

THE CONTROL, AUTOMATION AND INSTRUMENTATION (CAI) SYSTEM, A TECHNOLOGY APPLIED IN A WIDE RANGE OF GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES, HELPED OPTIMISE THE OPERATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES AND IMPROVE SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY, ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTOR OF ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES, MR MIAO CHI.

IN AN OPENING ADDRESS TO THE CAI SYMPOSIUM '91 ORGANISED BY THE HONG KONG INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERS, MR MIAO SAID THE TECHNOLOGY HAD PLAYED AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT ROLE IN ALL FIELDS ASSOCIATED WITH OUR LIVELIHOOD.

/ITS APPLICATION .....

ITS APPLICATION RANGES FROM THE MECHANISED LETTER SORTING SYSTEM IN THE GENERAL POST OFFICE TO THE CONTROL OF SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS.

"MORE RECENTLY, TO FACILITATE SAFE OPERATION OF ROUTE 5 AND TSEUNG KWAN O TUNNELS, WE HAVE INSTALLED IN BOTH TUNNELS CONTROL AND MONITORING SYSTEMS ON ELECTRONIC, ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT," MR MIAO SAID.

THESE INCLUDE THE USE OF EMBEDDED MICROPROCESSOR SENSING DEVICES TO MEASURE AND RECORD THE LEVEL OF CARBON MONOXIDE CONTENT, VISIBILITY LEVEL AND WIND VELOCITY INSIDE THE TUNNEL.

IN THE OPTIMISATION OF ENERGY MANAGEMENT, MR MIAO SAID BUILDING AUTOMATION SYSTEMS, WHICH HAD ENCOMPASSED MODERN COMPUTERISED INSTRUMENTATION AND CONTROL TECHNIQUE, WERE INCORPORATED AS A STANDARD REQUIREMENT IN MAJOR GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS SINCE THE 80'S.

HE ADDED THAT SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS WERE ANOTHER EXAMPLE IN WHICH SOPHISTICATED INSTRUMENTATION AND CONTROL SYSTEMS WERE USED.

THE SHA TIN SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT WAS INSTALLED WITH A REAL TIME COMPUTER SYSTEM FOR COLLECTING VALUABLE DATA VIA DIFFERENT TYPES OF SENSORS.

FROM THE DATA, STATISTICAL INFORMATION COULD BE DERIVED FOR EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE OF THE TREATMENT PROCESS.

SIMILARLY, THE NORTHWEST KOWLOON SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS, CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION, WILL ALSO BE EXTENSIVELY EQUIPPED WITH COMPUTERS FOR DATA ACQUISITION AND CONTROL OF THE PLANT PERFORMANCE.

"LOOKING AHEAD, THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAI, BOTH IN TECHNOLOGY AND IN THEORY, WILL NO DOUBT CONTINUE TO BRING TREMENDOUS BENEFITS TO MANKIND," MR MIAO SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

DB CANDIDATES' FORUMS IN SOUTHERN DISTRICT

* * * * * *

A SERIES OF DISTRICT BOARD CANDIDATES' FORUMS WILL BE HELD IN SOUTHERN DISTRICT IN THE COMING FORTNIGHT FOR RESIDENTS TO MEET THE CANDIDATES IN THEIR CONSTITUENCY AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR PLATFORMS.

ORGANISED BY THE DISTRICT OFFICE, THE FORUMS WILL ALSO PROVIDE CANDIDATES A CHANCE TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE EXPECTATIONS OF ELECTORS.

"AT EACH FORUM, CANDIDATES WILL INTRODUCE THEMSELVES AND THEIR PLATFORMS WHILE PARTICIPANTS WILL BE FREE TO ASK THEM QUESTIONS," A DISTRICT OFFICE SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

/THE FORUMS .....

THE FORUMS WILL TAKE PLACE FROM FEBRUARY 1 TO 11, AND THE DETAILS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

CONSTITUENCY	DATE	TIME	VENUE
POK FU LAM	FEBRUARY 1	8 PM	YU CHUN KEUNG MEMORIAL COLLEGE NO. 2, CHI FU CLOSE
TIN WAN AND SHEK PAI WAN	FEBRUARY 2	3 PM	PUI TAK CANOSSIAN COLLEGE, PEEL RISE, ABERDEEN
AP LEI CHAU NORTH	FEBRUARY 4	8 PM	AP LEI CHAU COMMUNITY HALL, AP LEI CHAU ESTATE
LEI TUNG	FEBRUARY 5	8 PM	LEI TUNG COMMUNITY HALL, LEI TUNG ESTATE
ABERDEEN AND HARBOUR	FEBRUARY 9	3 PM	PUI TAK CANOSSIAN COLLEGE, PEEL RISE, ABERDEEN
WAH FU	FEBRUARY 9	8 PM	WAH FU COMMUNITY HALL, WAH FU ESTATE
STANLEY, SHEK O AND BAYS	FEBRUARY 11	8 PM	ST STEPHEN'S COLLEGE, STANLEY

"NO FORUM WILL BE HELD IN THE SINGLE-SEAT WONG CHUK HANG CONSTITUENCY WHERE THE ONLY CANDIDATE HAS BEEN ELECTED IPSO FACTO," THE DISTRICT OFFICE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO COVER THE DB CANDIDATES' FORUMS IN SOUTHERN DISTRICT.

