



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 1992

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 1992

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STATEMENT BY CS TO LEGCO
ON GOVT'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO THE RAIN STORM
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MR DEPUTY PRESIDENT,

THE RAINSTORM WHICH STRUCK HONG KONG LAST FRIDAY MORNING WAS ONE OF THE MOST INTENSE EVER RECORDED IN THE TERRITORY. IN SOME PLACES - PARTICULARLY THE NORTH WESTERN PART OF HONG KONG ISLAND - OVER 300 MM OR 12 INCHES OF RAIN FELL IN NINE HOURS. THE STORM BROUGHT IN ITS WAKE SERIOUS FLOODING, MORE THAN 175 LANDSLIPS, DISRUPTION TO OUR TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS AND, TRAGICALLY, THE LOSS OF FIVE LIVES. I AM SURE THAT I SPEAK FOR EVERY MEMBER OF THIS COUNCIL AND INDEED FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY WHEN I SAY THAT THE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF THOSE WHO DIED HAVE OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY. WE SHARE THE SADNESS OF THE FAMILIES AND WE OFFER OUR CONDOLENCES ON THE LOSS OF THEIR DEAR ONES.

I THINK MOST PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THAT THE INTENSITY AND SEVERITY OF THE STORM COULD NOT HAVE BEEN FORESEEN AND THAT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WERE FACED WITH A VERY DIFFICULT SITUATION. HAVING SAID THIS, I ACCEPT THAT THE STORM AND ITS AFTERMATH HAVE REVEALED SOME SHORTCOMINGS IN OUR EMERGENCY RESPONSE MECHANISMS. WE HAVE MOVED QUICKLY TO IDENTIFY THE PROBLEMS AND I CAN ASSURE MEMBERS THAT WE ARE DETERMINED TO LEARN THE LESSONS. I AM NOT IN A POSITION TODAY TO ANNOUNCE THE FULL DETAILS OF HOW WE INTEND TO IMPROVE OUR EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM, BUT I CAN EXPLAIN IN GENERAL TERMS WHAT WE ARE PLANNING TO PUT IN PLACE.

WE HAVE TO IMPROVE OUR ARRANGEMENTS SO THAT WE ARE ABLE TO RESPOND QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY TO EMERGENCIES. BUT THESE RESPONSES MUST BE SUFFICIENTLY FLEXIBLE SO THAT WE AVOID ALARMING THE PUBLIC OR DISRUPTING THE DAILY LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY UNNECESSARILY. CLEARLY, WE DO NOT WANT A FULL SCALE EMERGENCY RESPONSE EVERY TIME WE GET HEAVY RAIN. BUT WE DO NEED A SYSTEM WHICH ALERTS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SO THAT THEY ARE READY TO RESPOND ONCE IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT WE ARE FACING A MAJOR PROBLEM. OUR AIM IS THEREFORE A TWO STAGE ARRANGEMENT.

- THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY WILL TRIGGER THE FIRST STAGE ON THE BASIS OF THEIR FORECASTING OF HEAVY RAINSTORMS LIKELY TO AFFECT HONG KONG. IT WILL INVOLVE A SERIES OF WARNINGS TO GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SO THAT THEIR EMERGENCY TEAMS AND RESPONSES CAN BE PUT IN PLACE QUICKLY. THIS IS ESSENTIALLY A MATTER OF PRIMING THE DEPARTMENTS AND MAKING SURE STAFF ARE IN POSITION AND ALERT.

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- ON MOST OCCASIONS HEAVY RAINSTORMS DO NOT DEVELOP INTO THE SORT OF INUNDATION WE SAW LAST FRIDAY AND IT WOULD CLEARLY BE A MISTAKE TO TRIGGER A FULL EMERGENCY RESPONSE EVERY TIME. IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO FORECAST ACCURATELY THE LEVEL OF RAIN FALL. WE BELIEVE THEREFORE THAT THE SECOND STAGE OF THE RAINSTORM ALERT SYSTEM SHOULD BE TRIGGERED BY THE ACTUAL RAIN FALL LEVELS BEING RECORDED THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY. AS WE WILL ALREADY HAVE ALERTED THE RELEVANT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS BEFORE THE RAIN STARTS TO FALL THIS SYSTEM WILL ENSURE THAT WE ARE READY TO RESPOND QUICKLY AND FLEXIBLY ONCE IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT WE MIGHT HAVE TO CONTEND WITH SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES. AND IT IS AT THIS STAGE THAT THE PUBLIC WILL BE GIVEN EARLY AND CLEAR ADVICE ON HOW TO RESPOND.

WE ARE STILL WORKING ON THE DETAILS OF THESE ARRANGEMENTS BUT OUR AIMS ARE CLEAR. WE WANT A SYSTEM BASED ON OBJECTIVE TRIGGERS WHICH LEADS TO A HIGH STATE OF PREPAREDNESS BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS. WE ALSO NEED TO RESPOND FLEXIBLY SO THAT THE PUBLIC IS GIVEN CLEAR AND APPROPRIATE ADVICE. I CAN ASSURE MEMBERS THAT WE SHALL COMPLETE THIS WORK VERY QUICKLY AND MAKE KNOWN THE DETAILS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

ONE OF THE DIFFICULTIES LAST FRIDAY WAS THAT THE STORM STRUCK BETWEEN 6 - 7 A.M. AND DISRUPTED SCHOOLING ARRANGEMENTS. THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION WAS CONCERNED TO AVOID A SITUATION IN WHICH SOME CHILDREN SET OFF FOR THEIR SCHOOLS IN DIFFICULT CONDITIONS ONLY TO FIND THE SCHOOLS CLOSED OR THAT THERE WAS NO TEACHER THERE TO TAKE CARE OF THEM. BUT OUR RESPONSES MUST BE SUFFICIENTLY FLEXIBLE TO COPE EVEN IF THE EMERGENCY ARISES AT THE MOST INCONVENIENT OR DIFFICULT TIME. THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION IS ALREADY WORKING ON A PLAN TO ACHIEVE THIS AND IS GETTING MAXIMUM COOPERATION FROM THE SCHOOLS. FOLLOWING ON FROM THE EVENTS OF LAST WEEK WE ARE ALL AGREED THAT IT IS BETTER TO ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION AND CLOSE THE SCHOOLS. THIS WILL CERTAINLY BE OUR GUIDELINE IN THE FUTURE.

I WOULD NOW LIKE TO INFORM MEMBERS OF THE PRESENT POSITION WITH THE MORE THAN 175 LANDSLIPS WHICH OCCURRED DURING THE STORM. THE GREAT MAJORITY OF THESE POSED NO SERIOUS THREAT OF INJURY OR DISRUPTION TO COMMUNICATIONS. OUR WORKS DEPARTMENTS MOVED QUICKLY TO DEAL WITH THE LANDSLIPS, PARTICULARLY THOSE AFFECTING PUBLIC SAFETY AND COMMUNICATIONS. MORE THAN 100 GEOTECHNICAL STAFF, SCORES OF OTHER ENGINEERS AND HUNDREDS OF CONTRACTOR'S STAFF WERE DEPLOYED AND REMEDIAL WORKS WERE SET IN HAND. ALL EXCEPT 4 OR 5 ROADS WERE CLEARED WITHIN 24 HOURS AND PROTECTIVE WORKS FOR MANY OF THE LANDSLIPS WERE CARRIED OUT WITHIN THE SAME PERIOD.

THE HIGHEST 24-HOUR RAINFALL OCCURRED IN THE NORTH WESTERN CORNER OF HONG KONG ISLAND, WHERE BAGUIO VILLAS IS SITUATED. I CAN ASSURE THOSE RESIDENTS OF BAGUIO VILLAS WHO HAVE HAD TO LEAVE THEIR HOMES THAT WE ARE DOING EVERYTHING WE CAN TO COMPLETE OUR GEOTECHNICAL WORK AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. SAFETY MUST BE THE HIGHEST PRIORITY BUT WE UNDERSTAND THE UNHAPPINESS AND DISRUPTION FACED BY RESIDENTS OF THE AFFECTED BLOCKS. BY THE END OF THIS WEEK WE WILL BE IN A POSITION TO MAKE A DECISION ON WHETHER IT IS SAFE FOR RESIDENTS TO RETURN TO BLOCK 26.

/WE ARE

WE ARE ALSO CARRYING OUT A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSES OF THE LANDSLIP BEHIND BAGUIO VILLA AND ARE DRAWING UP DETAILED PLANS FOR THE REMEDIAL WORK NECESSARY TO ENSURE THE LONG TERM STABILITY OF THE SLOPE. FULL INFORMATION ON BOTH WILL BE MADE PUBLIC AS SOON AS IT IS AVAILABLE.

I WOULD NOW LIKE TO BRIEF MEMBERS ON THE CURRENT SITUATION ON OUR SLOPE STABILISATION PROGRAMME. THIS PROGRAMME BEGAN IN 1976 AND WE HAVE PREPARED A CATALOGUE OF ABOUT 10,000 SLOPES WHICH MIGHT REQUIRE STABILISATION WORKS. WE HAVE COMPLETED OUR INVESTIGATION WORK ON 4,300 OF THESE AND HAVE DETERMINED THAT ONLY 880 REQUIRED WORK. WORK ON 750 OF THESE HAS BEEN COMPLETED. THE INVESTIGATION PROGRAMME WILL PROCEED AT THE RATE OF ABOUT 1,000 EACH YEAR AND OF COURSE WE HAVE GIVEN PRIORITY TO THOSE WHICH ARE MOST LIKELY TO NEED WORK. WE HAVE ALSO GIVEN PRIORITY TO CLEARING ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE SLOPES IN SQUATTER AREAS AND ONCE AGAIN WE HAVE MADE IMPORTANT PROGRESS. IN 1982 WE ESTIMATED THAT UP TO 60,000 SQUATTERS WERE AT RISK FROM POTENTIALLY UNSTABLE SLOPES. ALMOST ALL OF THESE AREAS HAVE BEEN CLEARED AND THE SQUATTERS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED WITH ALTERNATIVE, BETTER HOUSING. WE NOW ESTIMATE THAT THERE ARE FEWER THAN 2,000 SQUATTERS REMAINING ON A SPECIALLY VULNERABLE TERRAIN AND ALL OF THESE PEOPLE WILL BE REHOUSED BY EARLY 1994 AT THE LATEST.

THE GOVERNMENT'S CATALOGUE OF SLOPES IS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION IN THE GEOTECHNICAL INFORMATION UNIT AND THE DEPARTMENT IS PLEASED TO PROVIDE ADVICE TO ANYONE WHO NEEDS IT.

IN CONCLUSION I THINK WE CAN ALL AGREE THAT WE HAVE MADE ENORMOUS PROGRESS ON THIS ISSUE OVER THE LAST 16 YEARS. THE LIMITED DAMAGE FROM LAST FRIDAY'S STORM IS PROOF THAT THE \$1 BILLION OF PUBLIC MONEY INVESTED IN SLOPE STABILISATION WORKS HAS BEEN WELL SPENT.

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PROSPERITY AND GROWTH TO BE BUILT ON AIRPORT FOUNDATIONS

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HONG KONG'S PROSPERITY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE NEXT CENTURY WILL BE BUILT ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME (ACP), FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON HAMISH MACLEOD, SAID THIS EVENING AT THE END OF A LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DEBATE ON GOVERNMENT SPENDING AND THE ACP.

"TO PROCEED CONFIDENTLY WITH THE ACP IS THE WAY TO ENSURE A GROWING ECONOMY, AND WITH IT A GROWING ABILITY TO FUND SOCIAL SERVICES AND THE OTHER ITEMS WHICH WILL NOT JUST SAFEGUARD, BUT FURTHER IMPROVE, THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG," MR MACLEOD SAID.

"TO REFUSE TO RISE TO THE CHALLENGE, TO OPPOSE CHANGE, IS TO OPT FOR STAGNATION AND DECLINE."

/MR MACLEOD

MR MACLEOD STRESSED THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO:

- * OPERATE STRICT COST CONTROLS OF ALL ACP PROJECTS;
- * RESPOND CONSTRUCTIVELY TO SPECIFIC AND REASONABLE REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION ON THE ACP; AND
- * MAINTAIN A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD ON THE AWARD OF ALL CONTRACTS.

"AN IMPRESSIVE MOMENTUM HAS DEVELOPED IN RECENT MONTHS AS DESIGN WORK HAS ADVANCED, TENDERS INVITED, CONTRACTS AWARDED, AND WORK STARTED ON CONSTRUCTION SITES," HE SAID.

"I BELIEVE THAT ALL CONCERNED UNDERSTAND THE NEED FOR THIS MOMENTUM TO BE SUSTAINED. TO LET IT FALTER OR SLIP WOULD BE EXPENSIVE AND WOULD UNDERMINE CONFIDENCE IN THE ACP, AND MAKE BORROWING MORE DIFFICULT."

