



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FOR NEW AND MODERN PLANNING REGIME

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL ENSURE THAT THE NEW PLANNING LEGISLATION WOULD STRIKE A BALANCE AND PUT IN PLACE A NEW AND MODERN PLANNING REGIME WHICH WILL GUIDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG IN THE YEARS AHEAD, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR GRAHAM BARNES, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE MOTION DEBATE ON THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE, MR BARNES SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD FINALISE PROPOSALS IN THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT AND TO PREPARE A NEW PLANNING BILL FOR INTRODUCTION INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN ABOUT A YEAR'S TIME.

"THE ADMINISTRATION IS NOW STUDYING THE 65 SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED. VIEWS OF MEMBERS EXPRESSED IN THE DEBATE WILL CERTAINLY BE TAKEN INTO CAREFUL CONSIDERATION," HE SAID.

MR BARNES SAID THE PROPOSED PLANNING CERTIFICATE SYSTEM WAS THE MOST MISUNDERSTOOD PART OF THE DOCUMENT AND HAD BEEN SEEN AS CREATING UNCERTAINTY AND ADDITIONAL WORK TO DEVELOPERS, CAUSING DELAY TO THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.

"THE BASIC PURPOSE OF THE PLANNING CERTIFICATE SYSTEM IS TO ENABLE THE PLANNING AUTHORITY TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE PLANNING ASPECTS OF BUILDING WORKS RATHER THAN INDIRECTLY THROUGH THE BUILDING ORDINANCE AS AT PRESENT.

"THE PLANNING CERTIFICATE SIMPLY FACILITATES REDISTRIBUTION OF FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES BETWEEN THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE AND THE PLANNING ORDINANCE TO BRING ABOUT CLEARER LEGISLATIVE PURPOSE, AUTHORITY AND PROCEDURES.

"IT WILL NOT BE USED TO INTRODUCE ADDITIONAL CONTROLS OR IMPOSE EXTRA REQUIREMENTS OVER AND ABOVE THE EXISTING SYSTEM, NOR WOULD IT BRING ABOUT ANY DELAY TO THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS," HE SAID.

MR BARNES SAID THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSED IN THE CONSULATIVE DOCUMENT TO STREAMLINE THE PROCEDURES FOR HEARING OBJECTIONS AND TO IMPOSE STATUTORY TIME LIMITS ON THE VARIOUS STAGES OF THE PLAN-MAKING PROCESS.

"WE ARE NOW CONSIDERING THIS ISSUE FURTHER TO SEE IF ANY FURTHER SAFEGUARDS AGAINST THIS PRACTICE COULD BE MADE TO REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY OF ABUSE," HE SAID.

MR BARNES SAID SOME CONCERN HAD BEEN EXPRESSED ON THE METHOD OF DETERMINING THE AMORTISATION PERIOD AND THE NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE RELOCATION STRATEGY FOR THE DISPLACED NON-CONFIRMING USES.

/"THE ADMINISTRATION

"THE ADMINISTRATION APPRECIATES THESE CONCERNS AND IS FURTHER STUDYING THE MATTER.

"IN VIEW OF ITS COMPENSATION IMPLICATIONS, THE GENERAL CONCEPT OF AMORTISING UNDERSIRABLE NON-CONFIRMING USES IS ALSO BEING CLOSELY EXAMINED BY THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON COMPENSATION AND BETTERMENT," HE SAID.

ON THE NEED FOR AN ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY OF THE PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN THE DOCUMENT, MR BARNES EXPRESSED DOUBT IF IT IS POSSIBLE TO CARRY OUT A MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED CHANGES IN STATUTORY PLANNING PROCEDURES, WHICH BY THEMSELVES WOULD NOT CONFER OR RESTRICT SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS.

"IT WOULD ONLY BE WHEN STATUTORY PLANS WERE DRAWN UP FOR PARTICULAR DISTRICTS THAT THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ANY PLANNING OR DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PROPOSALS COULD BE ASSESSED READILY AND REALISTICALLY," HE SAID.

MR BARNES SAID THE ISSUE OF COMPENSATION AND BETTERMENT IS STILL BEING CLOSELY EXAMINED BY THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE AND A REPORT WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNOR AROUND MID-MARCH.

ON THE EXPERTISE OF THE PLANNING BOARD TO CONSIDER THE DESIGN ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS, MR BARNES SAID THE GOVERNMENT DID ENSURE THAT THERE IS A WIDE SPECTRUM OF OPINION IN THE BOARD WITH ARCHITECTS BEING CONSISTENTLY APPOINTED TO ITS MEMBERSHIP.

"WHEREVER THE BOARD INTENDS TO DESIGNATE AN AREA AS SPECIAL DESIGN AREA, IT WILL PUBLISH ITS INTENTIONS BOTH IN THE INITIAL PLANNING STUDY AND IN THE DRAFT STATUTORY OUTLINE ZONING PLAN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT AND OBJECTIONS.

"IT CAN ALSO APPOINT A SUB-COMMITTEE TO HELP IT MAKE UP ITS COLLECTIVE MIND ON DESIGN ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS," HE SAID.

MR BARNES POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS ALREADY THE PRACTICE TO CONSULT WITH VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS DISTRICT BOARDS, THE HEUNG YEE KUK AND OTHER INTERESTED BODIES DURING THE COURSE OF PREPARING THESE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES.

"BUT THE POINT IS THAT THE FORM OF CONSULTATION ON POLICY SHOULD BE TAILORED TO THE TYPE OF PROPOSALS BEING MADE AND A STATUTORY SYSTEM WILL NEED RATHER THAN HELP THESE ENDS," HE SAID.

FUNDING OF NEW TOWN INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT EXPLAINED

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT CHANGED ITS POLICY OF FINANCING INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEW TOWNS, THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY, MR YEUNG KAI-YIN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON FREDERICK FUNG KIN-KEE, MR YEUNG SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD RECENTLY PUT TO THE HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPOSALS THAT IT SHOULD UNDERTAKE A SMALL NUMBER OF SPECIFIC, HOUSING-RELATED INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECTS.

THIS IS BECAUSE THE AUTHORITY IS PROGRAMMING ITS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THESE AREAS FOR EARLIER COMPLETION THAN GOVERNMENT IS PROGRAMMING THE NECESSARY SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE, HE EXPLAINED.

"BY INVITING THE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO UNDERTAKE THESE WORKS, WE ARE OFFERING IT THE OPPORTUNITY TO CO-ORDINATE ALL THE HOUSING AND HOUSING-RELATED INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREAS IN QUESTION.

"IN THIS WAY, THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WILL BE ABLE TO ENSURE THAT IT IS ABLE TO PROVIDE NOT ONLY HOUSING, BUT A PROPER COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE WITHIN ITS PROGRAMMED TIMEFRAMES - SOMETHING THAT CANNOT BE ASSURED WITH GOVERNMENT'S CURRENT TIMEFRAMES AND AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES.

"IT IS ENTIRELY UP TO THE AUTHORITY TO DECIDE WHETHER IT WISHES TO ACCEPT THIS INVITATION. THE AUTHORITY IS ALREADY AWARE OF THAT, IF IT DOES SO, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO FUND THIS DEVELOPMENT FROM ITS OWN RESOURCES," HE SAID.

MR YEUNG ADDED THAT THE FUNDING OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS WILL NOT ADD TO THE FINANCIAL BURDEN OF PUBLIC RENTAL HOUSING TENANTS.

THESE TENANTS ENJOY HEAVILY-SUBSIDISED HOUSING, AND REGARDLESS OF THE AUTHORITY'S DECISION, WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO.

"SIMILARLY, THE PRICES OF HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME FLATS ARE FIXED WITH THE CRITERION OF AFFORDABILITY BEING ONE OF THE FACTORS TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION.

"WE DO NOT ENVISAGE ANY CHANGE IN THE METHOD OF CALCULATING AFFORDABILITY LEVELS, MR YEUNG SAID.

IF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WERE TO BEGIN OBTAINING SURPLUSES IN EXCESS OF WHAT IT REQUIRES TO SUPPORT IMMEDIATE NEEDS AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT WITHIN EXISTING POLICIES, THEN IT WOULD BE IN THE INTERESTS OF CO-ORDINATED DEVELOPMENT THAT THESE SURPLUSES SHOULD BE USED TO FUND SOCIAL AND ENGINEERING INFRASTRUCTURE RELATED TO HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, HE EXPLAINED.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IS EMPOWERED TO REQUIRE THESE SURPLUSES TO BE RETURNED TO GENERAL REVENUE, BUT THE GOVERNMENT IS AS KEEN AS THE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO SEE EXCESS FUNDS USED TO ENHANCE THE PROVISION OF HOUSING-RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE WHEN IT IS APPROPRIATE TO DO SO, HE ADDED.

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POLICE MAY FIRE AT SMUGGLERS

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POLICE OFFICERS FIRED AT SMUGGLERS OR SMUGGLERS' BOATS ON SIX OCCASIONS IN 1990 AND LAST YEAR, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PETER WONG, MR ASPREY SAID OFFICERS OF THE MARINE POLICE ARE SUBJECT TO POLICE GENERAL ORDERS GOVERNING THE USE OF FIREARMS.

HE SAID THESE ORDERS PROVIDED THAT A POLICE OFFICER MAY DISCHARGE A FIREARM EITHER TO PROTECT HIMSELF OR ANOTHER PERSON FROM DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY, OR TO EFFECT THE ARREST OF ANY PERSON TO WHOM HE HAD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT HE HAD COMMITTED A SERIOUS AND VIOLENT CRIME, PROVIDED THAT NO LESSER DEGREE OF FORCE COULD ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTS.

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NO BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH CHINA
ON EXCHANGE OF CRIME INFORMATION

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HONG KONG HAS NO FORMAL BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH CHINA GOVERNING THE EXCHANGE OF CRIME INFORMATION AND PERSONAL DATA ON SUSPECTED CRIMINALS AND PRISONERS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON JAMES TO IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

MR ASPREY SAID BOTH HONG KONG AND CHINA ARE MEMBERS OF INTERPOL AND INFORMATION PASSES BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES THROUGH THIS CHANNEL.

HOWEVER, HE POINTED OUT THAT UNDER THE INTERPOL ARRANGEMENT THERE IS NO OBLIGATION ON MEMBERS TO COMPLY WITH REQUESTS RECEIVED FROM OTHERS.

"WE ARE CONCERNED TO ENSURE THAT MAINLAND RESIDENTS WHO COMMIT SERIOUS CRIMES IN HONG KONG DO NOT EVADE JUSTICE SIMPLY BY RETURNING TO THE MAINLAND.

"SO AS A GENERAL RULE, WE ARE PREPARED TO SUPPLY INFORMATION WHEN REQUESTED BY THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES IN CASES WHERE THEY HAVE ARRESTED A MAINLAND RESIDENT FOR SERIOUS OFFENCES COMMITTED IN HONG KONG; SUCH AS MURDER OR ARMED ROBBERY," HE SAID.

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HE NOTED THAT THE PERSONS CONCERNED ARE NOT NOTIFIED BY THE HONG KONG AUTHORITIES, BUT IN PROVIDING INFORMATION, CARE IS TAKEN TO ENSURE THAT IT IS DONE IN ACCORDANCE WITH HONG KONG LAWS, INCLUDING THE BILL OF RIGHTS.

THE TYPES OF INFORMATION EXCHANGED THROUGH INTERPOL INCLUDE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE SUCH AS MEDICAL REPORTS, PHYSICAL EVIDENCE SUCH AS WEAPONS, AND STATEMENTS BY CONSENTING WITNESSES.