- - - - 0 - - - -

ELECTION FORUM IN YAU TSIM
* * * * *

THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT OFFICE WILL HOLD AN ELECTION FORUM ON SATURDAY (FEBRUARY 2) FOR CANDIDATES CONTESTING THE DISTRICT BOARD SEAT FOR THE YAU MA TEI EAST CONSTITUENCY.

IT WILL BEGIN AT 4.30 PM IN THE HALL OF THE HENRY G. LEONG COMMUNITY CENTRE, 60 PUBLIC SQUARE STREET.

/A SPOKESMAN .....

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DISTRICT OFFICE TODAY (WEDNESDAY) URGED RESIDENTS TO ATTEND THE FORUM WHICH IS ORGANISED TO HELP ENHANCE THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE CANDIDATES BEFORE THEY CAST THEIR VOTES ON MARCH 3.

THE CANDIDATES -- MR HO TAK-WAH, MS WOO YAN-YUE AND MR YU HON-BIU -- WILL PRESENT THEIR PLATFORMS AND ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR.

- - - - - - - -

ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE YAU MA TEI EAST CONSTITUENCY CANDIDATES' FORUM ON SATURDAY (FEBRUARY 2) IN THE HALL OF HENRY G. LEONG COMMUNITY CENTRE, 60 PUBLIC SQUARE STREET. THE FORUM WILL BEGIN AT 4.30 PM.

- - - - 0 - - - -

GOVT CONCERNED ABOUT VILLAGERS' WELFARE

* * * * *

WHILE CONTINUING ITS EFFORTS TO DEVELOP NEW TOWNS, THE GOVERNMENT IS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE WELFARE OF RESIDENTS LIVING IN REMOTE VILLAGES, THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT OFFICER, MR FREDERICK TONG, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF A NEW PIER AT LEUNG SHUEN WAN, MR TONG SAID THE DISTRICT OFFICE ALLOCATED FUNDS TO CARRY OUT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS AT REMOTE VILLAGE, IN ORDER TO IMPROVE RESIDENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE.

"THE NEW PIER WILL PROVIDE A SAFER AND MORE CONVENIENT BOARDING PLACE FOR THE RESIDENTS, WHO HAVE BEEN RELYING ON SMALL BOATS FOR THEIR TRANSPORTATION TO OTHER AREAS," HE SAID.

MR TONG SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE LIVING ENVIRONMENT WOULD NOT BE SUCCESSFUL WITHOUT THE ACTIVE SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION OF THE RESIDENTS, AND URGED THEM TO SUPPORT THE DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS BY CASTING THEIR VOTES ON MARCH 3.

"I HOPE ALL OF YOU WILL EXERCISE YOUR CIVIC RIGHTS ON ELECTION DAY TO SELECT YOUR REPRESENTATIVE TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY," MR TONG SAID.

THE NEW PIER, CONSTRUCTED AT A COST OF $490,000, IS LOCATED AT THE SOUTHERN TIP OF LEUNG SHUEN WAN.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/21 .....

DTC REGISTRATION REVOKED

* * * * *

THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING ANNOUNCED THAT THE REGISTRATION OF BBL FINANCE LIMITED AS A DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY HAS BEEN REVOKED AS AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) AT ITS OWN REQUEST UNDER SECTION 31(2) OF THE BANKING ORDINANCE.

- - - - 0 - - - -

ACTION ON ILLEGAL STRUCTURES IN QUARRY BAY

* * * * *

THE BUILDING AUTHORITY IS SEEKING TO CLOSE CERTAIN UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS IN TAIKOO SHING, QUARRY BAY, ON HONG KONG ISLAND, SO THAT THEY CAN BE DEMOLISHED WITHOUT DANGER TO THE OCCUPIERS OR THE PUBLIC.

THE STRUCTURES ARE LOCATED ON THE ROOF OVER FLAT H, 28TH FLOOR, AND THE ADJACENT PENTHOUSE OF MAPLE MANSION AND ON THE ROOF OVER FLAT G, 30TH FLOOR AND THE ADJACENT PENTHOUSE OF BANYAN MANSION.

NOTICES OF INTENTION TO APPLY FOR CLOSURE ORDERS FROM THE HONG KONG DISTRICT COURT ON MARCH 1 WERE POSTED ON THE STRUCTURES TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

UNDER THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE, A CLOSURE ORDER IS REQUIRED BEFORE DEMOLITION CAN BE CARRIED OUT.

IT IS EXPECTED THAT DEMOLITION WORK WILL START ONCE THE CLOSURE ORDERS ARE GRANTED.

- - - - 0 - - - -