MR MACLEOD WAS REPLYING TO A MOTION THAT CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THAT ACP EXPENDITURE WOULD NOT HAVE ANY MATERIAL EFFECT OF GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SOCIAL SERVICES AND OTHER PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS, AND THAT THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WOULD BE SAFEGUARDED.

HE REITERATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S PROJECTIONS SHOWED THAT THE ACP WOULD TAKE UP ABOUT 25% OF TOTAL ESTIMATED GOVERNMENT CAPITAL EXPENDITURE IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. THE PROGRAMME ITSELF WOULD ALSO SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE.

HONG KONG'S SUCCESS HAD BEEN BUILT ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF SUCH VISIONARY PROJECTS AS THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY AND THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNELS, SAID MR MACLEOD.

"IF WE HAD NOT TURNED SUCH VISIONS INTO REALITY, HONG KONG WOULD NOT BE WHAT IT IS TODAY, NOR WOULD IT BE POISED FOR THE GROWTH OF THE COMING YEARS.

"NOW THE VISION IS A NEW AIRPORT TO TAKE US INTO THE NEXT CENTURY, SERVED BY A RAILWAY, NEW HIGHWAYS, AND A THIRD HARBOUR TUNNEL. THESE ROAD AND RAIL FACILITIES WILL PROVIDE THE FAST ROAD AND RAIL TRANSPORT NEEDED BY A MODERN CITY AND AIRPORT OPERATING ROUND THE CLOCK."

OTHER SOCIAL BENEFITS FROM THE PROGRAMME'S ROAD, RAIL AND OTHER PROJECTS WOULD INCLUDE:

- * RELIEF FOR THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC FROM ROAD AND RAIL CONGESTION ON ROUTES THROUGH WEST KOWLOON;
- * RAPID ACCESS TO TSING YI AND THE NEW TOWNS PLANNED FOR NORTH LANTAU;
- * ACCESS IN 30 MINUTES FROM CENTRAL AND KOWLOON TO THE RECREATIONAL AREAS OF LANTAU;

- * IMPROVED LIVELIHOOD FOR THE 350,000 PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE CORRIDOR MOST AFFECTED BY KAI TAK AIRCRAFT NOISE; AND
- * REDEVELOPMENT OF THE KAI TAK SITE.

MR MACLEOD APPEALED TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO GIVE A LEAD TO THE COMMUNITY BY SHARING THE VISION OF THE FUTURE AND SUPPORTING THE ACP.

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SPEECH BY SEM WHEN WINDING UP MOTION DEBATE ON
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IN LEGCO

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MR DEPUTY PRESIDENT,

I HAVE LISTENED ATTENTIVELY TO MEMBERS' VIEWS ON THE MOTION THIS AFTERNOON. A CENTRAL THEME WHICH RUNS CONSISTENTLY THROUGH THE MANY CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECHES IS THAT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE TO ENABLE OUR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TO DO A BETTER JOB.

I CAN READILY IDENTIFY WITH THESE SENTIMENTS. TEACHERS HAVE A PIVOTAL ROLE TO PLAY IN THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG MINDS AND IN ENSURING THE QUALITY OF THAT EDUCATION. THE GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES THIS AND HAS INTRODUCED VARIOUS IMPROVEMENT MEASURES OVER THE YEARS TO BETTER EQUIP TEACHERS FOR THEIR MISSION. WE REALIZE THAT THESE INDIVIDUAL MEASURES, WHILE USEFUL IN THEMSELVES, ARE NOT ENOUGH, BECAUSE SOCIETY IS CONSTANTLY MOVING ON AND THE COMMUNITY'S EXPECTATIONS OF OUR TEACHERS KEEP ON RISING. WHAT IS NEEDED AT THIS JUNCTURE IS A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE FULL RANGE OF ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PREPARATION, DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE TEACHING FORCE, INCLUDING THE VERY ITEMS LISTED IN THE MOTION BEFORE US. AND THEY ARE PRECISELY WHAT THE EDUCATION COMMISSION HAS BEEN EXAMINING THOROUGHLY OVER THE PAST EIGHTEEN MONTHS. THE OUTCOME OF THE COMMISSION'S DELIBERATIONS WILL BE RELEASED IN A FEW WEEKS' TIME IN ITS FIFTH REPORT. THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY AND THE PUBLIC AT LARGE WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY AND COMMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OVER THE SUMMER, BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT DECIDES ON WHAT POLICIES TO ADOPT.

WHILE THE EDUCATION COMMISSION IS STILL WORKING HARD TO FINALISE ITS REPORT, IT WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE FOR ME TO PREJUDGE THE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS IT WILL BE MAKING ON THE VARIOUS ISSUES LISTED IN THE MOTION, NOT TO MENTION THE PUBLIC COMMENTS AND THE GOVERNMENT'S EVENTUAL DECISIONS ON THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, TODAY'S DEBATE DOES GIVE ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE STOCK OF WHAT HAS BEEN DONE TO DATE TO MAKE THE LIFE OF A TEACHER LESS ONEROUS, AND TO PROVIDE A CONTRAST TO THE SOMEWHAT GLOOMY PICTURE THAT SOME PEOPLE HAVE TENDED TO PAINT OF OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM.

/LET ME

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LET ME START WITH THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. SINCE 1990, SIX NEW PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND 14 NEW SECONDARY SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED TO IMPROVED STANDARD DESIGNS. THESE PROVIDE, RESPECTIVELY, 32% AND 15% MORE SPACE THAN THE FORMER DESIGNS, AS WELL AS ADDED FLEXIBILITY TO MEET MODERN EDUCATIONAL NEEDS. MOREOVER, THE NEW SCHOOLS ARE EQUIPPED WITH MICRO-COMPUTERS TO HELP COPE WITH THE MANY ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH NORMAL SCHOOL OPERATION. THERE IS ALSO AN ON-GOING PROGRAMME TO UPGRADE THE OLDER SCHOOLS BY PROVIDING THREE ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONAL ROOMS IN EACH OF THEM. TO DATE, SUCH CONVERSION WORK HAS BEEN COMPLETED IN 53 SCHOOLS, AND EIGHT MORE WILL UNDERGO SIMILAR CONVERSION IN THIS FINANCIAL YEAR.

ANOTHER MAJOR EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT FOR TEACHERS IS THE NOISE ABATEMENT PROGRAMME INVOLVING THE PROVISION OF AIR-CONDITIONING AND DOUBLE GLAZED WINDOWS FOR SCHOOLS AFFECTED BY TRAFFIC AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE. WORK ON 85 SCHOOLS HAS BEEN COMPLETED. ANOTHER 79 ARE IN THE PROGRAMME, WITH WORK ON 24 OF THEM EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY SEPTEMBER 1992. I SHOULD ALSO MENTION THAT, APART FROM THIS PROGRAMME, OVER 100 SCHOOLS HAVE HAD THEIR STAFF ROOMS AND GENERAL OFFICES AIR-CONDITIONED SINCE 1989. THESE IMPROVEMENTS REPRESENT SIGNIFICANT CAPITAL INVESTMENT. FOR EXAMPLE, THE COST OF A STANDARD PRIMARY SCHOOL HAS INCREASED FROM \$16 MILLION TO \$30 MILLION, AN INCREASE OF 88%. THE COST OF A STANDARD SECONDARY SCHOOL HAS GONE UP BY 25% FROM \$28 MILLION TO \$35 MILLION. THE NOISE ABATEMENT PROGRAMME HAS COST \$140 MILLION UP TO NOW.

WITH REGARD TO REDUCING THE NON-TEACHING WORK OF TEACHERS, PRIMARY SCHOOLS ARE NOW PROVIDED WITH ONE OR TWO CLERICAL STAFF, DEPENDING ON SCHOOL SIZE. SECONDARY SCHOOLS ARE PROVIDED WITH A BLOCK GRANT WHICH INCLUDES THE NOTIONAL ESTABLISHMENT OF ONE SECRETARY, ONE TYPIST AND TWO CLERICAL OFFICERS (FOR A 24-CLASS SCHOOL). THESE LEVELS OF PROVISION SHOULD BE ADEQUATE AT MOST TIMES, ALTHOUGH WE RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS A PARTICULAR PROBLEM AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL TERM, WHEN APPLICATIONS FROM PARENTS FOR VARIOUS KINDS OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE HAVE TO BE PROCESSED WITH THE HELP OF THE SCHOOLS AND SOME, IF NOT MOST, OF THIS WORK HAS FALLEN ON TEACHERS. TO SOME EXTENT, THE PROVISION OF COMPUTERS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES IN SCHOOLS WOULD ALLEVIATE THIS BURDEN. SO WOULD A STREAMLINING OF THE APPLICATION PROCEDURE, WHICH THE STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AGENCY IS EXAMINING. HOWEVER, THE SEASONAL NATURE OF THE EXTRA WORKLOAD SUGGESTS THAT THE ANSWER LIES, NOT IN PROVIDING MORE CLERICAL POSTS, BUT IN MORE FLEXIBLE USE OF RESOURCES THROUGH HIRING TEMPORARY OR PART-TIME STAFF. SECONDARY SCHOOLS HAVE THIS FLEXIBILITY ALREADY. WE PLAN TO EXTEND THE SAME ARRANGEMENT TO PRIMARY SCHOOLS UNDER THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE.

/DESPITE RECENT

DESPITE RECENT EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN, IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DEBATE REGARDING THE REPEATER ALLOWANCE, OVER THE WORKLOAD OF TEACHERS, THE TEACHER:PUPIL RATIO IN HONG KONG HAS IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY OVER THE PAST DECADE IN BOTH PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS. THE RATIO FOR A STANDARD SECONDARY SCHOOL IS NOW 1:22, NOT COUNTING THE SEPARATE PROVISION OF SPLIT CLASS TEACHERS AND ADDITIONAL TEACHERS FOR SCHOOLS USING CHINESE AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION. THE CORRESPONDING RATIO FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS IS 1:27. THESE LEVELS OF PROVISION PUT HONG KONG ON PAR WITH SINGAPORE AND TAIWAN, ALBEIT STILL ADMITTEDLY SOME WAY BEHIND JAPAN, THE UK AND THE USA. THEY ALSO MEAN THAT, ALTHOUGH THE CLASS SIZE HAS REMAINED GENERALLY AT OR CLOSE TO 40, TEACHERS NOWADAYS HAVE FEWER ASSIGNED PERIODS, THUS ENABLING THEM TO HANDLE THE EXTRA DEMANDS THAT MASS EDUCATION HAS BROUGHT INTO SCHOOLS.

ON TEACHER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT, AN IMPRESSIVE RANGE OF 20 IN-SERVICE COURSES HAS BEEN OFFERED TO HELP TEACHERS DEVELOP PROFESSIONALLY. SOME OF THESE COURSES HAVE BEEN MADE PRE-REQUISITES FOR PROMOTION. THROUGH ITS ADVISORY INSPECTORATE, THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ADVISES AND ASSISTS TEACHERS ACTIVELY ON ALL MATTERS RELEVANT TO SUBJECT TEACHING IN SCHOOLS. THESE INCLUDE THE ISSUE OF CURRICULUM GUIDELINES TO SCHOOLS COVERING ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATION. IN-SERVICE REFRESHER COURSES ARE ALSO ORGANIZED TO PROVIDE INDUCTION FOR NEW TEACHERS AND TRAINING FOR SENIOR TEACHERS AND PANEL HEADS. FURTHERMORE, THE DEPARTMENT HAS ESTABLISHED 21 TEACHING AND RESOURCE CENTRES FOR DIFFERENT SUBJECTS IN VARIOUS LOCATIONS TO PROVIDE CENTRALISED SOURCES OF REFERENCE AND RESOURCE MATERIALS, AS WELL AS VENUES FOR INTERACTION AMONGST TEACHERS. AS A MAJOR INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE PROFESSIONALISM AMONGST TEACHERS, THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAS SUPPORTED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HONG KONG TEACHERS' CENTRE WHICH WAS OPENED TO ALL TEACHERS IN JUNE 1989. IT IS A MULTI-FACETED, MULTI-PURPOSE CENTRE MANAGED BY A REPRESENTATIVE BODY OF TEACHER ORGANISATIONS IN HONG KONG. IT AIMS TO PROMOTE CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENRICHMENT AMONG TEACHERS, AND TO FOSTER AMONG THEM A GREATER SENSE OF UNITY AND PROFESSIONALISM IN A FRIENDLY, ENCOURAGING, AND NON-HIERARCHIAL ENVIRONMENT.