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GOVT DOES ALL IT CAN TO PROTECT HK'S TRADE INTERESTS

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THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAS IMPRESSED UPON THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT HONG KONG IS NOT MADE THE INNOCENT VICTIM OF THEIR DIFFERENCES WITH CHINA IN RESPECT OF SPECIAL 301, WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN A DEADLINE OF JANUARY 16 BY THE U.S. AUTHORITIES.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR T.H. CHAU TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON NGAI SHIU-KIT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

MR CHAU SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD ANALYSED THE PRELIMINARY U.S. LIST OF PRODUCTS FOR RETALIATION AND DISSEMINATED ITS ANALYSIS BOTH TO THOSE IN HONG KONG HAVING AN INTEREST AND TO THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION.

"WE HAVE ENCOURAGED OUR PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES TO MAKE THEIR VIEWS KNOWN TO THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION, AND I AM PLEASED TO SAY THAT MANY DID SO WITH THEIR CUSTOMARY VIGOUR AND FORTHRIGHTNESS IN THE PUBLIC HEARINGS HELD IN WASHINGTON LAST WEEK," MR CHAU SAID.

ON SPECIAL 301, MR CHAU POINTED OUT THAT THE POTENTIAL DANGER TO HONG KONG'S ECONOMY FROM U.S. RETALIATION WAS SIGNIFICANT BUT MANAGEABLE IN ITSELF.

"THE REAL DANGER LIES IN A DOWNWARD SPIRAL OF RETALIATORY ACTIONS FROM BOTH SIDES.

"WE HAVE THEREFORE ASKED BOTH SIDES TO TAKE OUR INTERESTS FULLY INTO ACCOUNT IN DECIDING ON THEIR NEXT COURSE OF ACTION.

"BOTH AMBASSADOR CARLA HILLS, THE U.S. TRADE REPRESENTATIVE, AND MADAM WU YI, CHINA'S CHIEF NEGOTIATOR ON SPECIAL 301, HAVE INDICATED IN PUBLIC THAT HONG KONG'S INTERESTS WOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT," MR CHAU SAID.

MR CHAU POINTED OUT THAT IN A SITUATION WHERE HONG KONG'S TWO MAJOR TRADING PARTNERS WERE ENGAGED IN BILATERAL TRADE DISPUTES WHICH COULD LEAD TO ACTIONS AFFECTING HONG KONG'S INTERESTS, A DEGREE OF UNCERTAINTY WAS INEVITABLE.

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"AS AN INTERESTED THIRD PARTY WE FIND OURSELVES IN A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT POSITION : WE HAVE A GREAT DEAL AT STAKE BUT NO ROLE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES.

"IN SPITE OF THIS, WE HAVE CONVEYED TO THE TWO SIDES OUR CONCERNS, OUR HOPE THAT THEY WILL BE ABLE TO REACH AN AGREEMENT, AND THE NEED TO AVOID HARM TO HONG KONG," MR CHAU SAID.

ON SECTION 301, MR CHAU SAID, THE UNCERTAINTY IS OF A LONGER TERM NATURE BECAUSE THE INVESTIGATION AND BILATERAL TALKS BETWEEN CHINA AND THE U.S. COULD CONTINUE UNTIL OCTOBER THIS YEAR.

"WE HAVE NO MEANS OF ESTIMATING THE POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECTS AT THIS STAGE BUT ARE MONITORING THE SITUATION CLOSELY," HE SAID.

MR CHAU TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WAS FULLY AWARE OF BOTH THE DIFFICULTIES CAUSED BY THE UNCERTAINTY AND THE POTENTIAL FOR DAMAGE TO HONG KONG'S INTERESTS.

HE ASSURED THE COUNCIL THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN DOING EVERYTHING IT COULD TO MINIMISE THE ADVERSE EFFECTS AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO IN FUTURE.

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ALL VIETNAMESE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WILL BE REPATRIATED
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ALL VIETNAMESE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS, INCLUDING FUGITIVE OFFENDERS FROM VIETNAM, SHOULD BE REPATRIATED TO VIETNAM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PEGGY LAM, MR ASPREY POINTED OUT THAT UNDER THE STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING SIGNED WITH VIETNAM ON OCTOBER 29 LAST YEAR, ALL SCREENED-OUT VIETNAMESE MIGRANTS WOULD IN DUE COURSE BE REPATRIATED UNDER THE ORDERLY RETURN PROGRAMME.

HE NOTED THAT THERE IS NO RELIABLE MEANS TO IDENTIFY VIETNAMESE MIGRANTS IN THE DETENTION CENTRES WHO MAY HAVE COMMITTED CRIMES IN VIETNAM.

"WE DO NOT HAVE AN EXTRADITION AGREEMENT WITH VIETNAM, NOR ARE WE LIKELY TO BE READY TO CONCLUDE ONE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

"IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES WE DO NOT SOLICIT INFORMATION FROM VIETNAM ABOUT THOSE IN OUR CAMPS WHO MAY HAVE COMMITTED CRIMES IN VIETNAM OR HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF CRIMES THERE," THE SECRETARY SAID.

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BILL ENABLES COMPUTERISED SYSTEM FOR ISSUE OF SUMMONSES

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THE MAGISTRATES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991 SEEKS TO INTRODUCE A COMPUTERISED SYSTEM FOR THE ISSUE OF SUMMONSES IN THE MAGISTRATES COURTS.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, MR JEREMY MATHEWS SAID THE BILL ALSO SEEKS TO EMPOWER THE GOVERNOR TO REFER ANY MAGISTRATES COURT DECISION IN A CRIMINAL CASE TO A HIGH COURT JUDGE FOR RECONSIDERATION.

AT PRESENT, THE PROCESSING OF SUMMONSES IN MAGISTRACIES IS DONE MANUALLY.

MR MATHEWS SAID IN 1990, OVER 300,000 SUMMONSES WERE ISSUED. IN MANY MAGISTRACIES, A DELAY OF SEVERAL WEEKS COULD ELAPSE BETWEEN THE RECEIPT OF A COMPLAINT AND THE ISSUE OF THE SUMMONS.

"THE AMENDMENTS PROPOSED WILL ENABLE SUMMONSES TO BE ISSUED BY COMPUTER AND PROCESSED BY MAGISTRATES OR BY AUTHORISED OFFICERS.

"IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE INTRODUCTION OF A COMPUTERISED SYSTEM WILL GREATLY REDUCE THE WAITING TIME FOR THE ISSUE OF SUMMONS AND WILL ENHANCE THE EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE," MR MATHEWS SAID.

THE BILL WILL ALSO EMPOWER THE GOVERNOR TO REFER ANY DECISION OF A MAGISTRATE IN A CRIMINAL CASE TO A JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT FOR HIS CONSIDERATION.

MR MATHEWS SAID AT PRESENT THE GOVERNOR HAS NO SUCH POWER.

HE SAID THIS IS ANOMALOUS SINCE THE GOVERNOR ALREADY HAS POWER TO REFER HIGH COURT AND DISTRICT COURT CASES TO THE COURT OF APPEAL.

"SUCH REFERENCES ARE USUALLY MADE ON MY ADVICE. A COMMON SITUATION GIVING RISE TO A REFERENCE IS WHERE FRESH EVIDENCE COMES TO LIGHT AFTER CONVICTION WHICH SUGGESTS THAT THE CONVICTION MIGHT BE UNSAFE.

"THIS POWER OF REFERENCE PROVIDES THE ONLY MEANS WHEREBY POSSIBLE INSTANCES OF INJUSTICE CAN BE RECTIFIED AFTER ALL CHANNELS OF APPEAL AVAILABLE TO THE PERSON CONVICTED HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED," HE EXPLAINED.

HE ADDED THAT IT IS NOT THE PURPOSE OF REFERENCE TO SEEK AN INCREASE IN A SENTENCE ALREADY IMPOSED.

"WHERE A REFERENCE IS MADE IT WILL BE THE COURTS THAT WILL DETERMINE THE OUTCOME.

"THE REFERENCE WILL BE TREATED AS AN APPEAL AND THE COURT'S DETERMINATION WILL BE BASED ENTIRELY ON THE MERITS BOTH AS TO CONVICTION AND SENTENCE," HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT ACHIEVED IN SLOPE SAFETY

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VERY SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN SQUATTER SAFETY FROM LANDSLIDES HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED WITH ALMOST ALL THE HILLSIDES IN THE URBAN AREA WHICH WERE ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE TO LANDSLIPS HAVING BEEN CLEARED UNDER THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT'S SQUATTER CLEARANCE PROGRAMME IN THE PAST SEVEN YEARS.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ALBERT CHAN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR WORKS, MR HUGH PHILLIPSON, SAID THE GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEERING OFFICE (GEO) IS CARRYING OUT STUDIES OF LANDSLIP HAZARDS TO SQUATTERS IN SOME OF THE LESS DANGEROUS URBAN HILLSIDES AND IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

SQUATTERS VULNERABLE TO LANDSLIP HAZARDS WERE ALSO CLEARED ON A NEED BASIS.

"THE GOVERNMENT'S LANDSLIP WARNING SYSTEM IS IN USE AGAIN THIS YEAR TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE WARNING OF THE PROBABLE OCCURRENCE OF LANDSLIPS ON STEEP HILLSIDES, AND TO URGE SQUATTERS TO BE CONCERNED FOR THEIR SAFETY AND TO TAKE REFUGE IN THE TEMPORARY SHELTERS PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT," MR PHILLIPSON SAID.

A SLOPE AFFECTING A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OR A ROAD IS DESIGNATED AS DANGEROUS BY THE GEO WHERE IT HAS AN INADEQUATE MARGIN OF SAFETY AND WHERE SLOPE FAILURE WOULD INVOLVE A SIGNIFICANT RISK TO LIFE.

"EXISTING SLOPES AND RETAINING WALLS WHICH ARE FOUND TO BE UNSAFE ARE RECTIFIED UNDER THE GOVERNMENT'S LONG-TERM LANDSLIP PREVENTIVE MEASURES PROGRAMME," HE SAID.

HE SAID THE PROGRAMME ALSO INCLUDES STABILISATION OF SOME UNSATISFACTORY GOVERNMENT SLOPES AND RETAINING WALLS.

SUCH COLLAPSE, MR PHILLIPSON SAID, COULD INDIRECTLY CAUSE LOSS OF LIFE BY MAJOR DISRUPTION TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES, OR LEAD TO MAJOR ECONOMIC DISRUPTION.

IN ADDITION, HE SAID A GREAT DEAL OF STABILISATION WORK HAS BEEN DONE IN ASSOCIATION WITH NEW GOVERNMENT PROJECTS AND BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

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PLAN TO EASE BEDSPACE APARTMENT OVERCROWDING MAKING HEADWAY

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THE ACTION PLAN TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF OVERCROWDING IN BEDSPACE APARTMENTS IS MAKING HEADWAY, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SUEN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HUI YIN-FAT, MR SUEN STRESSED THAT THE KEY FACTOR IN ANY SUCCESSFUL ACTION PLAN IS THE SETTING UP OF SUFFICIENT URBAN HOSTELS FOR THOSE TO BE DECANTED FROM OVERCROWDED BEDSPACE APARTMENTS.

FOR THIS REASON, IT IS STILL EARLY TO ASSESS THE PLAN'S EFFECTIVENESS, PARTICULARLY AS SINGLETON HOSTELS IN AREAS WHERE THEY ARE MOST NEEDED, SUCH AS YAU MA TEI, SHAM SHUI PO AND MONG KOK, ARE YET TO BE OPENED, HE SAID.

"THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO SUBJECT BEDSPACE APARTMENTS TO LICENSING ONCE THERE ARE SUFFICIENT ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE FOR THE DISPLACED LODGERS WAS SET OUT IN THE MOTION DEBATE ON FEBRUARY 27 LAST YEAR.

"AS I EXPECT THAT THE DECANTATION EXERCISE WILL BE REASONABLY COMPLETED IN ABOUT TWO YEARS, I WILL SEEK TO INTRODUCE THE NECESSARY LEGISLATION FOR A LICENSING SCHEME INTO THIS COUNCIL IN MID-1993," HE SAID.

MEANWHILE, THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION (CNTA) AND THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT HAVE MADE CONCERTED EFFORTS TO SECURE SUITABLE PREMISES FOR USE AS SINGLETON HOSTELS.

"THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF HOSTELS TARGETTED AT ABLE-BODIED LODGERS IN EXISTING BEDSPACE APARTMENTS WAS OPENED IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR IN WAN CHAI IN PREMISES MADE AVAILABLE BY THE TUNG WAH GROUP OF HOSPITALS.

"THE SECOND HOSTEL IS BEING SET UP IN KWUN TONG IN FLATS MADE AVAILABLE BY THE HONG KONG HOUSING SOCIETY. IT WILL BE OPERATIONAL IN A COUPLE OF MONTHS.

"IN ADDITION, A FLAT IN A PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL BUILDING IN YAU MA TEI HAS BEEN PURCHASED WITH MONEY DONATED BY THE CHINESE TEMPLES COMMITTEE," HE SAID, ADDING THAT RENOVATION PLANS FOR THIS APARTMENT ARE BEING DRAWN UP.

MR SUEN SAID THE AGENCY FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICE IS THE MANAGEMENT AGENCY FOR THESE HOSTELS AND FOR THOSE TO BE SET UP IN PREMISES SECURED BY THE CNTA.

AS REGARDS THE ELDERLY LODGERS IN BEDSPACE APARTMENTS, MR SUEN SAID THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT HAD OFFERED PREMISES AT CHEUNG SHA WAN ESTATE AND SIU SAI WAN ESTATE FOR USE AS HOSTELS FOR THEM.

/"THE PREMISES

"THE PREMISES AT CHEUNG SHA WAN ESTATE HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT TO THE SALVATION ARMY TO OPERATE THE HOSTEL, WHICH WILL COME INTO OPERATION IN APRIL OR MAY THIS YEAR.

"THE PREMISES AT SIU SAI WAN ESTATE WILL ALSO BE ALLOCATED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT TO A NON-GOVERNMENT WELFARE ORGANISATION TO PROVIDE A SIMILAR SERVICE IN ABOUT AUGUST OR SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR," HE SAID.

MR SUEN PRAISED THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB FOR HAVING GENEROUSLY DONATED \$15.6 MILLION TOWARDS THE CAPITAL COSTS FOR SETTING UP THESE HOSTELS FOR THE ELDERLY LODGERS.

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FURTHER HOS CONVEYANCING WORK TO BE PRIVATISED

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONSIDER CONTRACTING OUT THE REMAINDER OF THE NON-ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS OF THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME (HOS) CONVEYANCING WORK TO PRIVATE FIRMS IN THE LONGER TERM.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR GRAHAM BARNES, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON SELINA CHOW IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR BARNES SAID THIS WOULD HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE INITIAL CONTRACTING OUT OF THE BULK OF THE CONVEYANCING WAS PROVEN TO BE WORKING SMOOTHLY.

HE TOLD THE LEGCO THAT THE WORKLOAD OF THE HOME OWNERSHIP SECTION OF THE LAND OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT HAD INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY SINCE 1978 OWING TO AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF HOS FLATS PUT UP FOR SALE.

A TOTAL OF 13,718 FLATS WERE OFFERED FOR SALE LAST YEAR AS COMPARED WITH 8,373 IN 1978, REPRESENTING AN INCREASE OF 63.8 PER CENT.

THE EXISTING ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SECTION IS NOW ONLY 16 AS AGAINST 19 IN 1978, A REDUCTION OF 15.8 PER CENT.

THE RESULTANT EFFECT, MR BARNES SAID, WAS THAT THE SECTION HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO COMPLETE THE WORK OF EXECUTION, STAMPING AND REGISTRATION OF ASSIGNMENTS UNDER THE HOS IN TIME.

MR BARNES SAID ABOUT 16 OFFICERS OF THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT WERE LOANED TO THE HOS SECTION OF THE LAND OFFICE TO ASSIST IN THE WORK OF EXECUTION OR ASSIGNMENTS FROM NOVEMBER 1989 TO DECEMBER LAST YEAR IN ORDER TO MEET THE STRINGENT TIME SCHEDULE.

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"DESPITE THIS ARRANGEMENT, IT WAS STILL NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE LAND OFFICE TO HANDLE THE TOTAL VOLUME OF WORK AND BACKLOGS RESULTED.

"IT WAS ULTIMATELY DECIDED TO CONTRACT OUT THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR EXECUTION OF THE ASSIGNMENTS TO INDIVIDUAL PURCHASERS TO PRIVATE SOLICITORS FIRMS," HE SAID.

THE SECRETARY SAID THE CONTRACTING-OUT COMMENCED WITH PHASE 13B FLATS IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR.

THE LAND OFFICE CONTINUES TO PREPARE ALL LEGAL DOCUMENTATION FOR EACH HOS' COURT, IN ADDITION TO THE BACKLOG OF WORK.

MR BARNES SAID THE "SAVINGS" AS A RESULT OF THE TRANSFER THEREFORE TOOK THE FORM OF RELIEVING THE HOS SECTION FROM THE HUGE VOLUME OF WORK AND BACKLOGS, WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE CALL FOR THE ADDITION OF PERMANENT STAFF RESOURCES.

ALSO, HE SAID, WITH THE TRANSFER OF CONVEYANCING TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT STAFF ON LOAN TO THE SECTION WERE RETURNED TO THEIR OWN DEPARTMENT LAST MONTH.

MR BARNES NOTED THAT THERE IS NO LACK OF WORK FOR THE EXISTING STAFF IN THE HOS SECTION.

"AT PRESENT, THEY ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN THE PREPARATORY WORK RELATING TO 3,180 PHASE 13A ASSIGNMENTS WHICH WILL BE EXECUTED IN 1992/93.

"THEY ARE ALSO CLEARING BACKLOGS OF WORK, AND IN COMPLETING THE RECEIPT CLAUSES IN ABOUT 7,500 ASSIGNMENTS OF HOS FLATS BUILT UNDER PHASES 12A, 12B AND 12C," HE SAID.

MR BARNES SAID IT IS ESTIMATED THAT ABOUT 7,500 RECEIPT CLAUSES CAN ONLY BE COMPLETED IN 1992/93.

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GOVT COMMITTED TO IMPROVING ROAD SYSTEM IN NORTHWEST NEW TERRITORIES
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THE GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THE ROAD SYSTEM IN THE NORTHWEST NEW TERRITORIES TO MEET PRESENT AND FUTURE TRAFFIC DEMANDS, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR MICHAEL LEUNG, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON STEPHEN NG MING-YUM, MR LEUNG SAID SEVERAL MAJOR ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS WERE IN HAND.

THESE INCLUDE THE FINAL SECTION OF THE NEW TERRITORIES CIRCULAR ROAD FROM AU TAU TO FAN KAM ROAD WHICH IS SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION BY JULY THIS YEAR; THE YUEN LONG/TUEN MUN EASTERN CORRIDOR FOR COMPLETION BY OCTOBER 1993, AND THE YUEN LONG SOUTHERN BY-PASS TO BE COMPLETED BY JUNE 1994.

"THIS MEANS THAT BY MID 1994, THE TUEN MUN ROAD WILL BE LINKED TO THE NEW TERRITORIES CIRCULAR ROAD VIA NEW DUAL TWO-LANE EXPRESSWAYS, WHICH WILL GREATLY INCREASE ROAD CAPACITY," HE SAID.

ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE COUNTRY PARK SECTION OF ROUTE 3 AS A LONG TERM SOLUTION TO CONGESTION ON TUEN MUN ROAD, MR LEUNG SAID A FEASIBILITY STUDY WAS COMPLETED IN EARLY 1990, FOLLOWING WHICH AN ALIGNMENT FROM AU TAU THROUGH THE TAI LAM COUNTRY PARK TO TING KAU WAS SELECTED.

"THE PROGRAMME FOR CONSTRUCTING THE ROAD IS NOW BEING REVIEWED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UPDATING OF THE SECOND COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORT STUDY," HE SAID.

MR LEUNG SAID THE GOVERNMENT ALSO INTENDED TO COMMISSION A FINANCIAL CONSULTANCY TO CONSIDER HOW BEST THIS LARGE-SCALE PROJECT MIGHT BE FINANCED, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF PRIVATISATION.

"THE RESULTS OF THIS CONSULTANCY SHOULD BE AVAILABLE LATER THIS YEAR," HE SAID.

MR LEUNG ALSO OUTLINED A NUMBER OF SHORT-TERM IMPROVEMENTS TO CASTLE PEAK. THESE ARE:

- * WIDENING THE SECTION OF CASTLE PEAK ROAD ADJACENT TO SAM SHING ESTATE FOR COMPLETION BY MID 1993; AND
- * INTRODUCING BY STAGES SOME 20 LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES FOR THE CASTLE PEAK ROAD BETWEEN TUEN MUN AND YUEN LONG, WORK ON WHICH HAS JUST STARTED.

"ON COMPLETION AT THE END OF THIS YEAR, THESE MEASURES WILL RELIEVE TRAFFIC CONGESTION CONSIDERABLY, PARTICULARLY IN THE SECTION OF ROAD NEAR HUNG SHUI KIU," HE SAID.

IN ADDITION, THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW DUAL TWO-LANE ROAD FRONTING BELVEDERE AND BAYVIEW GARDENS IN CHAI WAN KOK, WOULD RELIEVE CONGESTION IN A SECTION OF CASTLE PEAK ROAD. WORKS WILL START BY THE END OF THIS YEAR FOR COMPLETION IN 1994.

/MR LEUNG

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MR LEUNG SAID A RECENT REVIEW HAD CONCLUDED THAT THE SPEED LIMIT ON TUEN MUN ROAD MIGHT BE RELAXED FROM THE EXISTING 70 KM TO 80 KM PER HOUR AT CERTAIN SECTIONS.

"DETAILED PROPOSALS WILL SHORTLY PUT TO THE DISTRICT BOARDS FOR ADVICE," HE SAID.

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IMPROVEMENT IN POLICE RECRUITMENT

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THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS AND THE INTAKE FIGURES FOR JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS LAST YEAR HAD INCREASED COMPARED WITH THE 1990 FIGURES.

THE WASTAGE LAST YEAR HAD ALSO DECREASED, ACCORDING TO THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON VINCENT CHENG HOI-CHUEN, MR ASPREY SAID HE HOPES THAT THIS TREND WILL CONTINUE THIS YEAR.

LAST YEAR, A TOTAL OF 9,271 APPLICATIONS FOR JUNIOR POLICE OFFICER POSTS WERE RECEIVED. THIS COMPARED WITH 5,109 APPLICATIONS IN 1990.

AS A RESULT, THE SECRETARY NOTED, RECRUITMENT HAD ALSO IMPROVED.