WITH REGARD TO GRADUATE TEACHING POSITIONS WITHIN PUBLIC SECTOR SCHOOLS, THE GOVERNMENT'S CURRENT POLICY IS TO PROVIDE FOR 70% OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHING POSTS TO BE FILLED BY DEGREE HOLDERS; THE REMAINING 30%, TOGETHER WITH ALL PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHING POSTS, ARE FILLED BY NON-GRADUATE TEACHERS. AN IMPROVEMENT ALREADY MADE IS THE PROVISION OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOME PRIMARY SCHOOL HEADMASTERS TO UNDERGO STUDIES FOR THE B.A. IN PRIMARY EDUCATION AT THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG. FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN TERMS OF THE PROVISION OF NEW GRADUATE POSITIONS ARE THE SUBJECT OF CONSIDERATION BY THE EDUCATION COMMISSION.

I NOW TURN TO THE QUESTION OF FUNDING. THE IMPROVEMENTS I HAVE MENTIONED WILL CONTINUE TO BE SUPPORTED AS PART OF THE NORMAL ACTIVITIES OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. AS A RESULT, THE UNIT COST OF EDUCATING A PUPIL WILL INCREASE, NOT DECLINE. HOWEVER, THE RATE AT WHICH INCREASES CAN BE ACHIEVED IS OFTEN NOT TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON A WILLINGNESS TO SPEND, BUT ON HOW WORTHWHILE INITIATIVES CAN BE IMPLEMENTED THROUGH THE SYSTEM.

/SIR, I

SIR, I WISH TO DIGRESS A LITTLE TO ANSWER A SPECIFIC POINT MADE BY MR CHEUNG MAN-KWONG ON THE APPARENT DISCREPANCY BETWEEN LOCAL AIDED SCHOOLS AND THE ENGLISH SCHOOL FOUNDATION SCHOOLS. THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IS TO PROVIDE ESF SCHOOLS WITH NO MORE SUBSIDY THAN THAT AVAILABLE TO LOCAL AIDED SCHOOLS. THIS IS THE PARITY OF SUBSIDY PRINCIPLE ESTABLISHED SINCE 1980. THE EXTRA FACILITIES THAT ESF SCHOOLS PROVIDED ARE FUNDED ENTIRELY BY PARENTS WHO PAID SUBSTANTIAL FEES. BY COMPARISON, THE PARENTS OF PUPILS STUDYING IN AIDED SCHOOLS PAY NOTHING UP TO SECONDARY 3 OR UP TO ONLY ABOUT 5% OF ESF FEES AT SENIOR SECONDARY LEVEL. HAVING SAID ALL THAT, I AGREE THAT THE ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE SCHOOLS SECTOR WILL BE THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. I AM GLAD TO SAY THAT THE NEW ALLOCATION OF \$300 MILLION OVER THREE YEARS, WHICH I ANNOUNCED IN THIS COUNCIL ON 1 APRIL, TOGETHER WITH THE SUPPORT GIVEN BY MEMBERS FOR THAT ALLOCATION TO BE SPENT ON OUTSTANDING IMPROVEMENT ITEMS FROM EARLIER EDUCATION COMMISSION REPORTS, HAS PUT ME IN THE HAPPY POSITION OF STARTING WITH A CLEAN SLATE WITH REGARD TO THE FUNDING OF NEW POLICIES TO EMERGE FROM ECR5. I CANNOT TODAY ANTICIPATE WHAT THESE NEW POLICIES WILL BE, AND IT WOULD BE IRRESPONSIBLE OF ME TO MAKE ANY SPECIFIC PROMISES AT THIS STAGE. BUT I DO UNDERTAKE TO ALERT MY COLLEAGUES IN THE ADMINISTRATION TO POSSIBLE FUNDING REQUIREMENTS AND TO BID FOR THE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT NEW POLICIES AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY.

TO CONCLUDE, MR DEPUTY PRESIDENT, THE ADMINISTRATION FULLY ACCEPTS THE NEED TO IMPROVE FURTHER THE QUALITY OF OUR SCHOOL EDUCATION. THIS IS OF COURSE NOT TO SAY THAT THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION THAT WE ARE ALREADY PROVIDING IS ANYTHING THAT WE NEED TO BE ASHAMED OF. THE ADMINISTRATION FULLY SUPPORTS THE SPIRIT OF THE MOTION BEFORE THE COUNCIL. WE HAVE TAKEN CAREFUL NOTE OF THE OBSERVATION AND CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS MADE BY THE MEMBERS TODAY AND WILL CONSIDER THEM CAREFULLY AND POSITIVELY. HOWEVER, UNTIL WE HAVE SEEN AND STUDIED THE OUTCOME OF THE EDUCATION COMMISSION'S DELIBERATIONS, WE ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO GIVE CLEAR SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS REGARDING FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN ALL THE AREAS LISTED IN THE MOTION, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS AND I QUOTE THE "MOVE TOWARDS THE TARGET OF AN ALL DEGREE-HOLDING TEACHING FORCE" WHICH TAKES US BEYOND EXISTING POLICY. FOR THIS REASON, THE EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS WILL ABSTAIN FROM VOTING ON THE MOTION NOTWITHSTANDING THE ADMINISTRATION'S SUPPORT FOR THE SPIRIT BEHIND IT.

THANK YOU, MR DEPUTY PRESIDENT.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 1992

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SPEECH BY ACTING SHW IN ADJOURNMENT DEBATE
ON CHINESE MEDICINE IN LEGCO

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MR DEPUTY PRESIDENT,

MAY I FIRST OF ALL THANK THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL FOR THEIR VIEWS AND OPINIONS ON CHINESE MEDICINE.

CHINESE MEDICINE HAS HAD A LONG HISTORY AND HAS SERVED MANY HERE AND ELSEWHERE FOR MANY MANY YEARS. INDEED, IT IS NOT JUST A FORM OF MEDICAL TREATMENT AND PREVENTIVE CARE, IT IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF CHINESE CULTURE.

LOCALLY, CHINESE MEDICINE IS WIDELY USED BY THE PUBLIC: BY PRESCRIPTION BY CHINESE MEDICINE PRACTITIONERS, THROUGH SELF-MEDICATION AND FOR GENERAL HEALTH MAINTENANCE. INTERNATIONALLY, THERE IS GROWING INTEREST IN CHINESE MEDICINE AS A FORM OF ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE, BOTH IN TREATMENT OF DISEASES AND IN ACADEMIC OR CLINICAL RESEARCH.

IN THE LIGHT OF PUBLIC CONCERN FOR THE PROPER USE AND GOOD PRACTICE OF CHINESE MEDICINE, GOVERNMENT APPOINTED THE WORKING PARTY ON CHINESE MEDICINE TO REVIEW EXISTING PRACTICES AND TO IDENTIFY THE WAY AHEAD. THE WORKING PARTY HAS, JUST LAST MONTH, COMPLETED PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON ITS INTERIM REPORT. WE NOW AWAIT WITH KEEN INTEREST ITS FURTHER DELIBERATIONS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

CLEARLY, CHINESE MEDICINE HAS A ROLE IN MEDICAL AND HEALTH CARE. THIS OUGHT TO BE RECOGNISED. I CAN SENSE CONSIDERABLE CONSENSUS ON THIS AMONGST MEMBERS IN TONIGHT'S DEBATE. THE QUESTION IS HOW. OUR PRIMARY CONCERN IS SAFE PATIENT CARE. IN THE GENERAL INTEREST OF OUR COMMUNITY, OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO PROMOTE THE PROPER USE OF CHINESE MEDICINE, TO ENSURE STANDARDS AND TO ENHANCE THE STATUS OF THE PROFESSION.

I AM GRATEFUL TO MEMBERS FOR THEIR WIDE-RANGING VIEWS IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE THIS EVENING. THESE, TOGETHER WITH THE VIEWS AND COMMENTS ALREADY EXPRESSED BY THE PUBLIC AND INTERESTED PARTIES ON THE INTERIM REPORT, OFFER THE WORKING PARTY ON CHINESE MEDICINE MUCH FOOD FOR THOUGHT. WHEN THE WORKING PARTY'S FINAL REPORT COMES TO HAND, WE WILL CONSIDER ITS RECOMMENDATIONS CAREFULLY, WITH CLARITY OF OBJECTIVE AND PRAGMATISM IN APPROACH.

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MEASURES TO COMBAT ARMED ROBBERIES OUTLINED

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THE POLICE HAVE RECENTLY COMPLETED A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THEIR ARMS AND AMMUNITION TO ENSURE THAT THEIR EQUIPMENT IS ADEQUATE TO TACKLE CRIMINALS WHO ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY SOPHISTICATED, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR ASPREY SAID A NUMBER OF IMPROVEMENTS HAD BEEN SUGGESTED, INCLUDING MORE EFFECTIVE AMMUNITION AND REVOLVERS, SPEED LOADING EQUIPMENT AND A NEW STYLE OF HOLSTER.

"THESE SUGGESTIONS ARE NOW BEING CONSIDERED URGENTLY WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION," HE SAID IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PEGGY LAM.

MR ASPREY POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN A NUMBER OF STEPS TO COMBAT THE OCCURENCE OF ARMED ROBBERIES.

IN THE CASE OF CRIMES INVOLVING CRIMINALS FROM CHINA, THE GOVERNMENT HAD IMPROVED CO-OPERATION WITH CHINA THROUGH BETTER COMMUNICATIONS AND LIAISON.

AT PRESENT, HE SAID THIS WAS ACHIEVED THROUGH THE INTERPOL OF WHICH BOTH CHINA AND HONG KONG WERE MEMBERS, REGULAR BORDER LIAISON AND VISITS BETWEEN THE HONG KONG POLICE AND MAINLAND PUBLIC SECURITY OFFICERS.

"HOWEVER, THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE HAS JUST RETURNED FROM A LIAISON MEETING IN CHINA AT WHICH CROSS BORDER CRIME INCLUDING FIREARM OFFENCES WAS DISCUSSED.

"IT WAS AGREED TO STEP UP LIAISON THROUGH STATIONING A CHINESE LIAISON OFFICER IN HONG KONG AND STRENGTHENING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE HONG KONG POLICE, AND THE GUANGDONG AND SHENZHEN INTERPOL LIAISON OFFICES TO CO-ORDINATE ACTION IN URGENT CASES.

"SUCH MEASURES SHOULD BE VERY USEFUL IN ENABLING MORE EFFICIENT EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON THE MOVEMENT OF CRIMINALS AND THE INFLUX OF FIREARMS ACROSS THE BORDER," MR ASPREY SAID.

HE STRESSED THAT LIAISON WITH CHINA MUST BE REINFORCED BY EFFECTIVE ACTION BY THE POLICE WITHIN HONG KONG INCLUDING MORE HIGH PROFILE PATROLS AROUND PREMISES PRONE TO ARMED ROBBERIES SUCH AS GOLDSMITH AND JEWELLERY SHOPS.

"THIS HAS MET WITH SOME SUCCESS. THE NUMBER OF ROBBERIES INVOLVING FIREARMS AND PISTOL-LIKE OBJECTS HAS DECREASED FROM 61 IN JANUARY TO 32 IN APRIL THIS YEAR," HE SAID.

MR ASPREY POINTED OUT THAT THE POLICE HAD APPREHENDED SOME OF THE CULPRITS INVOLVED IN ARMED ROBBERIES. THE ROBBERIES IN TAI KOK TSUI WHICH TOOK PLACE IN APRIL AND IN SHAM SHUI PO IN MARCH WERE CASES IN POINT.

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"DURING THE FIRST FOUR MONTHS OF 1992, EIGHT PERSONS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED FOR ROBBERIES INVOLVING GENUINE FIREARMS AND 27 FOR ROBBERIES USING PISTOL-LIKE OBJECTS.

"A FURTHER EIGHT PERSONS HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH A VARIETY OF SERIOUS OFFENCES, INCLUDING ROBBERY AND ATTEMPTED MURDER," HE SAID.

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AIRPORT SITE FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT BE ASSESSED SOON
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THE EXACT AMOUNT OF LAND AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC RENTAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ON THE EXISTING KAI TAK AIRPORT SITE WHEN REDEVELOPED WILL BE ASSESSED IN THE SOUTH-EAST KOWLOON DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT STUDY.

THE STUDY WILL SOON START AND BE COMPLETED IN MID NEXT YEAR.

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

MR EASON SAID THE ASSESSMENT WOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF METROPLAN OBJECTIVES.

"METROPLAN IS A FRAMEWORK FOR MORE DETAILED PLANNING AND IS NOT A DETAILED PLAN IN ITSELF.

"AMOUNTS OF LAND FOR VARIOUS USES REFERRED TO IN METROPLAN SHOULD THEREFORE BE REGARDED AS INDICATIVE AND NOT PRECISE AT THIS STAGE," MR EASON SAID.

AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, THE SECRETARY SAID THE AMOUNT OF LAND DESIGNATED FOR PUBLIC RENTAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN KOWLOON UNDER METROPLAN TOOK THE FUTURE WEST KOWLOON RECLAMATION AND THE RELOCATION OF THE KAI TAK AIRPORT INTO ACCOUNT.

HOWEVER, HE ADDED THAT THE RECENTLY COMPLETED WEST KOWLOON RECLAMATION STUDY HAD SINCE SHOWN THAT MORE LAND WAS LIKELY TO BE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC RENTAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA THAN WAS ENVISAGED UNDER THE METROPLAN STUDIES.

"THE EXACT AMOUNT WILL BE ESTABLISHED THROUGH FURTHER DETAILED PLANNING STUDIES," HE SAID.

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PRACTICAL MEASURES DRAWN UP TO ACCELERATE LOCALISATION

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PRACTICAL MEASURES HAVE BEEN DRAWN UP IN THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT, THE POLICE AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE TO ACCELERATE THE PROGRESS OF LOCALISATION, THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HENRY TANG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR WIGGHAM SAID A DOUBLE-LADDER SCHEME AND A DEVELOPMENT POSTS SCHEME HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED IN THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT TO GROOM LOCAL NON-DIRECTORATE OFFICERS AND ENHANCE THEIR SUITABILITY FOR ADVANCEMENT.

IN THE POLICE FORCE, STEPS ARE BEING TAKEN TO IDENTIFY SUITABLE LOCAL OFFICERS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT TRAINING COURSES TO DEVELOP THEIR POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER ADVANCEMENT.

OVERSEAS OFFICERS WORKING IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE HAVE FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS NOW GENERALLY BEEN REQUIRED TO RETIRE ON REACHING THE AGE OF 57.

THIS AIMS TO AVOID THE NEED TO RETIRE A LARGER NUMBER OF SENIOR OVERSEAS OFFICERS CLOSER TO 1997.

MR WIGGHAM SAID UNDER THE LOCALISATION POLICY, SUITABLY QUALIFIED LOCAL CANDIDATES ARE GIVEN PREFERENCE FOR APPOINTMENT.

THE AVAILABILITY OF SUITABLY QUALIFIED LOCAL OFFICERS IS ALSO TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN CONSIDERING RENEWAL OF CONTRACT FOR OVERSEAS OFFICERS.

"LOCALISATION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE IS TAKING PLACE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RATE AT WHICH QUALIFIED AND SUITABLE LOCAL CANDIDATES BECOME AVAILABLE," HE SAID.

"LOCALISATION HAS BEEN AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE A GRADUAL PROCESS, DURING WHICH THE HIGH QUALITY OF HONG KONG'S ADMINISTRATION WILL BE MAINTAINED."

SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE LOCALISATION POLICY IN THE 1950'S, THE PERCENTAGE OF OVERSEAS OFFICERS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE AS A WHOLE HAS SHRUNK FROM ABOUT 4.4% IN 1952 TO ABOUT 1.4% AT PRESENT.

LOCAL OFFICERS NOW FILL 63.2% OF THE DIRECTORATE POSTS AND 76.9% OF THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT/PROFESSIONAL POSTS INCLUDING THE HOSPITAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT STAFF WHO HAVE BEEN SECONDED OR TRANSFERRED TO THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY.

AT THE TOP, LOCAL OFFICERS ALSO FILL HALF OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT AND POLICY SECRETARY POSTS.

FOR THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT, LOCAL OFFICERS CONSTITUTE ABOUT 14% AT THE DIRECTORATE LEVEL AND 54% AT THE NON-DIRECTORATE LEVEL.

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IN THE POLICE, THEY CONSTITUTE 29% AT ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER/COMMISSIONER LEVEL, 40% AT SUPERINTENDENT LEVEL AND 77% AT THE INSPECTORATE LEVEL.

IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE, THEY CONSTITUTE 62% AT DIRECTORATE LEVEL AND 85% AT THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER LEVEL.

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EFFICIENCY OF CIVIL SERVICE BEING MONITORED
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THE HONG KONG CIVIL SERVICE IS RECOGNISED INTERNATIONALLY AS EFFICIENT AND DEDICATED, AND AS A FACTOR CONTRIBUTING GREATLY TO THE EFFICIENCY AND PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG, THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HOWARD YOUNG, MR WIGGHAM SAID THE GOVERNMENT USED A VARIETY OF MEASURES TO ASSESS AND MONITOR THE EFFICIENCY OF THE CIVIL SERVICE.

THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT CONDUCTS VALUE-FOR-MONEY AUDITS TO ASCERTAIN THAT PRUDENCE AND ECONOMY HAVE BEEN EXERCISED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC FUNDS AND THAT GOOD VALUE HAS BEEN OBTAINED FROM EXPENDITURE THAT HAS BEEN INCURRED.

"THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT COVERING THE RESULTS OF SUCH AUDITS IS SUBMITTED TO THIS COUNCIL," MR WIGGHAM SAID.

"THE COUNCIL'S ROLE IS ALSO VITAL IN THE ADOPTION AND MONITORING OF THE GOVERNMENT'S BUDGET, THE CREATION OF DIRECTORATE POSTS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE AND AS A WATCHDOG GENERALLY ON PERFORMANCE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR."

MR WIGGHAM NOTED THAT STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON THE HONG KONG CIVIL SERVICE ARE COMPILED AS A MEANS TO MONITOR DEVELOPMENTS.

ONE INDICATOR IS THE RATIO BETWEEN THE COST OF THE CIVIL SERVICE AND TOTAL GOVERNMENT RECURRENT EXPENDITURE. THE RATIO HAS VARIED FROM 42% IN 1981/82, 46.8% IN 1990/91 TO 42.3% IN 1991/92.

THE RATIO OF THE CIVIL SERVICE TO THE WHOLE POPULATION INCLUDING STAFF WHO HAVE LEFT THE SERVICE TO JOIN THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL AND THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY WAS 3.3% AT JANUARY 1 THIS YEAR.

THIS COMPARED WITH 4.3% IN JAPAN (1988), 13.7% IN FRANCE (1988), 9.4% IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (1987), 9.4% IN THE UNITED STATES (1988) AND 9.1% IN WEST GERMANY (1987).

OTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE FOR PURPOSES OF COMPARISON IS THE SHARE OF GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE IN GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT.

/THE FIGURES

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THE FIGURES FOR HONG KONG AND SOME ASIAN COUNTRIES ARE: THAILAND - 13.4%; REPUBLIC OF KOREA - 15.9%; HONG KONG - 16.4%; SINGAPORE - 22.3%; AND MALAYSIA - 29.7%.

"HOWEVER, THESE FIGURES DO NOT NECESSARILY ENABLE A COMPARISON TO BE MADE BETWEEN THE RELATIVE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIONS," SAID MR WIGGHAM.

"ADMINISTRATIONS DIFFER, AMONG OTHER THINGS, IN THE SCOPE OF THEIR ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES, AND CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEMS.

"FOR EXAMPLE, IN JAPAN, PUBLIC EMPLOYEES INCLUDE THE SELF-DEFENSE FORCE AND EMPLOYEES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS. THESE PERSONNEL AND SERVICES, AND THE VARIOUS LEVELS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE NO EQUIVALENTS IN HONG KONG.

"THERE IS THEREFORE NO COMMON BASIS FOR MEANINGFUL COMPARISON," HE ADDED.

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GOVT EXAMINING LAW OF PRIVACY

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THE GOVERNMENT IS AWARE THAT THE BILL OF RIGHTS ORDINANCE MAY HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, THE SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SZE, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HENRY TANG, THE SECRETARY SAID THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION WAS EXAMINING EXISTING HONG KONG LAW RELATING TO PRIVACY IN GENERAL.

IN PARTICULAR, IT WOULD REPORT ON WHETHER LEGISLATIVE OR OTHER MEASURES WERE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE PROTECTION AGAINST, AND TO PROVIDE REMEDIES IN RESPECT OF UNDUE INTERFERENCE WITH THE PRIVACY OF THE INDIVIDUAL, INCLUDING MATTERS CONCERNING THE ACQUISITION, COLLECTION, RECORDING AND STORAGE OF INFORMATION AND OPINIONS PERTAINING TO INDIVIDUALS BY ANY PERSONS OR BODIES, HE SAID.

A COMPREHENSIVE REPORT ON THE ISSUES BY A SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION WOULD BE RELEASED FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND COMMENTS IN A FEW MONTHS' TIME.

MEANWHILE, MR SZE SAID A GOVERNMENT WORKING GROUP UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS WAS STUDYING THE APPROPRIATE APPROACH TO BE ADOPTED FOR DATA PROTECTION, AND WOULD HAVE REGARD TO THE FINDINGS OF THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION IN ITS DELIBERATION.

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ANTI-ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION POLICY REITERATED
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THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, REITERATED THE POLICY TO DETER ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION WHILE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE NEED TO REDUCE OVERCROWDING IN PRISONS.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MARTIN BARROW IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR ASPREY SAID SOME 3,400 ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WERE IN PRISON AND THE TOTAL MAINTENANCE COSTS WERE ABOUT \$500 MILLION A YEAR.

HE SAID THE LEGISLATION ENACTED IN NOVEMBER 1990 SOUGHT TO FURTHER THE OBJECTIVE OF DETERING ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION BY DENYING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO OBTAIN WORK IN HONG KONG.

THIS WAS ALSO ACHIEVED BY A REVISED PROSECUTIONS POLICY INTRODUCED AT THE SAME TIME, WHEREBY ALL ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FOUND AT PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT WERE TO BE PROSECUTED.

"WE HAVE TO BALANCE THE NEED TO REDUCE OVERCROWDING IN THE PRISONS AND THE NEED TO DETER PEOPLE FROM COMING HERE ILLEGALLY," MR ASPREY SAID.

THE NEW LEGISLATION AND PROSECUTIONS POLICY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN REDUCING THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT POPULATION IN PRISONS FROM A HIGH OF ABOUT 40% OF THE TOTAL PRISON POPULATION IN SEPTEMBER 1990 TO ABOUT 30% AT PRESENT, A REDUCTION OF OVER 1,200 PERSONS.

THE AVERAGE DAILY COST OF MAINTAINING A PRISONER IS \$416 AT CURRENT PRICES.

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NO PLAN TO CONTROL MEDICINE LABELLING
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THERE IS NO PLAN TO INTRODUCE STATUTORY CONTROL ON LABELLING OF MEDICINE, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, DR S.H. LEE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE ADVICE GIVEN BY THE PHARMACY AND POISONS BOARD, HE SAID PUBLIC EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL CO-OPERATION WOULD BE THE MOST PRACTICAL APPROACH.

"TO THIS END, WE HAVE MONITORED THE SITUATION AND ARE PLEASED THAT LABELLING OF DRUGS IS BEING INCREASINGLY PRACTISED BY HOSPITALS, DOCTORS AND PHARMACISTS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

"PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS HAVE ALSO TAKEN STEPS TO URGE THEIR MEMBERS TO ADOPT THE PRACTICE IN THE INTEREST OF BETTER PATIENT CARE," DR LEE ADDED.

/REPLYING TO

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY PROF THE HON FELICE LIEH MAK, DR LEE SAID: "THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY IS IN FULL SUPPORT OF THE GOOD MEDICAL PRACTICE TO LABEL ALL DISPENSED MEDICINE.

"LABELLING IS NOW DONE THROUGH THE AUTHORITY'S COMPUTERISED PHARMACEUTICAL SUPPLIES SYSTEM OR BY OTHER MEANS.

"THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY HAS PLANS TO EXTEND THE SYSTEM ON A PROGRESSIVE BASIS. BY 1994, THE SYSTEM WILL BE INSTALLED IN FOUR MORE HOSPITALS AND NINE SPECIALIST CLINICS," HE ADDED.

AT PRESENT, LABELLING OF DRUGS IS PRACTISED BY FIVE EX-GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS, 11 EX-SUBVENTED HOSPITALS AND ONE SPECIALIST CLINIC.

"EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO INTRODUCE LABELLING IN OTHER HOSPITALS AND SPECIALIST CLINICS," DR LEE SAID.

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STRUCTURE DESIGN REQUIRED TO TAKE INTO
ACCOUNT SETTLEMENT OF RECLAIMED AREA

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UNDER THE BUILDING (CONSTRUCTION) REGULATIONS, WHEN DESIGNING STRUCTURES TO BE LOCATED ON RECLAIMED LAND, IT IS NECESSARY TO FORECAST THE SETTLEMENT OF THE RECLAIMED AREA AND TO TAKE THIS INTO ACCOUNT IN THE STRUCTURAL DESIGN, THE SECRETARY FOR WORKS, MR JAMES BLAKE, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"SPECIFIED DESIGN STRESSES MUST NOT BE EXCEEDED, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ANY EFFECTS ARISING FROM SETTLEMENT OF THE RECLAIMED AREA," SAID MR BLAKE IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON GILBERT LEUNG KAM-HO.