SOME 1,246 OFFICERS WERE RECRUITED LAST YEAR, 45% MORE THAN IN 1990.

THE INTAKE EACH MONTH IN LAST YEAR CONSISTENTLY EXCEEDED THE INTAKE FOR THE CORRESPONDING MONTH IN 1990.

WASTAGE HAD DECREASED, MR ASPREY SAID.

THE NUMBER OF JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS LEAVING THE FORCE LAST YEAR WAS 1,299, REPRESENTING AN AVERAGE OF 108 OFFICERS EACH MONTH, ABOUT 20% LESS THAN IN 1990.

"THE PAST FEW MONTHS IN PARTICULAR HAVE SEEN A FULL INTAKE OF JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS INTO THE POLICE TRAINING SCHOOL, AND NEW RECRUITMENT HAS SUBSTANTIALLY EXCEEDED WASTAGE," HE SAID.

/THE FOLLOWING

THE FOLLOWING IS A TABLE SHOWING THE RECRUITMENT AND WASTAGE STATISTICS FOR 1989, 1990 AND LAST YEAR.

YEAR	NO. OF APPLICATIONS	INTAKE	WASTAGE
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1989	6,324	1,237	1,568
1990	5,109	862	1,611
1991	9,271	1,246	1,299

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LOANSHARKING - PRIME TARGET OF POLICE

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LOANSHARKING ACTIVITIES ARE A PRIME TARGET OF THE ORGANISED CRIMES AND TRIAD GROUP OF THE POLICE, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A WRITTEN QUESTION BY THE HON NG MING-YUM, MR ASPREY SAID THE POLICE HAVE INITIATED A STUDY INTO LOANSHARKING.

PARTICULAR FEATURES IN MIND INCLUDED MUCH LOANSHARKING IS LINKED TO ORGANISED CRIME AND TRIAD SOCIETIES ARE INVOLVED IN FRINGE ACTIVITIES SUCH AS INTIMIDATION AND DEBT COLLECTION.

THE STUDY IS SCHEDULED TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE FOR DISCUSSION LATER THIS YEAR.

MR ASPREY SAID IT WILL INDICATE WHETHER ANY OPERATIONAL OR POLICY CHANGES ARE REQUIRED.

"THERE IS NO SPECIFIC CRIMINAL OFFENCE OF LOANSHARKING. THE TERM IS GENERALLY TAKEN TO MEAN LENDING MONEY AT USURIOUS INTEREST RATES."

"AS SUCH, LOANSHARKING IS AN OFFENCE UNDER SECTION 24(1) OF THE MONEY LENDERS ORDINANCE," MR ASPREY SAID.

THE SECRETARY SAID THE GOVERNMENT MONITORS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION AND THE POLICY TOWARDS LOANSHARKING ON THE BASIS OF THE PREVALENCE OF LOANSHARKING CASES REPORTED AND DETECTED.

"WE ALSO PUT OUT PUBLICITY TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC NOT TO BORROW MONEY FROM LOANSHARKS AND TO ENCOURAGE THE PUBLIC TO REPORT LOANSHARKING CASES TO THE POLICE," HE SAID.

IN THE PAST THREE YEARS, 223 LOANSHARKING CASES WERE REPORTED TO THE POLICE. FROM JANUARY 1, 1989 TO JUNE 30 LAST YEAR, 80 PERSONS WERE PROSECUTED.

/OF THE

OF THE 42 PERSONS CONVICTED, 12 WERE SENTENCED TO IMPRISONMENT OF SIX MONTHS OR LESS, ONE WAS CONDITIONALLY DISCHARGED, EIGHT WERE GIVEN A SUSPENDED SENTENCE OF IMPRISONMENT, AND 21 WERE FINED. THE AVERAGE FINE WAS \$5,700.

THE FOLLOWING IS A TABLE OF STATISTICS ON LOANSHARKING OFFENCES:

	YEAR			TOTAL
	1989	1990	1991	
CASES REPORTED TO THE POLICE	78	78	67	223
	UNTIL 30.6.91			
PERSONS PROSECUTED	42	32	6	80
SENTENCE:				
- ACQUITTED	17	15	6	38
- SUSPENDED IMPRISONMENT	4	4	-	8
- CONDITIONAL DISCHARGE	1	-	-	1
- IMPRISONMENT				
- LESS THAN 6 MONTHS	2	3	-	5
- 6 MONTHS	7	-	-	7
- FINE	11	10	-	21

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STUDY UNDERWAY TO SPEED UP JUDICIAL PROCESS
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THE JUDICIARY IS CONDUCTING AN INFORMATION SYSTEMS STRATEGIC STUDY TO SUGGEST WAYS IN WHICH MODERN TECHNOLOGY MAY BE USED TO INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID FORD, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PANG CHUN-HOI, SIR DAVID SAID THE STUDY AIMED AT SPEEDING UP THE JUDICIAL PROCESS AND WOULD BE COMPLETED SOON.

MEANWHILE, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JUDGES AND MAGISTRATES WILL CONTINUE TO BE CLOSELY MONITORED BY THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE JUDICIARY, HE SAID.

/GIVEN THE

GIVEN THE INADEQUACY OF HIGH COURT JUDGES, A PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF THREE SUCH ADDITIONAL POSTS WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE IN THE NEAR FUTURE, HE SAID.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY SAID THE WAITING TIME FOR TRIALS IN THE HIGH COURT IS NOT SATISFACTORY, AND DOES REFLECT A NEED FOR ADDITIONAL HIGH COURT JUDGES.

THE DETERIORATION OF WAITING TIMES FOR CRIMINAL TRIALS IN THE HIGH COURT WAS MAINLY DUE TO A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CRIMINAL CASES SET DOWN FOR TRIAL IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS AND THE INCREASING COMPLEXITY OF CASES, BOTH CRIMINAL AND CIVIL, GENERALLY.

HOWEVER, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JUDGES AND MAGISTRATES IN THE OTHER COURTS IS CONSIDERED SATISFACTORY, SIR DAVID SAID.

IN THE PERIOD JULY 1, 1990 TO JUNE 30 LAST YEAR, 333 PERSONS WERE DETAINED FOR MORE THAN TWO MONTHS WHILE AWAITING TRIAL IN THE HIGH COURT, REPRESENTING 58 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ACCUSED PERSONS DEALT WITH IN CRIMINAL CASES IN THE HIGH COURT.

IN THE SAME PERIOD, 38 PERSONS WERE BEING DETAINED FOR MORE THAN TWO MONTHS WHILE AWAITING TRIAL IN THE DISTRICT COURT, REPRESENTING TWO PER CENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ACCUSED PERSONS DEALT WITH IN CRIMINAL CASES IN THE DISTRICT COURT.

NO PERSON WAS BEING DETAINED FOR MORE THAN TWO MONTHS WHILE AWAITING TRIAL IN THE MAGISTRATE'S COURT.

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ARRESTS MADE FOR ILLEGAL HAWKING ON CHATER ROAD
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THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT (USD) MADE 327 ARRESTS WITH GOODS CONFISCATED FOR HAWKING WITHOUT A LICENCE IN THE CHATER ROAD PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT LAST YEAR, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR GRAHAM BARNES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

DURING THE SAME PERIOD, THERE WERE ALSO 437 CASES OF SEIZURE OF GOODS WITHOUT ARREST.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PEGGY LAM, MR BARNES SAID THE USD ALSO ISSUED 245 SUMMONSES AGAINST PERSONS FOUND HAWKING INSIDE THE URBAN COUNCIL PLEASURE GROUNDS IN THE VICINITY.

"THESE MEASURES HAVE GONE SOME WAY TOWARDS EASING THE HAWKING PROBLEM," HE SAID.

/MR BARNES

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MR BARNES SAID THE MAIN PRIORITIES OF THE USD IN CHATER ROAD, CHATER GARDEN AND STATUE SQUARE AREAS ON SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS ARE DIRECTED AT KEEPING THE AREA AS CLEAN AS POSSIBLE DURING THE DAY, MOUNTING LARGE-SCALE CLEAN-UPS AFTER THE CROWD HAS DISPERSED, AND HELPING TO KEEP PEDESTRIAN PASSAGEWAYS CLEAR OF OBSTRUCTION CAUSED BY HAWKING ACTIVITIES.

SINCE UP TO 20,000 PEOPLE MAY BE GATHERED IN THESE AREAS, MR BARNES SAID THE DEPARTMENT DEPLOYS THREE TIMES AS MUCH MANPOWER AND OTHER RESOURCES IN PREVENTING OBSTRUCTION BY HAWKERS ON SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS THAN ON WEEKDAYS.

THE STAFF ARE ON PATROL FROM BEFORE 8 AM UNTIL AFTER 9 PM EVERY SUNDAY AND PUBLIC HOLIDAY.

THE AREAS OF PATROL EXTEND FROM THE STAR FERRY CONCOURSE AND CONNAUGHT GARDEN IN THE NORTH TO QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL AND BEYOND IN THE SOUTH, AND FROM CHATER GARDEN IN THE EAST TO PEDDAR STREET IN THE WEST.

"THE PATROLS DISPERSE ANY ILLEGAL HAWKERS FOUND TRYING TO TRADE AND, IF THE WARNINGS ARE NOT HEEDDED, ARREST THE HAWKERS AND SEIZE THE GOODS.

"IN ADDITION, JOINT RAIDING OPERATIONS WITH SUPPORT FROM THE POLICE ARE MOUNTED FROM TIME TO TIME."

MR BARNES SAID OVER THE PAST YEAR, THE URBAN COUNCIL HAD ORGANISED JOINTLY WITH THE PHILIPPINE CONSULATE AND VOLUNTARY GROUPS A NUMBER OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCHEMES TO LAUNCH CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGNS IN THE AREA.

"THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO DISSEMINATE WARNINGS AGAINST ILLEGAL HAWKING, IN ENGLISH, TAGALOG AND CHINESE, THROUGH BROADCAST VANS AND NOTICE-BOARDS SET UP IN PROMINENT LOCATIONS.

"THE DEPARTMENT IS CONSIDERING WHETHER TO INCREASE SUCH WARNING MESSAGES," HE SAID.

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BILL PROVIDES FOR PRIVATE MANAGEMENT OF
GOVT VEHICLE EXAM CENTRES INTRODUCED

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A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE PRIVATE MANAGEMENT OF GOVERNMENT VEHICLE EXAMINATION CENTRES IS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) (NO. 5) BILL 1991, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR MICHAEL LEUNG, SAID THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO CONTRACT OUT THE MANAGEMENT OF THE NEWEST GOVERNMENT'S VEHICLE EXAMINATION CENTRE AT KOWLOON BAY TO ACHIEVE GREATER EFFICIENCY AND COST EFFECTIVENESS.

THIS CENTRE IS USED FOR THE ANNUAL INSPECTION OF GOODS VEHICLES AND PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLES.

AT PRESENT, THERE ARE SIX VEHICLE EXAMINATION CENTRES OPERATED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO EXAMINE ANNUALLY ALL PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLES AND GOODS VEHICLES MANUFACTURED BEFORE 1983 TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE ROADWORTHY.

MR LEUNG SAID THE BILL PROVIDED FOR THE PRIVATE MANAGEMENT OF A GOVERNMENT VEHICLE EXAMINATION CENTRE UNDER A WRITTEN AGREEMENT, AND SUBJECT TO SUCH TERMS AND CONDITIONS AS THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT MIGHT SPECIFY.

"TO SAFEGUARD THE PUBLIC INTEREST, THE COMMISSIONER IS EMPOWERED TO GIVE GENERAL DIRECTIONS TO THE PRIVATE OPERATOR CONCERNING THE OPERATION OF THE CENTRE AND TO SUSPEND OR REVOKE HIS APPOINTMENT IF NECESSARY.

HE SAID INSPECTION FEES WILL CONTINUE TO BE SET BY THE GOVERNMENT, BUT WILL BE COLLECTED BY THE PRIVATE OPERATOR.

MR LEUNG POINTED OUT THAT THE BILL ALSO SOUGHT TO IMPROVE CERTAIN ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES IN THE OPERATION OF VEHICLE EXAMINATION CENTRES.

THESE INCLUDED THE PUBLICATION OF NOTICES IN THE PRESS REQUIRING THE PRODUCTION OF VEHICLES FOR EXAMINATION AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO SERVING SUCH NOTICES IN WRITING AND SERVING SUSPENSION OF VEHICLE LICENCE ORDERS AND VEHICLE REPAIR ORDERS ON THE PERSON WHO PRODUCES THE VEHICLE FOR EXAMINATION AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO SERVING SUCH ORDERS ON THE OWNER.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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STUDY ON GAS SAFETY UNDERWAY

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THE DIRECTOR OF ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES, WHO IS THE GAS AUTHORITY, IS CONDUCTING A DETAILED STUDY OF THE FULL RECORD OF THE CORONER'S REPORT, INCLUDING THE SUGGESTIONS FOR THE INCLUSION OF A BILINGUAL WARNING LABEL AND RESTRICTIONS ON THE SALE OF REFILL CANISTERS.

THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON GILBERT LEUNG THAT THE DIRECTOR WOULD MAKE HIS RECOMMENDATIONS AFTER CONSULTING THE GAS SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

AT THE CONCLUSION IN NOVEMBER LAST YEAR OF AN ENQUIRY INTO THE DEATH OF THE 13-YEAR-OLD BOY WHO HAD DIED AS A RESULT OF SNIFFING LIGHTER FUEL, THE CORONER'S COURT SUGGESTED THAT CANISTERS OF LIGHTER FUEL SHOULD BEAR A LABEL, BOTH IN ENGLISH AND CHINESE AND IN CLEAR AND BOLD WORDS, ON THE DANGERS OF ABUSE, POINTING OUT THAT IT COULD BE FATAL AND SHOULD BE KEPT AWAY FROM CHILDREN.

THE COURT ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE SALE OF CANISTERS OF LIGHTER FUEL SHOULD BE RESTRICTED.

MR ASPREY SAID ACCORDING TO INFORMATION RECEIVED BY THE GOVERNMENT'S CENTRAL REGISTRY OF DRUG ABUSE FROM A WIDE RANGE OF REPORTING AGENCIES, NO CASES OF ABUSE OF LIGHTER FUEL GAS WERE REPORTED IN 1989; TWO CASES WERE REPORTED IN 1990.

APART FROM THE CASE REFERRED TO IN THE QUESTION, NO OTHER CASES WERE REPORTED IN THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF LAST YEAR.

"A TOTAL OF NINETEEN CASES OF ABUSE OF OTHER ORGANIC SOLVENTS, ALL OF THEM INVOLVING THE SUBSTANCE COMMONLY KNOWN AS THINNER, WERE REPORTED IN THE PAST THREE YEARS," HE SAID.

ALL 22 KNOWN SOLVENT ABUSE CASES IN THE LAST THREE YEARS INVOLVED YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER THE AGE OF 21. MOST WERE REPORTED BY OUTREACH SOCIAL WORKERS," HE ADDED.

HE SAID ALTHOUGH THE ABUSE OF SOLVENTS IS LOW, BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ACTION COMMITTEE AGAINST NARCOTICS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PROBLEM.

"WE PUBLICISE THE DANGERS OF THIS FORM OF ABUSE THROUGH DRUG EDUCATION TALKS GIVEN TO SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN (WHICH ARE BEING EXTENDED TO PRIMARY 6 STUDENTS NEXT YEAR) AND DISPLAYS AT ANTI-DRUG EXHIBITIONS, CARNIVALS AND OTHER PUBLICITY EVENTS AND FUNCTIONS," MR ASPREY SAID.

HE SAID ORGANIC SOLVENTS, INCLUDING LIGHTER FUEL GAS, WERE ALSO INCLUDED AS COMMON DRUGS OF ABUSE ON A POSTER RECENTLY PUT ON PUBLIC DISPLAY.

/"WE HAVE

"WE HAVE ALSO PRODUCED A DRUG EDUCATION TEACHING KIT, INCORPORATING VIDEO TAPES, REFERENCE MATERIALS AND FOLLOW-UP LESSON PLANS, WHICH AIMS TO MAKE YOUNG PERSONS MORE AWARE OF THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF ABUSING PSYCHOTROPIC AND OTHER SUBSTANCES, INCLUDING ORGANIC SOLVENTS," HE SAID.

THE SECRETARY SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAS RECENTLY ISSUED A GUIDEBOOK ON DRUG ABUSE FOR PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS. A SEPARATE SECTION IS DEVOTED TO ORGANIC SOLVENTS.

"WE WILL CONTINUE TO DIRECT OUR PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN AGAINST ABUSE OF ALL SUBSTANCES, INCLUDING SOLVENTS," HE ADDED.

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OPTIONS AND COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR FORM 7 STUDENTS

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THE GOVERNMENT PROVIDES EACH SECONDARY SCHOOL WITH A CAREERS MASTER OR CAREERS TEACHER TO ADVISE STUDENTS ON FURTHER STUDIES AND CAREERS PLANNING, SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO THE HON ERIC LI KA-CHEUNG'S QUESTION ON COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR CANDIDATES WHO MET THE MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO DEGREE COURSES IN PUBLICLY FUNDED TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS BUT WHO FAILED TO GET ENROLLED IN ANY OF THEM, MR CHAN CONFIRMED THAT SEVERAL OPTIONS WERE OPEN TO THEM.

THE OPTIONS INCLUDE FURTHER STUDY AT DEGREE LEVEL AT THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE AND AT NON-DEGREE LEVEL AT INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS THE POLYTECHNICS, THE APPROVED POST-SECONDARY COLLEGES, AND THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION.

MR CHAN SAID THESE OPTIONS WOULD HAVE BEEN MADE KNOWN TO THEM THROUGH THEIR CAREERS TEACHERS.

"THE CAREERS TEACHERS ARE BACKED UP IN THEIR DELIVERY OF COUNSELLING WORK BY BOTH THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT, WHICH ORGANISE FREQUENT TRAINING IN CAREERS COUNSELLING SKILLS.

"THE TEACHERS ARE ALSO SENT UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON CAREERS AND FURTHER STUDY OPPORTUNITIES," HE ADDED.

MR CHAN POINTED OUT THAT OVERSEAS STUDY OPPORTUNITIES WOULD ALSO HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED AS ANOTHER OPTION FOR STUDENTS WHOSE FAMILIES CAN AFFORD THE COST.

"AS FOR THOSE WISHING TO ENTER EMPLOYMENT, COUNSELLING ON CAREER CHOICES BASED ON THEIR INDIVIDUAL INTEREST AND ABILITY WOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN. THEY WOULD ALSO HAVE BEEN ADVISED ON HOW TO IMPROVE THEMSELVES THROUGH PART-TIME CONTINUING EDUCATION," HE SAID.

/HE ADDED

HE ADDED THAT STUDENTS WHO NEED FURTHER HELP CAN OBTAIN COUNSELLING AND ADVISORY SERVICES FROM THE CAREERS AND GUIDANCE SERVICES SECTION OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

"IN THE YEAR 1990/91, 2,700 FORM 7 STUDENTS RECEIVED INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING," HE SAID.

MR CHAN CLARIFIED THAT THE NUMBER 18,629 MENTIONED IN HIS REPLY TO MR LI'S QUESTION ON DECEMBER 18 LAST YEAR REFERRED TO THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS, NOT THE NUMBER OF CANDIDATES.

HE EXPLAINED THAT PRIOR TO THE INTRODUCTION OF A JOINT ADMISSION SYSTEM LAST YEAR, CANDIDATES APPLIED SEPARATELY TO INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTIONS AND MOST APPLIED TO MORE THAN ONE.

THUS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY ALL INSTITUTIONS FUNDED BY THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE ALWAYS EXCEEDED THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES.

BY THE SAME TOKEN, THE NUMBER OF CANDIDATES FAILING TO GAIN A DEGREE PLACE WOULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY LESS THAN THE FIGURE OF 18,629, PARTICULARLY IF THE NUMBER ADMITTED BY THE TWO POLYTECHNICS WERE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

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ESTIMATES OF STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD RELEASED
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DURING THE 12-MONTH PERIOD ENDED SEPTEMBER 30 LAST YEAR, A TOTAL OF 18,900 VISAS WERE ISSUED FOR HONG KONG STUDENTS TO STUDY IN THE U.S., CANADA, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND AUSTRALIA, THE FOUR MAJOR DESTINATIONS WHICH TOGETHER RECEIVE OVER 95 PER CENT OF ALL HONG KONG STUDENTS GOING OVERSEAS.

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, SAID THIS IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ERIC LI KA-CHEUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR CHAN POINTED OUT THAT GOVERNMENT DID NOT HAVE COMPLETE DATA ON THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS LEAVING HONG KONG TO STUDY OVERSEAS, BUT AN ESTIMATE MAY BE MADE BASED ON STUDENT VISA STATISTICS PROVIDED BY FOREIGN CONSULATES AND COMMISSIONS IN HONG KONG.

HE ADDED THAT THE VISA RECIPIENTS COULD BE CLASSIFIED INTO THREE GROUPS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT.

THE FIRST GROUP COMPRISED 8,300 STUDENTS WHO HAD COMPLETED SECONDARY EDUCATION OR BELOW AND WHO WOULD BE ENROLLED IN COURSES BELOW DEGREE LEVEL.

THE SECOND GROUP COMPRISED 4,300 STUDENTS WHO HAD COMPLETED SIXTH FORM IN HONG KONG AND WHO WOULD BE ENROLLED IN FIRST DEGREE STUDIES.

THE LAST GROUP COMPRISED 6,300 STUDENTS WHO WERE GRADUATES FROM TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS OR POST-SECONDARY COLLEGES IN HONG KONG.

"ABOUT TWO-THIRDS OF THE LAST GROUP WERE DEGREE HOLDERS AND WOULD BE PURSUING POSTGRADUATE STUDIES ABROAD. OTHERS MAY BE ENROLLED FOR ADVANCED YEARS OF FIRST DEGREE COURSES OR POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES, DEPENDING ON THE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS OF INDIVIDUAL OVERSEAS INSTITUTIONS," MR CHAN SAID.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT VISA RECIPIENTS BY ISSUING COUNTRY AND BY EDUCATION ATTAINMENT IS AS FOLLOWS:-

ISSUING COUNTRY	SECONDARY OR BELOW	SIXTH FORM	POST-SECONDARY/ UNIVERSITY	ALL LEVELS
U.S.A.	700	1,800	3,400	5,900
CANADA	3,300	1,000	300	4,600
UK	2,000	500	1,900	4,400
AUSTRALIA	2,300	1,000	700	4,000
TOTAL	8,300	4,300	6,300	18,900

"THE REMAINING FIVE PER CENT OF STUDENTS TO WHOM VISAS ARE ISSUED MAINLY ATTEND COURSES IN WESTERN EUROPE AND OTHER ASIAN COUNTRIES. RELIABLE FIGURES FOR THIS GROUP ARE NOT AVAILABLE," HE SAID.