BUILDING (CONSTRUCTION) REGULATIONS APPLY TO SUPERSTRUCTURES WHETHER ON ORIGINAL GROUND OR ON NEW OR OLD RECLAMATIONS.

MR BLAKE POINTED OUT THAT IN THE PAST, AND NOW, COMMENCEMENT OF PILED FOUNDATIONS FOR BUILDINGS FOLLOWED ALMOST IMMEDIATELY AFTER COMPLETION OF RECLAMATION WORKS.

"NON-PILED STRUCTURES SUCH AS ROADS AND DRAINS ARE NORMALLY CONSTRUCTED ON CONVENTIONAL RECLAMATION ABOUT TWO YEARS AFTER COMPLETION TO MINIMISE SETTLEMENT.

"THIS PERIOD CAN BE SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED BY USING SPECIAL METHODS TO ACCELERATE RECLAMATION SETTLEMENTS," HE SAID.

ON THE RECLAMATION PROJECT FOR THE AIRPORT ISLAND AT CHEK LAP KOK, MR BLAKE SAID THE AIRPORT ISLAND RECLAMATION WOULD BE FORMED BY REMOVAL OF THE SOFT MARINE MUD, AND CONTROLLED BACKFILLING WITH STABLE MATERIALS.

/THE AIRPORT

THE AIRPORT MASTER PLAN, BY SEQUENCING THE RECLAMATION, TOGETHER WITH THE CAREFUL LOCATION OF THE VARIOUS STRUCTURES, HAD DEVELOPED A SCHEME WHICH MINIMISED DELAYS FROM SETTLEMENT AND ENABLED THE EARLY CONSTRUCTION OF STRUCTURES REQUIRED FOR AIRPORT OPENING, HE SAID.

"IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE MAIN TERMINAL BUILDING, RAILWAY STATION, CONTROL TOWER AND ASSOCIATED STRUCTURES WILL BE ERECTED ON CHEK LAP KOK ISLAND ITSELF, NOT ON THE RECLAMATION.

"ONLY THE RUNWAYS AND OTHER STRUCTURES SUCH AS THE MAINTENANCE AREA AND AIR CARGO HANDLING AREA, WILL BE WITHIN THE RECLAIMED AREA," HE SAID.

MR BLAKE POINTED OUT THAT AREAS OF RECLAMATION WOULD BE MONITORED BY MEASURING INSTRUMENTS AND SURVEY TECHNIQUES WHICH WOULD ENABLE ENGINEERS TO COMPARE SETTLEMENTS WITH THOSE PREDICTED AND THIS WOULD DETERMINE THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE COMMENCEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION WORK WITHIN THOSE AREAS.

ON THE PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES TO BE TAKEN BY THE ADMINISTRATION TO ASSURE THAT THE AIRPORT WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED BY THE SETTLEMENT OF THE FILL, MR BLAKE SAID: "SETTLEMENTS WILL BE WITHIN THE ACCEPTABLE TOLERANCES FOR THE TYPES OF STRUCTURE, INCLUDING THE RUNWAYS, TO BE BUILT ON THE AREAS OF THE RECLAMATION."

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TWO-TIER MECHANISM TO MONITOR COMPLAINTS
AGAINST HOSPITALS

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THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY (HA) IS OPERATING A TWO-TIER MECHANISM TO MONITOR THE HANDLING OF PUBLIC COMPLAINTS BY VARIOUS HOSPITALS UNDER ITS MANAGEMENT, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, DR S.H. LEE, SAID.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ZACHARY WONG WAI-YIN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), DR LEE SAID OFFICERS WERE DESIGNATED IN HOSPITALS AND IN HA HEAD OFFICE TO ENSURE THAT PUBLIC COMPLAINTS WERE HANDLED PROMPTLY AND THOROUGHLY.

"THERE IS ALSO A PUBLIC COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE COMPRISING MEMBERS OF THE HA BOARD AND OTHER NON-OFFICIALS TO CONSIDER APPEAL CASES WITH IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE," HE SAID.

"THE HA FURTHER MONITORS THE SITUATION THROUGH ITS PATIENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE TO DETECT PERSISTENT TRENDS RELATING TO A CERTAIN HOSPITAL OR SPECIALTY AND TO IDENTIFY ANY UNDERLYING PROBLEMS.

"TO THIS END, INDIVIDUAL HOSPITALS ARE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT MONTHLY STATISTICAL REPORTS ON PUBLIC COMPLAINTS FOR ANALYSIS AND COLLATION."

/THE AUTHORITY

THE AUTHORITY ALSO INTENDS TO DEVELOP A MORE DETAILED ANALYSIS ON THE NATURE OF THESE COMPLAINTS IN FUTURE ACCORDING TO THE HOSPITALS, SPECIALTIES, SERVICE UNITS OR PERSONNEL INVOLVED.

DR LEE NOTED THAT BEFORE HA TOOK OVER THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC HOSPITALS IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR, PUBLIC COMPLAINTS WERE HANDLED BY THE FORMER HOSPITAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH A SET OF ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES.

STATISTICS SHOW THAT ABOUT 2,550 COMPLAINTS WERE RECEIVED BY GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS BETWEEN JULY 1989 AND NOVEMBER LAST YEAR.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST SUBVENTED HOSPITALS WERE HANDLED BY THE INDIVIDUAL HOSPITAL'S GOVERNING BODY.

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LDC TO REIMBURSE COMPENSATION EXPENSES

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ALL ACQUISITION AND CLEARANCE COSTS ON WING LOK STREET IN CENTRAL MET BY THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE REIMBURSED BY THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (LDC), WHICH WILL ALSO PAY THE GOVERNMENT A SERVICE CHARGE.

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

MR EASON SAID THE COSTS INCLUDED EX-GRATIA PAYMENTS.

THE COMPENSATION AND EX-GRATIA ALLOWANCES FOR RESUMPTION AND CLEARANCE WERE ESTIMATED AT \$400 MILLION.

FUNDS WERE AVAILABLE FROM THE CAPITAL WORKS RESERVE FUND HEAD 701, LAND ACQUISITION, HE ADDED.

"THE AMOUNT OF COMPENSATION INCLUDES EX-GRATIA REMOVAL ALLOWANCES FOR ELIGIBLE AFFECTED TENANTS.

"SEPARATELY, THE LDC WILL MAKE ARRANGEMENTS IN RELATION TO THE REHOUSING OF ELIGIBLE DOMESTIC TENANT," HE ADDED.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 1992

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POST-RETIREMENT EMPLOYMENT FOR RETIRED CIVIL SERVANTS

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A TOTAL OF 119 APPLICATIONS FROM 76 RETIRED DIRECTORATE OFFICERS FOR PERMISSION TO WORK WERE REFERRED TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON POST-RETIREMENT EMPLOYMENT FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD UP TO THE END OF MARCH THIS YEAR.

OF THESE, THREE WERE NOT RECOMMENDED, 31 WERE APPROVED WITH THE IMPOSITION OF A SANITISATION PERIOD OF BETWEEN ONE AND SIX MONTHS, AND THE REST WERE APPROVED WITHOUT CONDITIONS.

THE FIGURES WERE GIVEN IN A WRITTEN REPLY BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHEUNG MAN-KWONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY). MR WIGGHAM SAID THE APPLICANTS INCLUDED ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS, DIRECTORATE STAFF OF THE DISCIPLINED SERVICES AND CHIEF PROFESSIONALS IN THE MEDICAL, ENGINEERING, LEGAL AND ACCOUNTING FIELDS.

"SOME OF THEM HAVE JOINED FINANCIAL AND TRADING ENTERPRISES AS NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS WHILST OTHERS HAVE ENTERED PRIVATE PRACTICE AFTER RETIREMENT.

"THEY CONTINUE TO RECEIVE THEIR CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONS DURING ANY EMPLOYMENT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR."

MR WIGGHAM NOTED THAT IN CONSIDERING AN APPLICATION, THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE APPLICANT'S PREVIOUS INVOLVEMENT IN POLICY FORMULATION.

VIEWS ARE SOUGHT FROM THE RESPECTIVE POLICY SECRETARIES FOR EACH APPLICATION ON THE QUESTION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

CONSIDERATION IS ALSO GIVEN TO WHETHER THE PROPOSED EMPLOYMENT WILL RESULT IN THE OFFICER HAVING AN UNDESIRABLE PUBLIC PROFILE.

"CONDITIONS, SUCH AS A SANITISATION PERIOD OR SANCTIONS AGAINST DEALING WITH SPECIFIC COMPANIES MAY BE IMPOSED AS NECESSARY," HE SAID.

IF A PENSIONER TAKES UP ANY POST-RETIREMENT EMPLOYMENT WITHIN TWO YEARS (FIVE YEARS FOR AN OFFICER AT SECRETARY RANK OR ABOVE) AFTER HIS RETIREMENT WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION, THE GOVERNOR IS EMPOWERED TO SUSPEND HIS PENSION UNDER THE HONG KONG PENSIONS LEGISLATION.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACTS ALSO APPLY TO AN OFFICER AFTER HIS RETIREMENT OR RESIGNATION FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE.

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COMMISSION PAYMENT - ONE FACTOR FOR GOVT TO CHOOSE ESTATE AGENTS
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PROVISION HAD TO BE MADE FOR THE PAYMENT OF COMMISSION TO ESTATE AGENTS IN THE GOVERNMENT'S SALE OF ITS EX-QUARTERS BECAUSE FAILURE TO PROVIDE FOR THIS COULD RESULT IN AN UNSATISFACTORY RESPONSE.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY, MR K.Y. YEUNG, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HOWARD YOUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR YEUNG SAID SALES AGENTS WERE SELECTED FOLLOWING A TENDER EXERCISE IN WHICH THE LEVEL OF COMMISSION WAS CONSIDERED ALONGSIDE MANY OTHER FACTORS.

THE FACTORS INCLUDED THE SCOPE OF SERVICE TO BE PROVIDED, MARKETING STRATEGY AND THE AGENT'S EXPERTISE AND REPUTATION, HE ADDED.

MR YEUNG SAID THE REQUIREMENT TO PAY A COMMISSION WAS ONLY ONE OF THE MANY FACTORS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN ASSESSING THE TENDERS FROM THESE ESTATE AGENTS.

"THE PRACTICE ON THE PART OF ESTATE AGENTS IN THE CHARGING OF COMMISSION VARIES.

"IN ADDITION TO CHARGING THE PURCHASER, SOME AGENTS ALSO REQUIRE A COMMISSION FROM THE VENDOR," HE ADDED.

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RECOMMENDATIONS ON GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL TO BE MADE SOON
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THE EDUCATION COMMISSION IS NOW CONSIDERING THE PROPOSAL FOR THE SETTING UP OF A GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL AND IS EXPECTED TO MAKE KNOWN ITS VIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN ITS FIFTH REPORT TO BE RELEASED SHORTLY.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON NG MING-YUM IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SAID FOLLOWING COMPLETION IN OCTOBER 1990 OF THE CODE FOR THE EDUCATION PROFESSION OF HONG KONG, THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE HAD CONSULTED TEACHERS ON THE CODE ITSELF AND ON THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION FOR THE SETTING UP OF A GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL TO ENFORCE THE CODE.

A FORMAL PROPOSAL FOR THE GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL WAS SUBMITTED TO THE EDUCATION COMMISSION IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR, HE NOTED.

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LAW ALREADY COVERED IN FORMAL CURRICULUM

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TO INCLUDE LAW AS AN INDEPENDENT AND EXAMINATION SUBJECT FOR THE HONG KONG CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION (HKCEE) WOULD INTRODUCE AN ELEMENT OF SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE WHICH IS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE APPROPRIATE, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SAID THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAD CONSIDERED THE POSSIBLE INCLUSION OF THE SUBJECT INTO THE CURRICULUM OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND AS A SUBJECT FOR HKCEE ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS IN THE PAST.

"IT HAS CONCLUDED THAT THE IDEA SHOULD NOT BE PURSUED FOR THE TIME BEING," HE ADDED.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON JAMES TO KUN-SUN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR CHAN EXPLAINED THAT SECONDARY EDUCATION WAS INTENDED TO BE GENERAL IN NATURE.

"THE PRESENT SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM IS ALREADY FULL," HE SAID.

"NEW SUBJECTS CAN ONLY BE ADDED BY TAKING OUT EXISTING ONES."

HE POINTED OUT THAT LAW OR KNOWLEDGE OF THE LEGAL SYSTEM WAS ALREADY COVERED IN THE FORMAL CURRICULUM.