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PROJECTS ENDORSED BY SWAC TO BE IMPLEMENTED SHORTLY

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THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT THREE PROJECTS ENDORSED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SWAC) WILL BE IMPLEMENTED SHORTLY.

THESE PROJECTS RELATE TO THE EXPANSION OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER SCHEME, THE HOME HELP TEAMS AND INFIRMARY UNITS.

MRS WONG SAID THE FIRST PHASE OF THE EXPANSION OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER SCHEME WILL BE IMPLEMENTED EARLY THIS YEAR.

EIGHT ADDITIONAL HOME HELP TEAMS AND THREE ADDITIONAL INFIRMARY UNITS WILL BE PROVIDED IN 1992/93.

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IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON LAM KUI-CHUN, MRS WONG SAID THREE OTHER PROJECTS HAVE BEEN ACCORDED PRIORITY, BUT NO DEFINITE IMPLEMENTATION DATES HAVE BEEN SET.

THESE PROJECTS ARE: THE PROVISION OF A MEDICAL OFFICER VISIT SERVICE FOR INFIRMARY UNITS IN CARE-AND-ATTENTION HOMES; THE PROVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS FOR INFIRMARY UNITS IN CARE-AND-ATTENTION HOMES; AND THE PROVISION OF TWO ADDITIONAL OUTREACHING SOCIAL WORK TEAMS A YEAR.

MRS WONG ALSO SAID INITIATIVES OF A LEGISLATIVE NATURE ARE BEING CONSIDERED IN THE CONTEXT OF NEW OR AMENDING LEGISLATION.

THESE INCLUDE THE PROVISIONS FOR UPDATING AND AMENDING THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND JUVENILES ORDINANCE AND PROVISIONS FOR MAINTAINING THE STANDARD AND CONTROL OF RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES FOR THE ELDERLY.

"IT IS OUR AIM TO INTRODUCE THE RELEVANT LEGISLATION TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DURING THE CURRENT SESSION," SHE SAID.

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HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION CLOSELY INVOLVED IN HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT
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THE REDEVELOPED HAVEN OF HOPE HOSPITAL WILL HAVE 30 ACUTE BEDS FOR TUBERCULOSIS AND CHEST PATIENTS WHO MAY REQUIRE INTENSIVE MEDICAL TREATMENT DURING HOSPITALISATION, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON EMILY LAU WAI-HING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MRS WONG SAID PLANS FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE HAVEN OF HOPE HOSPITAL HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH THE HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION WHICH HAS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS.

"THERE IS NO QUESTION OF THE STAFF OF THE HOSPITAL NOT BEING ADEQUATELY INFORMED OF THE PRECISE SCOPE OF THE PROJECT," SHE SAID.

SHE TOLD THE LEGCO THAT \$462 MILLION HAD BEEN EARMARKED FOR THIS PROJECT WHICH, ACCORDING TO PRESENT TIMETABLE, IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN 1996.

SHE EXPLAINED THAT IN MEDICAL SERVICES, THE TERM "ACUTE" CARRIES TWO MEANINGS, I.E. THE TIMING OF ONSET OF DISEASE, AND THE INTENSITY OF MEDICAL CARE REQUIRED.

MRS WONG SAID THE HOSPITAL WILL NOT HAVE AN ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT.

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GOVT WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK EXTRADITION OF OSMAN

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THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, MR JEREMY MATHEWS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO SEEK THE EXTRADITION TO HONG KONG OF MR LORRAIN OSMAN.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY MR JIMMY MCGREGOR, MR MATHEWS NOTED THAT MR OSMAN FACED CHARGES OF A SERIOUS NATURE.

"AS I SAID IN THIS COUNCIL ON MAY 30, 1990, IT IS MR OSMAN'S OWN USE OF THE APPEAL CHANNEL WHICH HAS RESULTED IN THE EXTRADITION PROCEEDINGS BEING PROLONGED," HE SAID.

MR OSMAN'S SIXTH APPLICATION FOR A WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS WAS FOUND TO BE AN ABUSE OF PROCESS AND DISMISSED BY THE DIVISIONAL COURT IN ENGLAND ON NOVEMBER 14 LAST YEAR.

HIS APPLICATION TO THE DIVISIONAL COURT FOR LEAVE TO APPEAL TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS WAS REJECTED ON NOVEMBER 28 LAST YEAR.

ON DECEMBER 11 LAST YEAR, HE FILED A PETITION IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS FOR LEAVE TO APPEAL TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

IT IS LIKELY THAT THIS WOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE LORDS WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.

"IT CANNOT BE PREDICTED AT THIS STAGE AS TO WHEN MR OSMAN WILL BE RETURNED TO HONG KONG OR WHAT FURTHER LEGAL PROCEEDINGS HE MAY BRING," MR MATHEWS SAID.

THE COST SO FAR OF THE EXTRADITION PROCEEDINGS IS ABOUT \$15.8 MILLION.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN AWARDED COSTS IN A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS AND APPEALS BROUGHT BY MR OSMAN, INCLUDING THE SIX HABEAS CORPUS PROCEEDINGS, AND THAT STRENUOUS EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO RECOVER THOSE COSTS.

"MR OSMAN IS CO-ACCUSED WITH MR GEORGE TAN IN RESPECT OF SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS OF FRAUD AND CORRUPTION ARISING OUT OF FUNDING OF THE CARRIAN GROUP BY BUMIPUTRA MALAYSIA FINANCE LIMITED.

IN ORDER FOR THEM TO BE TRIED JOINTLY, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO HAVE MR OSMAN RETURNED TO HONG KONG," MR MATHEWS SAID.

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IMPROVEMENTS TO TRAFFIC FLOW IN SAI KUNG

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IMPROVEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO THE TRAFFIC FLOW AT THE JUNCTION OF HIRAM'S HIGHWAY AND CLEAR WATER BAY ROAD, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR MICHAEL LEUNG, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON EMILY LAU, MR LEUNG SAID THESE MEASURES INCLUDED LOWERING THE SPEED LIMIT, AND BETTER TRAFFIC SIGNS.

ON THE FLYOVER PROJECT DESIGNED TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW IN THE AREA, MR LEUNG SAID THE PROJECT IS NOW IN CATEGORY C OF THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME WITH AN ESTIMATED COST OF \$61 MILLION.

"IF IT SUCCEEDED IN GAINING HIGH PRIORITY AND WAS FUNDED, THE EARLIEST THAT THE FLYOVER COULD BE COMPLETED WOULD BE 1995," HE SAID.

MR LEUNG SAID THIS FLYOVER ORIGINALLY FORMED PART OF THE FIRST PHASE OF A PACKAGE OF MEASURES TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW ON HIRAM'S HIGHWAY AND CLEAR WATER BAY ROAD.

OTHER WORKS IN THE FIRST PHASE, INCLUDING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CLIMBING LANE BETWEEN WO MEI AND CLEAR WATER BAY ROAD, ARE NOW NEARING COMPLETION.

"THE FLYOVER, HOWEVER, HAD TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THESE WORKS BECAUSE OF STRONG LOCAL OBJECTIONS TO ITS EXPECTED IMPACT ON THE TAI PO TSAI BURIAL GROUND," HE SAID.

THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE OF THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT BOARD HAD ACCEPTED THE REVISED PROPOSAL FOR THE FLYOVER IN JANUARY 1989 AND WAS ADVISED THAT THIS COULD BE COMPLETED BY MID-1991 PROVIDED NO NEW OBJECTIONS WERE RECEIVED.

"HOWEVER, IN 1990, A BID FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS TO COVER THE INCREASE IN COST DID NOT SUCCEED, AND IN 1991, THE BALANCE OF FUNDS FOR THE FLYOVER WAS DIVERTED TO OTHER MORE URGENT PROJECTS," HE SAID.

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3-1/2-HOUR DEBATE ON TOWN PLANNING REVIEW IN LEGCO

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A MOTION ON THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE MOVED BY THE HON EDWARD HO WAS PASSED AFTER A 3-1/2-HOUR DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE MOTION READS: "THAT THIS COUNCIL SUPPORTS THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE AND URGES THE ADMINISTRATION TO TAKE INTO CAREFUL CONSIDERATION THE VIEWS OF MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL AND THE PUBLIC IN DRAFTING THE NEW PLANNING LEGISLATION TO ENSURE THAT IT IS RELEVANT AND BENEFICIAL TO THE CHANGING SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT OF HONG KONG."

A TOTAL OF 15 MEMBERS SPOKE IN THE MOTION DEBATE. THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR GRAHAM BARNES SPOKE ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT.

MEANWHILE, 14 LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS SPOKE DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE RAISED BY DR THE HON HUANG CHEN-YA ON THE MATTER OF PUBLIC HOUSING SUBSIDY POLICY.

THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR GRAHAM BARNES SPOKE ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT.

THREE BILLS: THE LEGAL PRACTITIONERS (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1991, DANGEROUS DRUGS (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1991 AND THE PRINCE PHILIP DENTAL HOSPITAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991 WERE PASSED.

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

THEY WERE THE MAGISTRATES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) (NO. 5) BILL 1991 AND TELEVISION (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1991.

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IMPORTATION OF LABOUR SCHEME BENEFITS WHOLE COMMUNITY: GOVERNOR

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THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, HOPES THAT LOCAL WORKERS AND THOSE INVOLVED IN THE ORGANISATION OF LOCAL WORK GROUPS WOULD UNDERSTAND THAT THE IMPORTATION OF LABOUR SCHEME WOULD BENEFIT THE WHOLE COMMUNITY, INCLUDING THE LOCAL WORKFORCE.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) AFTER A VISIT TO THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT, SIR DAVID SAID THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT WANT TO DO ANYTHING WHICH WOULD DAMAGE THE INTERESTS OF THE LOCAL WORKFORCE.

"THE SCHEME IS DESIGNED TO HELP THE WHOLE COMMUNITY AND THAT VERY MUCH INCLUDES THE LOCAL WORKFORCE, AND I HOPE THAT PEOPLE AS THEY LOOK AT THE SCHEME, WILL REALISE THAT," HE SAID.

"I DON'T BELIEVE THAT THINGS LIKE STRIKE ACTION ARE THE APPROPRIATE WAY TO TACKLE IT. IF THERE ARE POINTS TO BE DISCUSSED THEN I HOPE DISCUSSION WILL GO ON," HE ADDED.

THE GOVERNOR SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD A NEW TRAINING SCHEME AND MONEY FOR IT, AND WELCOMED IDEAS FROM PEOPLE AND THOSE IN THE WORKFORCE.

ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED COMMITTEE SYSTEM FOR THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SIR DAVID REITERATED THE ROLES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WOULD REMAIN AS THEY ALWAYS WERE.

"THE WAY IN WHICH LEGCO ORGANISE ITS BUSINESS THEY MUST LOOK AT THEMSELVES. I HOPE THEY WILL WORK OUT A SENSIBLE, EFFICIENT WAY OF DOING BUSINESS BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT WILL BENEFIT THE WHOLE COMMUNITY, THE WHOLE OF HONG KONG," HE SAID.

ASKED ABOUT THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF GOLF COURSES IN THE COUNTRY PARKS, THE GOVERNOR SAID COUNTRY PARKS WERE VERY IMPORTANT FACILITIES TO HONG KONG.

"OF COURSE WE WANT TO MAINTAIN THOSE COUNTRY PARKS AND MAKE SURE THAT THERE ARE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES FOR THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG; THAT IS VERY IMPORTANT.