CITING EXAMPLES, HE SAID AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL, ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS AS WELL AS SOCIAL STUDIES COVER THE BASICS OF LAW AND ORDER, THE LEGAL SYSTEM, LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE JUDICIARY.

AT THE ADVANCED SUPPLEMENTARY LEVEL, THE NEWLY-INTRODUCED LIBERAL STUDIES PROVIDES A MORE IN-DEPTH TREATMENT OF SIMILAR CONCEPTS.

"PUPILS NOT TAKING THESE SUBJECTS WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME EXPOSED TO LAW AND THE LEGAL SYSTEM THROUGH EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND SCHOOL CIVIL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES.

"THESE ARE OUTLINED IN THE 'GUIDELINES ON CIVIC EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS' PRODUCED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT," MR CHAN SAID.

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PARENTS' PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT ENCOURAGED
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS ENCOURAGED ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT BY PROVIDING SUCH OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE UNDER THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE (SMI), THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

WITH THE HELP OF AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE SMI, THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAS DEVELOPED A WIDE RANGE OF REFERENCE MATERIALS TO HELP SCHOOLS, PARENTS AND TEACHERS ADAPT TO SMI, HE SAID.

BUT IT WILL BE UP TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS TO CHOOSE SUITABLE REPRESENTATIVES WHO ARE ABLE AND WILLING TO DEVOTE THEIR TIME AND EXPERIENCE TO FURTHER THEIR CONSTITUENTS' INTERESTS ON THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.

"THE OVERALL QUESTION OF TEACHERS' WORKLOAD IS A SEPARATE ISSUE WHICH IS BEING CONSIDERED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT," THE SECRETARY ADDED.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON STEPHEN NG MING-YUM IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR CHAN SAID THE FIRST BATCH OF 21 AIDED SCHOOLS THAT JOINED THE SCHEME IN SEPTEMBER LAST YEAR WOULD EXPERIENCE THE FULL EFFECTS OF OPERATING UNDER THE SMI DURING 1992-93, WHEN THEY WOULD BE GIVEN GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN THE SPENDING OF THEIR GRANTS.

"THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PLANS TO EVALUATE THE PROGRESS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHEME BY MEANS OF QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS DURING THIS PERIOD," MR CHAN SAID.

"PRELIMINARY FINDINGS ARE EXPECTED TO BECOME AVAILABLE TOWARDS THE END OF 1993."

HE NOTED THAT A GENERAL INVITATION HAD BEEN ISSUED TO SCHOOLS TO JOIN A SECOND BATCH BEGINNING IN SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR AND SO FAR 10 GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS HAVE ALREADY INDICATED THEIR INTEREST TO JOIN.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 1992

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IMPROVEMENTS TO SEVERANCE AND LONG SERVICE
PAYMENT PROPOSED

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A BILL THAT SEEKS TO REMOVE CERTAIN AMBIGUITIES AND INADEQUACIES IN THE PROVISIONS RELATING TO SEVERANCE AND LONG SERVICE PAYMENT UNDER THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) (NO. 4) BILL 1992, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, SAID AN EMPLOYEE'S ENTITLEMENT TO SEVERANCE AND LONG SERVICE PAYMENT IS SUBJECT TO A MAXIMUM EQUIVALENT TO THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF HIS LAST 12 MONTHS' WAGES.

AT PRESENT, AN EMPLOYEE ON SICK LEAVE, MATERNITY LEAVE OR LEAVE ARISING FROM WORK INJURIES DURING HIS LAST 12 MONTHS OF EMPLOYMENT IS DEEMED TO HAVE BEEN PAID FULL WAGES.

TO IMPROVE THE PROTECTION ACCORDED TO AN EMPLOYEE IN THE CALCULATION OF SUCH PAYMENT, MR CHAN SAID THE BILL PROPOSED TO EXPAND THIS DEEMING PROVISION TO COVER SITUATIONS WHERE AN EMPLOYEE HAD BEEN PUT ON SHORT-TIME WORK OR HAD TAKEN NO-PAY SICK LEAVE OR NO-PAY MATERNITY LEAVE.

"IT ALSO PROPOSES THAT THE PROVISION, WHICH AT PRESENT APPLIES ONLY TO EMPLOYEES BEING DISMISSED OR LAID OFF, SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO COVER EMPLOYEES WHO RESIGN BECAUSE OF ILL-HEALTH OR OLD AGE AND DEPENDANTS OF AN EMPLOYEE WHO DIES IN SERVICE," HE ADDED.

UNDER THE PROPOSED BILL, THE "CROSS-HARBOUR" PROVISION WHICH AT PRESENT ENTITLES AN EMPLOYEE TO CLAIM SEVERANCE PAYMENT IF HIS EMPLOYMENT IS TERMINATED AS A RESULT OF HIS EMPLOYER MOVING THE WORKPLACE ACROSS THE HARBOUR, WOULD BE REMOVED.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE PRESENT TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IN HONG KONG, MR CHAN FELT THAT A GEOGRAPHICAL DEMARCATION BASED SOLELY ON CROSSING THE HARBOUR HAD BECOME QUITE ANACHRONISTIC.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, IF A CHANGE OF WORKPLACE CAUSED HARDSHIP TO AN EMPLOYEE TO AN EXTENT SUFFICIENTLY SERIOUS TO ESTABLISH A CONSTRUCTIVE DISMISSAL UNDER COMMON LAW, THE EMPLOYEE MIGHT STILL CLAIM SEVERANCE PAYMENT.

THE BILL FURTHER PROPOSES THAT AN EMPLOYEE SHOULD NOT BE DEPRIVED OF HIS ENTITLEMENT TO SEVERANCE OR LONG SERVICE PAYMENT MERELY BECAUSE HE HAS GIVEN NOTICE OF RESIGNATION.

THE EXISTING PROVISIONS STIPULATE THAT AN EMPLOYEE SHALL BE TAKEN TO BE DISMISSED, AND MAY CLAIM SEVERANCE OR LONG SERVICE PAYMENT IF HE TERMINATES THE CONTRACT WITHOUT NOTICE OR PAYMENT IN LIEU BECAUSE OF CERTAIN CONDUCT ON THE PART OF HIS EMPLOYER, THAT IS, ILL TREATMENT.

/"HOWEVER, IF'

"HOWEVER, IF AN EMPLOYEE IN THIS SITUATION INADVERTENTLY GIVES NOTICE OF RESIGNATION DESPITE HIS BEING ENTITLED TO LEAVE WITHOUT NOTICE, SEVERANCE OR LONG SERVICE PAYMENT WILL NOT BE PAYABLE," MR CHAN SAID.

"PROVISIONS ARE THEREFORE MADE IN THE BILL TO RECTIFY THIS ANOMALY."

AMBIGUITIES IN THE EXISTING PROVISIONS ON SETTING OFF OF RETIREMENT SCHEME PAYMENT AGAINST SEVERANCE OR LONG SERVICE PAYMENT WILL ALSO BE REMOVED TO PROTECT EMPLOYERS FROM HAVING TO PAY DOUBLE BENEFITS.

AT PRESENT WHEN AN EMPLOYEE DIES IN SERVICE, HIS STATUTORY BENEFICIARIES, NAMELY HIS SPOUSE, CHILDREN OR PARENTS IN THAT ORDER, SHALL BE ENTITLED TO THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT DUE TO HIM.

IF THE EMPLOYEE IS ALSO COVERED BY A RETIREMENT SCHEME, THE RETIREMENT SCHEME CAN BE SET OFF BY THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT.

"PROBLEMS ARISE WHEN THE NOMINATED BENEFICIARY OF THE RETIREMENT SCHEME IS NOT THE SAME PERSON AS THE STATUTORY BENEFICIARY OF THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT," MR CHAN EXPLAINED.

"TO ENSURE THAT UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES THE STATUTORY BENEFICIARY OF A DECEASED EMPLOYEE WILL HAVE FIRST CALL ON THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT AND THAT AN EMPLOYER WILL NOT HAVE TO PAY DOUBLE BENEFITS, THE BILL PROPOSES THAT THE TRUSTEE OF THE RELEVANT RETIREMENT SCHEME SHALL RETURN TO THE EMPLOYER THE AMOUNT OF RETIREMENT BENEFITS EQUIVALENT TO LONG SERVICE PAYMENT AND PAY THE BALANCE, IF ANY, TO THE NOMINATED BENEFICIARY."

LASTLY, THE BILL PROPOSES THAT ONCE THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL HAS RULED THAT SEVERANCE PAYMENT IS PAYABLE, PAYMENT SHOULD BE MADE BY THE EMPLOYER WITHIN 14 DAYS UNLESS ANOTHER TIME LIMIT IS SET BY THE TRIBUNAL.

THIS AIMS TO PLUG A LOOPHOLE IN THE EXISTING PROVISIONS WHEREBY AN UNSCRUPULOUS EMPLOYER CAN ESCAPE CRIMINAL SANCTION FOR WITHHOLDING SEVERANCE PAYMENT BY FILING A CLAIM AT THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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ACTING STI ON CONSUMER PROTECTION

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THE VAST MAJORITY OF GOODS AND SERVICES SUPPLIERS IN HONG KONG OPERATE IN A COMPETITIVE MARKET WITHOUT ANY GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION AND MARKET MECHANISM AND CONSUMER CHOICE ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS FOR GUARANTEEING A FREE MARKET.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MISS DENISE YUE, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LI WAH-MING.

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"IN THIS CONNECTION, CONSUMER EDUCATION EFFORTS HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY," SHE SAID.

MISS YUE POINTED OUT THAT SECTORS THAT REQUIRED TO OPERATE IN A RESTRICTED COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT WERE THE EXCEPTION RATHER THAN THE NORM.

"IN HONG KONG, THE CONSUMER COUNCIL IS CHARGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PROTECTING AND PROMOTING THE INTERESTS OF CONSUMERS.

"TOWARDS THIS END, THE CONSUMER COUNCIL HAS CONDUCTED AND WILL CONTINUE TO CONDUCT REGULAR PRICE SURVEYS AS WELL AS MONITORING ANY MONOPOLISTIC TENDENCY IN TRADE PRACTICES," SHE SAID.

MISS YUE SAID MARKET CONCENTRATION IN ITSELF DID NOT NECESSARILY GIVE RISE TO ADVERSE EFFECTS TO CONSUMERS.

"WHERE IT DOES AND WHERE CONSUMERS ARE UNABLE TO PROTECT THEMSELVES, THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROVIDED VARIOUS FORMS OF REGULATORY FRAMEWORK THAT ARE BEST SUITED TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PARTICULAR SECTOR," SHE SAID.

FOR EXAMPLE, MISS YUE SAID THERE WERE SECTORS IN THE ECONOMY WHICH HAD TO BE OPERATED AT A SUFFICIENTLY LARGE SCALE TO ATTAIN OPTIMUM USE OF RESOURCES AND ACHIEVE ECONOMIES OF SCALE.

"THERE ARE ALSO OTHERS WHERE IT IS IN THE WIDER INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY TO PROVIDE FOR COMPETITION IN A CONTROLLED FASHION IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT CONSUMERS RECEIVE AN EFFICIENT AND RELIABLE SERVICE AT A REASONABLE PRICE.

"IN RESPECT OF THESE SECTORS, THE INTERESTS OF CONSUMERS ARE GIVEN DUE REGARD IN THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS PUT IN PLACE BY THE GOVERNMENT WHICH, AMONGST OTHER THINGS, LIMIT THE MAXIMUM PERMISSIBLE RATE OF RETURN ON CAPITAL EMPLOYED AND SPECIFY THE MINIMUM STANDARDS OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED," SHE ADDED.

MISS YUE FURTHER POINTED OUT THAT ANY ARTIFICIAL INJECTION OF COMPETITION INTO THESE SECTORS THROUGH GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION WOULD NOT AUTOMATICALLY LEAD TO CHEAPER PRODUCTS OR BETTER QUALITY SERVICES OR THE MORE EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES.

"FURTHERMORE, SUCH ACTION MIGHT RUN THE RISK OF GOVERNMENT HAVING TO PROTECT THE NEW ENTRANTS UNTIL THEY BECOME ESTABLISHED, IF EVER. SUCH PROTECTION CAN ONLY BE PROVIDED AT TAXPAYERS EXPENSE," SHE SAID.

MISS YUE TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO GENERALISE THE SORT OF CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT NEED TO CONSIDER INTRODUCING LEGISLATIVE CONTROL ADDING THAT EACH CASE WAS BEST DEALT WITH ON ITS OWN MERITS.