"BUT ALSO WE WANT TO ALLOW FOR A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF REASONABLE DEVELOPMENT AND NOT JUST BE A DEAD HAND ON DEVELOPMENT. THE ONE EXISTING PLAN, THE SHALOTUNG ONE, IS STILL A PLAN; IT HASN'T YET BEEN APPROVED SO IT STILL HAS TO BE LOOKED AT IN DETAIL," HE SAID.

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GOVERNOR VISITS SAI KUNG

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THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, AND LADY WILSON VISITED SAI KUNG DISTRICT TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THEY WERE ACCOMPANIED BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR ALBERT C.C. LAM AND THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT OFFICER, MR PARRISH NG.

THE GOVERNOR BEGAN BY VISITING THE SEAFOOD STORES ALONG THE SAI KUNG WATERFRONT WHICH HAVE BECOME A POPULAR ATTRACTION IN THE AREA. HE STOPPED TO TALK WITH THE STORE OWNERS AND INSPECTED THEIR PRODUCE.

SIR DAVID THEN WENT TO SEE THE TRADITIONAL HAKKA VILLAGE OF BOON KIN WHERE HE CALLED ON A FAMILY LIVING IN A CAREFULLY PRESERVED HAKKA HOUSE AND VISITED THE OFFICE OF THE FIRE FIGHTING TEAM FORMED BY THE VILLAGERS.

SIR DAVID TRAVELLED TO TSEUNG KWAN O FOR A DETAILED BRIEFING ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW TOWN AFTER WHICH HE VISITED PO LAM ESTATE WHERE HE ALSO ATTENDED A TEA RECEPTION WITH DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS AND OTHER DIGNITARIES.

"THE TREMENDOUS DEVELOPMENTS IN TSEUNG KWAN O ARE MOST ENCOURAGING," SIR DAVID SAID, WHEN HE COMMENTED ON THE HOUSING OF MORE THAN 110,000 PEOPLE THERE OVER THE PAST THREE-AND-A-HALF YEARS.

"THERE IS A HEALTHY CONTRAST BETWEEN THESE DEVELOPMENTS AND THE LARGE RECREATIONAL AREAS AND TRADITIONAL VILLAGES WHICH MAKE SAI KUNG SUCH AN ATTRACTIVE DISTRICT."

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LOCAL WORKERS TO FILL JOB VACANCIES FIRST

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LOCAL WORKERS HAVE PRIORITY TO FILL JOB VACANCIES FOR WHICH ANY EMPLOYER INTENDS TO IMPORT FOREIGN WORKER UNDER THE SCHEME ANNOUNCED RECENTLY BY THE GOVERNMENT.

"TO FULLY PROTECT THE JOB OPPORTUNITY OF LOCAL WORKERS, THE SCHEME REQUIRES ALL EMPLOYERS APPLYING FOR IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN LABOUR TO FIRST REGISTER THEIR JOB VACANCIES WITH THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT'S LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE (LES)," AN ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, MR ALFRED CHAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"SHOULD AN EMPLOYER FAIL TO MEET THIS REQUIREMENT, HIS APPLICATION WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED BY THE EMPLOYMENT VISA CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE (EVCC) FOR THE SCHEME," HE SAID.

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"PERMISSION TO IMPORT WORKERS WILL BE GIVEN ONLY IF THE COMMITTEE IS SATISFIED THAT EVEN WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE LES, THE EMPLOYER IS UNABLE TO FILL HIS VACANCIES WITH LOCAL STAFF," HE SAID.

MR CHAN STRESSED THAT THE WAGES OFFERED TO LOCAL WORKERS FOR SUCH POSTS REGISTERED WITH THE LES MUST BE NO LESS THAN THE ALLOWABLE WAGES FOR THE OCCUPATION CONCERNED FOR FOREIGN WORKERS ANNOUNCED BY THE GOVERNMENT, PLUS \$400 PER MONTH.

"INFORMATION ON ALL VACANCIES RECEIVED WILL BE AVAILABLE AT EACH OF THE 11 LES DISTRICT OFFICES SO THAT INTERESTED WORKERS MAY APPLY AT ANY ONE OF THESE OFFICES FOR THESE VACANCIES," HE ADDED.

"OFFICERS OF THE LES WILL CHECK THEIR RECORDS OF JOB APPLICANTS TO IDENTIFY SUITABLE JOB-SEEKERS AND WILL THEN REFER THEM TO EMPLOYERS FOR INTERVIEWS," HE ADDED.

MR CHAN CALLED ON WORKERS' UNIONS TO ENCOURAGE THEIR MEMBERS WHO MAY BE INTERESTED IN THE JOBS AVAILABLE TO APPROACH THE LES OFFICES.

"THE LES WILL MAKE REPORT IN EACH CASE TO THE EVCC. IF AN EMPLOYER REFUSES TO TAKE ON LOCAL JOB APPLICANTS WITHOUT GOOD REASONS, HIS APPLICATION FOR IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN WORKERS MAY BE REJECTED BY THE COMMITTEE," HE SAID.

REGISTRATION OF VACANCIES SHOULD BE MADE ON A SPECIALLY-DESIGNED VACANCY ORDER FORM (LD 295).

THE EMPLOYER MUST SUBMIT THIS FORM TO THE LES HEAD OFFICE ON 17TH FLOOR, HARBOUR BUILDING, 38 PIER ROAD, CENTRAL.

THE LES WILL ISSUE AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO THE EMPLOYER, A COPY OF WHICH SHOULD ACCOMPANY THE APPLICATION FORM WHEN HE APPLIES TO THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT FOR IMPORTATION OF LABOUR.

THE VACANCY ORDER FORM, TOGETHER WITH THE APPLICATION FORM FOR IMPORTATION OF LABOUR, CAN BE OBTAINED FROM ALL LES DISTRICT OFFICES AND THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT FROM NEXT MONDAY (JANUARY 20).

ENQUIRIES ON LES SERVICES MAY BE MADE BY CALLING 8524158.

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TWO GOVT LOTS FETCH OVER \$1.3 BILLION
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TWO LOTS OF GOVERNMENT LAND WERE SOLD FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT OF \$1.322 BILLION BY THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT IN A PUBLIC AUCTION HELD THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON.

THE FIRST LOT, LOCATED AT THE JUNCTION OF CHEONG WAN ROAD AND SCIENCE MUSEUM ROAD, TSIM SHA TSUI EAST, WAS SOLD TO TERRIFIC INVESTMENT LIMITED AT \$1.25 BILLION WITH BIDDING OPENING AT \$900 MILLION.

WITH AN AREA OF ABOUT 5,535 SQUARE METRES, THE SITE IS FOR NON-INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES (EXCLUDING GODOWN, HOTEL, RESIDENTIAL AND PETROL FILLING STATION) AND INCLUDING A PUBLIC TRANSPORT TERMINUS, A LIBRARY, A PUBLIC TOILET AND A MULTI-STOREY CARPARK.

ACCORDING TO THE BUILDING COVENANT, THE DEVELOPER HAS TO COMPLETE A GROSS FLOOR AREA OF NOT LESS THAN 39,850 SQUARE METRES ON OR BEFORE MARCH 31, 1996.

THE OTHER LOT, LOCATED ON ABERDEEN MAIN ROAD, WAS BOUGHT BY WEALTHY ISLAND COMPANY LIMITED FOR \$72 MILLION WITH BIDDING OPENING AT \$38 MILLION.

THE SITE, WITH AN AREA OF ABOUT 346 SQUARE METRES, IS FOR NON-INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES (EXCLUDING SERVICE APARTMENTS, PETROL FILLING STATION, GODOWN AND HOTEL).

THE BUILDING COVENANT STIPULATES THAT THE DEVELOPER HAS TO COMPLETE A GROSS FLOOR AREA OF NOT LESS THAN 1,950 SQUARE METRES ON OR BEFORE MARCH 31, 1995.

THE AUCTION WAS HELD IN HOTEL FURAMA KEMPINSKI AND WAS CONDUCTED BY GOVERNMENT LAND AGENT, MR NIGEL BURLEY.

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DRINKING WATER UP TO WHO STANDARD

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THE DRINKING WATER SUPPLY IN HONG KONG IS UP TO THE STANDARD SET BY THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION, (WHO), THE DIRECTOR OF WATER SUPPLIES, MR WONG KWOK-LAI, TOLD AN INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON WATER QUALITY TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN HIS OPENING ADDRESS TO A THREE-DAY WORKSHOP ON "ALUMINIUM IN DRINKING WATER", MR WONG SAID THERE ARE 18 WATER TREATMENT WORKS SCATTERED OVER THE TERRITORY AND THE POTABLE SUPPLY TO ALL URBAN AND MOST POPULATED RURAL AREAS IS FULLY TREATED.

THE WORKSHOP IS ORGANISED BY THE WATER SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT IN COLLABORATION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL WATER SUPPLY ASSOCIATION.

MR WONG SAID THE TERRITORY'S GATHERING GROUNDS ARE MOSTLY UPLAND AND WELL PROTECTED FROM POLLUTION. THE QUALITY OF RAW WATER FROM THIS SOURCE IS EXTREMELY GOOD AND POSES NO PROBLEM FOR TREATMENT.

HE SAID WATER FROM CHINA COMES FROM A LARGE RIVER WHICH IS SUBJECT TO THE EFFECT OF AGRICULTURAL AND SOME INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES.

"ALTHOUGH THE QUALITY OF WATER FROM THIS SOURCE DOES NOT COMPARE SO FAVOURABLE AS THAT FROM OUR UPLAND CATCHMENT AREAS, IT IS BY FAR SATISFACTORY AND HAS NO TREATMENT PROBLEM," HE SAID.

"IN GENERAL TERMS, THE DRINKING WATER SUPPLY CAN BE DESCRIBED AS BEING SOFT, LOW TO MODERATE IN MINERAL SALT CONTENT, VERY LOW IN ORGANIC MATTER AND CONFORMING CHEMICALLY AND BACTERIOLOGICALLY TO THE GUIDELINE FOR DRINKING WATER QUALITY (WHO 1984)," HE ADDED.

MR WONG SAID PROVIDING AN ADEQUATE WATER SUPPLY FOR HONG KONG HAD ALWAYS BEEN DIFFICULT.

"WE HAVE A HIGHLY UNPREDICTABLE RAINFALL DUE TO THE SMALLNESS OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA IN THAT A VERY SLIGHT TURN IN THE DIRECTION OF A TROPICAL CYCLONE WILL MARK A DIFFERENCE OF SEVERAL HUNDRED MILLIMETRES OF RAINFALL," HE SAID.

AT PRESENT, WATER FROM CHINA CONSTITUTES ABOUT TWO-THIRDS OF THE TERRITORY'S DEMAND WHILE HONG KONG'S OWN RESERVOIR SYSTEMS CATER FOR THE REMAINING THIRD.

"WATER WAS FIRST OBTAINED FROM CHINA IN 1960 AT AN ANNUAL QUANTITY OF 22.7 MILLION CUBIC METRES WHICH TODAY STANDS AT 570 MILLION CUBIC METRES WITH A NEW AGREEMENT EXTENDING THE SUPPLY FROM CHINA INTO THE TURN OF THE CENTURY," HE SAID.

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TONNES OF VEGETABLES DESTROYED

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SOME EIGHT TONNES OF VEGETABLES WERE SEIZED AND DESTROYED BY HEALTH INSPECTORS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH DURING A DAY-LONG OPERATION AT MAN KAM TO BORDER CHECKPOINT WHICH ENDED AT 8 PM LAST NIGHT (TUESDAY).

THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HEALTH (HYGIENE), DR M.B. ALI, SAID A TOTAL OF 90 LORRIES WERE CHECKED AND OVER 160 VEGETABLE SAMPLES, INCLUDING CHOI SUM AND PAK CHOI, WERE TAKEN FOR EXAMINATION.

FOUR LORRY-LOADS OF VEGETABLES, WHICH DID NOT HAVE THE REQUIRED TAGS ISSUED BY FARMS CONCERNED OR THE NECESSARY IMPORT DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES, WERE DETAINED.

OF THE SAMPLES TAKEN, SIX FAILED THE SCREENING TESTS. THE OWNERS OF THE VEGETABLES VOLUNTARILY SURRENDERED THE GOODS FOR DESTRUCTION.

THE SHENZHEN AND GUANGZHOU AUTHORITIES WERE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS.

DR ALI SAID THE DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO TIGHTEN UP CHECKING AND SAMPLING AT THE BORDER CHECKPOINT.

MEANWHILE, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE REMINDED TO WASH AND BLANCH VEGETABLES THOROUGHLY BEFORE COOKING.

THEY ARE ADVISED TO TAKE THE FOLLOWING PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES:

- DON'T BUY VEGETABLES WITH AN OBVIOUS STRANGE SMELL;
- WASH VEGETABLES WELL BEFORE COOKING;
- DIP VEGETABLES INTO CLEAN WATER FOR SOME TIME TO ALLOW PESTICIDE TO LEACH OUT;
- BLANCH VEGETABLES IN BOILING WATER AND POUR AWAY THE WATER USED FOR BLANCHING AS IT MAY CONTAIN DISSOLVED PESTICIDES; AND
- COOK VEGETABLES THOROUGHLY BEFORE CONSUMPTION.

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TENDERS INVITED FOR SITE FORMATION WORKS FOR
LANTAU FIXED CROSSING/ROUTE 3 INTERCHANGE

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THE GOVERNMENT IS INVITING TENDERS FROM SIX PREQUALIFIED CONTRACTORS FOR THE SITE FORMATION WORKS OF THE LANTAU FIXED CROSSING/ROUTE 3 INTERCHANGE IN THE NORTH WESTERN PART OF TSING YI ISLAND.

THE DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS, MR KWEI SEE-KAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE ADVANCE EARTHWORKS CONTRACT INVOLVED EXCAVATION OF OVER SIX MILLION CUBIC METRES OF MATERIALS TO PREPARE FOR THE SITE FOR THE FUTURE INTERCHANGE LINKING THE LANTAU FIXED CROSSING WITH THE ROUTE 3 ROAD NETWORK.

"THE CONTRACT WILL BE FIXED-PRICE LUMP SUM. THIS IS TO ENSURE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE THAT THE WORKS ARE COMPLETED ON TIME AND WITHIN BUDGET," MR KWEI SAID.

THE CONTRACT IS EXPECTED TO BE AWARDED IN APRIL THIS YEAR AND WILL BE COMPLETED IN 28 MONTHS.

TENDER DOCUMENTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION BY PREQUALIFIED CONTRACTORS FROM TODAY. THE CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF TENDER IS FEBRUARY 28.

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GOVT LAND TO LET BY TENDER

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THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT IS INVITING TENDERS FOR THE SHORT-TERM TENANCIES FOR FOUR PIECES OF GOVERNMENT LAND.

THE FIRST SITE IS LOCATED AT THE JUNCTION OF WHARF ROAD AND TONG SHUI ROAD, NORTH POINT.

IT HAS AN AREA OF ABOUT 1,580 SQUARE METRES AND IS DESIGNED FOR A FEE-PAYING PUBLIC CARPARK (EXCLUDING CONTAINER VEHICLES).

THE TENANCY IS FOR THREE YEARS AND QUARTERLY THEREAFTER.

THE SECOND SITE IS LOCATED AT THE JUNCTION OF FUNG TAK ROAD AND YING FUNG LANE, KOWLOON.

WITH AN AREA OF ABOUT 2,250 SQUARE METRES, THE SITE IS FOR STORAGE PURPOSES (EXCLUDING STORAGE OF CONTAINERS).

THE TENANCY IS FOR ONE YEAR AND QUARTERLY THEREAFTER.

THE THIRD SITE IS LOCATED AT LUNG CHEUNG ROAD, DIAMOND HILL, KOWLOON.

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IT HAS AN AREA OF ABOUT 4,000 SQUARE METRES AND IS FOR A PLANT NURSERY AND/OR A PROCESSING YARD FOR LANDSCAPE GARDENING.

THE TENANCY IS FOR ONE YEAR AND QUARTERLY THEREAFTER.

THE REMAINING SITE IS LOCATED IN AREA 40, HANG HAU, TSEUNG KWAN O, SAI KUNG.

WITH AN AREA OF ABOUT 35,000 SQUARE METRES, THE SITE IS FOR OPEN STORAGE OF THE TENANT'S GOODS (EXCLUDING STORAGE OF CONTAINERS).

THE TENANCY IS FOR TWO YEARS AND QUARTERLY THEREAFTER.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF TENDERS IS NOON ON JANUARY 31.

FORM OF TENDER, TENDER NOTICE AND CONDITIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM AND TENDER PLAN INSPECTED AT THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES, SAI KUNG AND HONG KONG EAST, THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG AND THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES KOWLOON, 10TH FLOOR, YAU MA TEI CARPARK BUILDING, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, KOWLOON.

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271 VMS RETURNED
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A GROUP OF 271 VIETNAMESE MIGRANTS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) RETURNED TO VIETNAM UNDER THE UNHCR'S VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION PROGRAMME.

COMPRISING 107 MEN, 58 WOMEN, 52 BOYS AND 54 GIRLS, THEY WERE THE 86TH BATCH TO GO BACK UNDER THE PROGRAMME.

THIS GROUP BROUGHT TO 799 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE MIGRANTS WHO HAVE RETURNED VOLUNTARILY THIS YEAR, AND TO 14,778 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RETURNEES SINCE THE PROGRAMME STARTED IN MARCH 1989.

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PHOTO EXHIBITION TO PROMOTE TOURISM ON ISLANDS
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A PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION WITH THE THEME "A GLIMPSE OF THE ISLANDS DISTRICT" WILL BE HELD AT THE WEST BRIDGE EXHIBITION AREA OF CITY PLAZA, TAI KOO SHING FROM JANUARY 17 TO 19.

THE PICTURES WILL FEATURE FESTIVE EVENTS, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING, CAMPING FACILITIES, AND DEVELOPMENTS ON THE ISLANDS.

A VIDEO SHOW ON THE DISTRICT'S SCENIC SPOTS WILL ALSO BE SHOWN. TOURIST MAPS, GUIDES AND PAMPHLETS ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS AND SOUVENIRS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO VISITORS.

THE EXHIBITION IS ORGANISED BY THE ISLANDS DISTRICT BOARD'S TOURISM, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE HONG KONG TOURIST ASSOCIATION AND THE DISTRICT OFFICE.

IT WILL MOVE TO SHATIN NEW TOWN PLAZA ON JANUARY 24 AND WILL BE STAGED UNTIL JANUARY 26.

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RE-APPOINTMENT TO STANDING COMMISSION ON
CIVIL SERVICE SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

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THE GOVERNOR TODAY (WEDNESDAY) RE-APPOINTED MR TANG KWAI-NANG AS A MEMBER OF THE STANDING COMMISSION ON CIVIL SERVICE SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS WITH EFFECT FROM JANUARY 1 THIS YEAR, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN ANNOUNCED TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE STANDING COMMISSION ADVISES THE GOVERNMENT ON THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES GOVERNING THE PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF THE NON-DIRECTORATE CIVIL SERVICE OTHER THAN THE DISCIPLINED SERVICES.

MR TANG IS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLINED SERVICES SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE.

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TUNG CHUNG FISH CULTURE ZONE REMOVED

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THE TUNG CHUNG FISH CULTURE ZONE WAS REMOVED FROM THE LIST OF DESIGNATED FISH CULTURE ZONE WITH EFFECT FROM TODAY (WEDNESDAY) TO FACILITATE SITE FORMATION WORKS FOR THE NEW AIRPORT AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS.

THE FISH CULTURE ZONE (DESIGNATION) (AMENDMENT) ORDER 1992 WHICH GAVE EFFECT TO THIS ARRANGEMENT WAS GAZETTED ON JANUARY 10.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT SAID THE REMOVAL WAS REQUIRED BECAUSE THE AREA WOULD SOON BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE FORMATION WORKS.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 1992

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"MARICULTURISTS WITHIN THE AFFECTED ZONE HAVE BEEN OFFERED EX-GRATIA ALLOWANCES FOR EXTINGUISHMENT OF THEIR OPERATION OR FOR RELOCATION TO AVAILABLE VACANT SITES IN OTHER FISH CULTURE ZONES," HE SAID.

"HOWEVER, AFTER CONSIDERING THE GENUINE DIFFICULTIES OF MARICULTURISTS IN MOVING YOUNG FISH STOCKS DURING THIS TIME OF THE YEAR, THE GOVERNMENT HAS AGREED TO ALLOW THE TUNG CHUNG MARICULTURE OPERATIONS TO REMAIN AT THE SITE, AT THEIR OWN RISKS, UNTIL APRIL 30 TO ENABLE THEM TO SELL OFF THEIR STOCKS IN THE WARM SPRING MONTHS," HE ADDED.

THE TUNG CHUNG FISH CULTURE ZONE COVERS AN AREA OF ABOUT 1.7 HECTARES. IT IS PRESENTLY OCCUPIED BY 30 LICENSED MARICULTURISTS.

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LABOUR INSPECTION OFFICE ON MOVE

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THE LAI CHI KOK OFFICE OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT'S LABOUR INSPECTION DIVISION WILL MOVE TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO ROOMS 1 - 4, FIFTH FLOOR, WEST COAST INTERNATIONAL BUILDING, 290 - 296 UN CHAU STREET, KOWLOON.

THE OPENING HOURS OF THE NEW OFFICE ARE FROM 9 AM TO 5.30 PM MONDAY TO FRIDAY, AND FROM 9 AM TO NOON ON SATURDAYS. ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON 728 9280.

THE OFFICE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR REGULATING THE WORKING HOURS AND REST PERIODS OF WOMEN AND YOUNG PERSONS IN INDUSTRY AND CONTROLLING THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN AGED UNDER 15.

IT ALSO ENFORCES PROVISIONS OF THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ORDINANCE WHICH REQUIRES EMPLOYERS TO TAKE OUT INSURANCE POLICIES FOR THEIR EMPLOYEES.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS
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	DATE ----	\$ MILLION -----
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT ON	14.1.92	910
EFFECT OF FORWARDS TO BE SETTLED ON	15.1.92	-450*
EFFECT OF OPERATIONS THIS MORNING		+40
EFFECT OF OPERATIONS THIS AFTERNOON		NEUTRAL
* O/N ASSISTANCE TO BE REVERSED	-410MN	
OTHER FORWARDS TO BE SETTLED	- 40MN	
TRADE WEIGHTED INDEX 110.6 *+0.3* 15.1.92		

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS		HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS				
TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	4.16 PCT	23 MONTHS	2311	6.25	101.85	5.25
1 MONTH	3.94 PCT					
3 MONTHS	3.94 PCT					
6 MONTHS	3.99 PCT					
12 MONTHS	4.31 PCT					
TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 5,941 MN						
CLOSED 15 JANUARY 1992						

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