42 GOVT OFFICIALS DEPLOYED TO PAA

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A TOTAL OF 42 GOVERNMENT OFFICERS HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED TO THE PROVISIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY (PAA) IN 37 POSTS SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN APRIL 1990, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ANSON CHAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON SAMUEL WONG, MRS CHAN SAID OF THE 37 POSTS CONCERNED FIVE WERE IN THE DIRECTORATE RANK, 17 IN PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL GRADES AND 15 WERE FOR GENERAL GRADE AND SECRETARIAL STAFF.

THE PRESENT POSITION IS THAT, OF THE TOTAL OF 42 OFFICERS DEPLOYED TO THE PAA:

- * NINETEEN OFFICERS HAVE ALREADY RETURNED TO POSTS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE;
- * TWO OFFICERS WILL RETURN TO THE CIVIL SERVICE BY THE END OF MAY AND 12 OTHERS WILL BE REVERTING SOON;
- * ONE OFFICER WILL REMAIN WITH THE AUTHORITY UNTIL MAY NEXT YEAR; AND
- * EIGHT OFFICERS HAVE RESIGNED FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE AND JOINED THE PAA.

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DISCUSSIONS WITH CHINA ON II MOTHERS ONGOING

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DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS, THE GOVERNMENT HAD ON MANY OCCASIONS RAISED THE MATTER WITH THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES WITH THE AIM OF ENSURING THE EARLY RETURN TO HONG KONG OF THE MOTHERS INVOLVED.

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

"WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO, AND WE HOPE THEY GET THEIR PERMITS IN THE NEAR FUTURE," HE ADDED.

THE SECRETARY SAID A TOTAL OF 70 ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT MOTHERS WERE REMOVED TO CHINA IN EARLY 1988.

TO DATE, 34 OF THEM HAD RETURNED TO HONG KONG ON ONE-WAY PERMITS ISSUED BY THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES, HE SAID.

THE REMAINING 36 MOTHERS WHO HAD YET TO OBTAIN THEIR ONE-WAY PERMITS CAME FROM HAIFENG, SHANMEI, PUNING, HUIYANG, CHAOYANG, PANYU AND DONGGUAN, HE ADDED.

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13 ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS' STRUCTURES CLEARED

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THIRTEEN STRUCTURES OCCUPIED BY ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN TIN SHUI WAI WERE DEMOLISHED BY THE CONTRACTOR EMPLOYED BY THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO THEIR ARREST ON MAY 4.

THE DEBRIS AND LITTER WAS ALSO DISPOSED OF AT THE PILLAR POINT LANDFILL UNDER SUPERVISION BY THE CIVIL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, WHICH MANAGED THE LANDFILL.

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

MR EASON SAID THE CLEARANCE ACTION IN THE TIN SHUI WAI AREA WAS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW POLLUTION IN PLACES WHERE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WERE FOUND WAS DEALT WITH.

HE SAID THE MEASURES WERE ESSENTIALLY CONCERNED WITH THE REMOVAL OF LITTER AND CONSTRUCTION WASTE.

UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES ORDINANCE, THE REGIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT CAN ABATE SANITARY NUISANCES AND CLEAR OBNOXIOUS MATTER ARISING FROM THE UNAUTHORISED OCCUPATION OF SUCH AREAS.

HOWEVER, MR EASON SAID NO SUCH ACTION WAS NECESSARY AT TIN SHUI WAI.

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STANDARDS OF CARE FOR ANIMALS ON DISPLAY SATISFACTORY

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THE EXISTING STANDARDS OF HUSBANDRY AND VETERINARY CARE FOR WILD ANIMALS ON PERMANENT EXHIBITION IN HONG KONG ARE SATISFACTORY IN GENERAL, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ANSON CHAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON J.D. MCGREGOR IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MRS CHAN SAID THE STANDARDS OF CARE WERE SET OUT IN THE PUBLIC HEALTH (ANIMALS AND BIRDS) (EXHIBITIONS) REGULATIONS AND THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ORDINANCE.

THE STATUTORY STANDARDS REQUIRE THAT ANIMALS ON A PERMANENT EXHIBITION SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH ENCLOSURES WHERE THEY CAN LIVE COMFORTABLY, MOVE AROUND FREELY AND RECEIVE ADEQUATE LIGHTING AND VENTILATION.

THEY ALSO REQUIRE THE ADEQUATE PROVISION OF FOOD AND WATER, ADEQUATE SANITATION AND A SUITABLE PROGRAMME OF VETERINARY CARE.

/SHE SAID

SHE SAID THE CRUEL TREATMENT OF ANY ANIMAL WAS PROHIBITED.

SHE POINTED OUT THAT NO ONE MAY HOLD A PERMANENT EXHIBITION OF ANIMALS WITHOUT A LICENCE ISSUED BY THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.

IN GENERAL, ALTHOUGH THE STANDARDS OF CARE SPECIFIED IN HONG KONG WERE NOT AS COMPREHENSIVE AS THOSE IN BRITAIN, THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES CONSIDERED HONG KONG'S STANDARDS COMPARED FAVOURABLY WITH THOSE IN OTHER CITIES IN THE REGION, SHE SAID.

"WHERE THE POSITION APPEARS TO BE LESS THAN SATISFACTORY IS IN RESPECT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A SUITABLE LIVING ENVIRONMENT, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF SPACE AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ANIMALS TO FOLLOW THEIR NORMAL BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS," SHE ADDED.

MRS CHAN RECOGNISED THAT THERE WAS A GROWING PUBLIC EXPECTATION THAT ANIMALS ON PERMANENT EXHIBITION SHOULD BE ACCOMMODATED IN CONDITIONS RESEMBLING THEIR NATURAL HABITAT WHERE THEY MIGHT DISPLAY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE OF THEIR NATURAL BEHAVIOUR.

AS THE PUBLIC HEALTH (ANIMALS AND BIRDS) (EXHIBITIONS) REGULATIONS WERE MADE NEARLY 20 YEARS AGO, MRS CHAN AGREED THAT THEY PERHAPS DID NOT REFLECT THE PUBLIC EXPECTATION.

"THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES IS CONTACTING REPUTABLE EXHIBITORS OF WILD ANIMALS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT BODIES IN BRITAIN AND ELSEWHERE TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE STANDARDS OF CARE THEY PROVIDE AND HOW THESE ARE REFLECTED IN LEGISLATION.

"I INTEND TO REVIEW OUR REGULATIONS IN THE LIGHT OF THE INFORMATION COLLECTED AND BRING FORWARD SUCH AMENDMENTS TO THEM AS MAY BE NECESSARY," SHE SAID.

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CHANGES TO 3RD QUARTER APPROVED ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE Tabled
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A SUMMARY OF ALL CHANGES TO THE APPROVED ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1991-92 WAS Tabled IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

EXPLAINING THE CHANGES, THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY, MR K.Y. YEUNG, SAID SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION OF \$4,088.1 MILLION WAS APPROVED, OF WHICH \$2,741.8 MILLION WERE FOR THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY TO TAKE OVER THE MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY OF PUBLIC HOSPITALS WITH EFFECT FROM DECEMBER 1 LAST YEAR.

HE SAID THE SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION WAS FULLY OFFSET, EITHER BY SAVINGS UNDER THE SAME OR OTHER HEADS OF EXPENDITURE, OR BY THE DELETION OF FUNDS UNDER THE ADDITIONAL COMMITMENTS SUBHEADS.

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DURING THE PERIOD, NON-RECURRENT COMMITMENTS WERE INCREASED BY \$11.6 MILLION, NEW NON-RECURRENT COMMITMENTS OF \$190.3 MILLION WERE APPROVED, AND APPROVED NON-RECURRENT COMMITMENTS OF \$25.7 MILLION WERE REVOTED.

THE PERIOD ALSO SAW AN APPROVED NET DECREASE OF 4,543 POSTS, MAINLY DUE TO THE DELETION OF POSTS AS A RESULT OF CIVIL SERVANTS HAVING OPTED FOR THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY'S TERMS OF SERVICE.

MR YEUNG SAID THESE ITEMS HAD BEEN APPROVED EITHER BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OR UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY.

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BILL TO UPDATE LAND REGISTRATION ORDINANCE INTRODUCED

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AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED TO UPDATE CERTAIN PROVISIONS IN THE LAND REGISTRATION ORDINANCE AND TO IMPROVE THE OPERATION OF THE LAND REGISTRY, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF LAND REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR EASON SAID OUTDATED REFERENCES RELATING TO THE TERM "LIS PENDENS" WHICH MEANT PENDING ACTION IN THE ORDINANCE WERE REMOVED AND A DEFINITION WAS PROVIDED.

HE SAID THE BILL ALSO SOUGHT TO ALLOW MORE FLEXIBILITY FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE TERM "FLOATING CHARGE" BY DELETING ITS DEFINITION.

"THIS APPROACH IS CONSISTENT WITH THAT ADOPTED BY THE AD HOC GROUP OF THIS COUNCIL WHICH STUDIED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONVEYANCING AND PROPERTY ORDINANCE," HE SAID.

AT PRESENT, TITLE TO LAND IS UNAFFECTED BY A WILL UNTIL THE TESTATOR DIES AND THERE IS A GRANT OF PROBATE. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO REGISTER ANY WILL WITH THE LAND OFFICE.

MR EASON SAID THE BILL THEREFORE SOUGHT TO REMOVE ALL REFERENCES TO WILLS FROM THE ORDINANCE AND ITS SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION.

"WILLS ALREADY DEPOSITED IN THE LAND OFFICE, WHICH NUMBER ABOUT 150, WILL BE HANDED OVER TO THE REGISTRAR, SUPREME COURT FOR CUSTODY," HE ADDED.

IN ADDITION, THE SECRETARY SAID THE BILL PROPOSED THAT A PERSON COMMIT AN OFFENCE IF HE WILFULLY OR MALICIOUSLY DESTROYED, REMOVED OR DEFACED LAND OFFICE DOCUMENTS.

THIS SUPPLEMENTED THE EXISTING OFFENCE FOR DISHONESTLY DESTROYING OR DEFACING SUCH DOCUMENTS, HE ADDED.

THE PENALTIES FOR THE TWO OFFENCES WERE SET AT THE SAME LEVEL AS FOR CORRESPONDING OFFENCES IN THE COMPANIES ORDINANCES, THAT WAS, A FINE AND IMPRISONMENT FOR THE FIRST OFFENCE AND IMPRISONMENT FOR THE SECOND.

MR EASON SAID IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE WORKLOAD OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IN CONSIDERING ROUTINE AND TECHNICAL MATTERS IN RESPECT OF THE ORDINANCE, THE BILL ALSO PROPOSED THAT THE POWERS TO MAKE REGULATIONS UNDER SECTION 28(1) AND TO AMEND THE SECOND SCHEDULE OF THE ORDINANCE UNDER SECTION 30(2) BE VESTED IN THE LAND OFFICER INSTEAD OF THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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POST OFFICE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 INTRODUCED

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A BILL SEEKING TO REMEDY SOME EXISTING DEFICIENCIES IN THE POST OFFICE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ANSON CHAN, SAID THE BILL EXTENDED THE DEFINITION OF 'POSTMASTER GENERAL' (PMG) TO COVER THE DEPUTY POSTMASTER GENERAL SO THAT THE LATTER COULD CARRY OUT THE PMG'S STATUTORY DUTIES IF NECESSARY.

IN ADDITION THE BILL AUTHORISED THE PMG TO MAKE DEPARTMENTAL RULES ALLOWING THE DESTRUCTION OF UNDELIVERABLE MAIL, SHE SAID.

"THIRDLY, OUTDATED PROVISIONS PROHIBITING THE POSTING OF LOTTERY TICKETS OR DOCUMENTS RELATING TO LOTTERIES, IRRESPECTIVE OF WHETHER OR NOT THE LOTTERY IS LEGAL, ARE AMENDED TO RESTRICT THEIR APPLICATION PURELY TO ILLEGAL LOTTERIES.

"SIMILARLY OBSOLESCENT PROVISIONS PROHIBITING THE POSTING OF 'COINS OR GOLD OR SILVER BULLION' ARE REPEALED," MRS CHAN SAID.

FOURTHLY, THE BILL REMOVED INCONSISTENCIES IN THE PENALTIES SET FOR DIFFERENT OFFENCES UNDER THE ORDINANCE, AND, WHERE NECESSARY, INCREASED THE LEVEL TO MAINTAIN THE DETERRENT EFFECT, SHE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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CRIMES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL INTRODUCED
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THE CRIMES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1992 WHICH SEEKS TO MAKE A PROVISION ON LOITERING OFFENCE COMPATIBLE WITH THE BILL OF RIGHTS ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID AT PRESENT POLICE OFFICERS ARE EMPOWERED TO REQUIRE AN ACCUSED PERSON TO EXPLAIN HIS SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOUR IF HE IS FOUND LOITERING IN A PUBLIC PLACE OR IN THE COMMON PARTS OF ANY BUILDING.

THIS REQUIREMENT RISKS INFRINGING THE PRESUMPTION OF INNOCENCE GUARANTEED BY THE BILL OF RIGHTS ORDINANCE, AND THE RIGHT OF AN ACCUSED PERSON NOT TO BE COMPELLED TO CONFESS GUILT, HE SAID.

UNDER THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT, ANY FAILURE OF A SUSPECT TO GIVE A SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION OF HIS PRESENCE AND BEHAVIOUR WILL ONLY FORM PART OF THE EVIDENCE IN THE CASE.

IT WILL NOT, AS IT DOES IN THE PRESENT OFFENCE, CONSTITUTE A PART OF THE OFFENCE.

MR ASPREY SAID THE AMENDMENT WOULD ALSO REQUIRE THE PROSECUTION TO PROVE 'INTENT' ON THE PART OF THE ACCUSED TO COMMIT AN ARRESTABLE OFFENCE.

"THE LOITERING OFFENCE HAS BEEN AN EFFECTIVE MEANS OF CRIME PREVENTION, AND WE NEED TO RETAIN IT AS SUCH.

"THE ABILITY OF THE POLICE TO PREVENT AND COMBAT CRIME SHOULD NOT BE AFFECTED ADVERSELY BY THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT," HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONS TO INCREASE
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TWO SEPARATE RESOLUTIONS WERE INTRODUCED TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL UNDER THE PENSIONS (INCREASE) ORDINANCE AND WIDOWS AND ORPHANS PENSION (INCREASE) ORDINANCE TO INCREASE CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONS BY 11.54% WITH EFFECT FROM APRIL 1 THIS YEAR.

MOVING THE MOTIONS, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON HAMISH MACLEOD, SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S DECLARED POLICY WAS TO MAINTAIN THE ORIGINAL PURCHASING POWER OF CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONS.

/THESE INCLUDED

THESE INCLUDED PENSIONS PAYABLE UNDER THE WIDOWS AND ORPHANS PENSION SCHEME AND THE WIDOWS' AND CHILDREN'S PENSIONS SCHEME.

HE SAID THIS WAS ACHIEVED BY PERIODIC PENSION ADJUSTMENTS IN LINE WITH MOVEMENTS IN THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A).

DURING THE LATEST REVIEW PERIOD FROM APRIL 1, 1991 TO MARCH 31, 1992, THE MOVING ANNUAL AVERAGE OF THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A) ROSE BY 11.54%.

HE SAID THE TOTAL COST OF INCREASING ALL PENSIONS BY THIS PERCENTAGE WAS ESTIMATED TO BE \$198.29 MILLION FOR A FULL YEAR.

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INTERNATIONAL TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE SERVICE TO BE EXPANDED
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A RESOLUTION WAS INTRODUCED TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) TO ENABLE THE HONG KONG TELEPHONE COMPANY TO EXPAND ITS INTERNATIONAL TOLL-FREE SERVICE.

MOVING A MOTION UNDER THE TELEPHONE ORDINANCE, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ANSON CHAN, SAID THE EXPANDED SERVICE WOULD ALLOW LOCAL RESIDENTS TO DIAL INTERNATIONAL TOLL-FREE NUMBERS, SUCH AS THE "1-800" NUMBERS IN USA, FROM HONG KONG.

THE COMPANIES THAT OFFER THESE TOLL-FREE NUMBERS WILL PAY FOR THE CALL CHARGES, AND WILL BE BILLED IN HONG KONG.

THEY WILL ALSO BE REQUIRED TO PAY REGISTRATION AND ANNUAL SERVICE CHARGES, AS WELL AS A SEPARATE ONE-OFF CHARGE IF THEY WISH TO CHANGE NUMBERS.

ON CHARGES FOR THE REVISED SERVICE, MRS CHAN SAID: "WE HAVE EXAMINED THESE CHARGES AND CONSIDER THEM TO BE A FAIR REFLECTION OF THE COSTS OF PROVIDING THE SERVICE."

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MOTION ON NEW AIRPORT PROJECT PASSED

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A MOTION ON THE IMPACT OF THE AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME ON PUBLIC EXPENDITURE AND PEOPLE'S LIVELIHOOD WAS PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

TWENTY LEGISLATORS SPOKE ON THE MOTION MOVED BY THE HON ALBERT CHAN. THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON HAMISH MACLEOD, REPLIED FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

ANOTHER MOTION MOVED BY THE HON TIK CHI-YUEN ON PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION WAS ALSO PASSED.

ELEVEN MEMBERS DEBATED THE MOTION AND THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, SPOKE ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT.

IN ADDITION, BANKRUPTCY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 AND STAMP DUTY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 WERE PASSED.

A TOTAL OF FOUR BILLS WERE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS. DEBATES ON THEM WERE ADJOURNED.

THEY WERE POST OFFICE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992, EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) (NO. 4) BILL 1992, CRIMES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 AND LAND REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992.

MEANWHILE, EIGHT COUNCILLORS SPOKE IN AN ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON CHINESE MEDICINE RAISED BY THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG. THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, DR S.H. LEE, REPLIED FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

ALSO PASSED WERE TWO MOTIONS MOVED BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY UNDER THE PENSIONS (INCREASE) ORDINANCE AND THE WIDOWS AND ORPHANS PENSION (INCREASE) ORDINANCE, AND A MOTION BY THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MRS ANSON CHAN, UNDER THE TELEPHONE ORDINANCE.

THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY, MR K.Y. YEUNG, TABLED THE REPORT OF CHANGES TO THE APPROVED ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE APPROVED DURING THE THIRD QUARTER OF 1991-92.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID FORD, TABLED THE GOVERNMENT MINUTE IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE DATED JANUARY THIS YEAR.

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RENTON TO CHAIR BRITISH-HK PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

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THE RT. HON. TIM RENTON, CONSERVATIVE MP FOR SUSSEX WAS ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH HONG KONG PARLIAMENTARY GROUP YESTERDAY (TUESDAY).

HE TAKES OVER FROM SIR PETER BLAKER WHO RETIRED FROM PARLIAMENT AT THE LAST GENERAL ELECTIONS.

THE OTHER OFFICE-BEARERS ELECTED TO THE GROUP ARE:

MR ROGER SIMS, MP (JOINT VICE-CHAIRMAN);
DR JOHN MAREK, MP (JOINT VICE-CHAIRMAN);
SIR RUSSELL JOHNSTON, MP (SECRETARY); AND
MR JOHN MCFALL, MP (TREASURER).

THE HONG KONG COMMISSIONER, MR JOHN YAXLEY, WELCOMING THE ELECTION OF MR RENTON AND THE OTHER OFFICE BEARERS SAID: "MR RENTON IS A SENIOR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT WHO KNOWS HONG KONG WELL AND HAS ALWAYS BEEN A GOOD FRIEND OF THE TERRITORY. HONG KONG IS LUCKY TO HAVE MR RENTON AS THE NEW CHAIRMAN OF THIS VERY PRESTIGIOUS PARLIAMENTARY GROUP."

MR RENTON JOINED THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN 1974. A HIGHLY REGARDED MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, MR RENTON HAS A DISTINGUISHED POLITICAL CAREER, HOLDING VARIOUSLY THE MINISTERIAL POSITIONS OF: UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE, FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE (1984-85); MINISTER OF STATE, FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE (1985-87); MINISTER OF STATE, HOME OFFICE (1987-89); PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO HM TREASURY AND GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (1989-90); AND MINISTER OF STATE, PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE (MINISTER FOR THE ARTS) (1990-MARCH 1992). WHEN HE WAS A MINISTER OF STATE IN THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE, MR RENTON WAS THE MINISTER WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR HONG KONG.

MR RENTON WAS BORN IN 1932. HE WAS EDUCATED IN ETON AND OXFORD. HE IS MARRIED WITH FIVE CHILDREN.

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FINDINGS OF STUDY GROUP ON RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION
OF JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS RELEASED

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THE STUDY GROUP WHICH WAS APPOINTED TO EXAMINE THE PROBLEM OF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION AMONG JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS (JPOS) HAS PRODUCED A PACKAGE OF 42 RECOMMENDATIONS AIMED AT INCREASING JPO STRENGTH.

THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLINED SERVICES HAS ADVISED ON THESE RECOMMENDATIONS.

ANNOUNCING THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, SAID: "THE ADMINISTRATION HAS TAKEN A TWO-STEP APPROACH TO TACKLING THE PROBLEM OF POLICE MANPOWER SHORTAGES.

"FIRST, A STUDY GROUP WAS APPOINTED, AS A MATTER OF URGENCY, TO IDENTIFY THE CAUSES OF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION DIFFICULTIES AMONG JPOS AND TO RECOMMEND SOLUTIONS WHICH CAN BE IMPLEMENTED QUICKLY.

"SECOND, A REVIEW TEAM WILL EXAMINE THE MANPOWER REQUIREMENT, AS WELL AS THE MANAGEMENT AND COMMAND STRUCTURE, OF THE POLICE FORCE SO AS TO ESTABLISH APPROPRIATE MANNING SCALES TO MEET OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE NEXT DECADE."

MR WIGGHAM UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF A STRONG POLICE FORCE, IN TERMS OF BOTH NUMBERS AND MORALE, IN MAINTAINING LAW AND ORDER FOR THE CONTINUED STABILITY OF HONG KONG.

HE EMPHASISED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAD TAKEN A LONG-TERM VIEW OF THE POLICE MANPOWER SITUATION IN THE LIGHT OF CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS, SUCH AS THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE BRITISH FORCES AND THE GROWING TRAFFIC ACROSS THE BORDER WITH CHINA.

"WE ARE NOT MERELY RESPONDING TO RECENT EVENTS," MR WIGGHAM SAID, "BUT ALSO PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE."

THE FIRST STUDY, WHICH HAS BEEN COMPLETED, REVEALED THAT THE JPO STRENGTH AS AT APRIL 1, 1992 WAS ABOUT 800 LESS THAN THREE YEARS AGO, DUE TO A COMBINATION OF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION DIFFICULTIES, WHEREAS POLICE RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE NUMBER OF VIOLENT CRIMES, IN PARTICULAR, ARMED ROBBERIES AND USE OF FIREARMS BY CRIMINALS, HAD INCREASED OVER THE SAME PERIOD.

ALTHOUGH RECRUITMENT HAS IMPROVED SINCE OCTOBER 1991, THE NUMBER TAKEN ON STRENGTH WAS STILL CONSISTENTLY BELOW TARGET.

"AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND AND IN VIEW OF THE PROJECTED JPO WASTAGE RATE THROUGH RETIREMENT IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS, THE STUDY GROUP CONCLUDED THAT IMMEDIATE ACTION WAS NECESSARY TO INCREASE THE INTAKE AND TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF RESIGNATIONS AMONG SERVING JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS," MR WIGGHAM SAID.

THE SECRETARY NOTED THAT THE STUDY GROUP PROPOSED TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM ON THREE FRONTS:

- * TO INCREASE THE DEPLOYMENT OF POLICE OFFICERS FOR OPERATIONAL DUTIES THROUGH FURTHER CIVILIANISATION OF DISCIPLINED POLICE POSTS AND WITHDRAWAL OF TRAINED POLICE OFFICERS FROM CIVILIAN POSTS;
- * TO INCREASE INTAKE BY STREAMLINING THE RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES AND RECRUITING MORE WOMEN POLICE CONSTABLES; AND

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* TO REDUCE WASTAGE BY PROVIDING MORE PERSONAL GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT TO ASSIST JUNIOR POLICE CONSTABLES IN COPING WITH THE DEMANDS OF WORK AND IMPROVING THE PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF JPOS.

COMMENTING ON THE PROPOSED PAY ADJUSTMENT, MR WIGGHAM SAID: "THE POLICE HOLD A SPECIAL POSITION IN OUR SOCIETY. IN RECOGNITION OF THE UNIQUENESS OF THE POLICE, AS THE GOVERNMENT'S AGENCY OF LAST RESORT, A SEPARATE POLICE PAY SCALE WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1988.

"IT FOLLOWS THAT THE POLICE PAY SCALE MUST BE CAPABLE OF BEING ADJUSTED INDEPENDENTLY OF THE OTHER CIVIL SERVICE PAY SCALES.

"THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE POLICE PAY SCALE ARE JUSTIFIED ON A UNIQUE COMBINATION OF FACTORS FACING THE POLICE AND ARE BASED ON ESTABLISHED PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES.

"THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL INCREMENTS ON PASSING OUT FROM THE POLICE TRAINING SCHOOL AND AFTER THE SECOND YEAR OF SERVICE RESPECTIVELY IS A WELL-TRIED AND PROVEN METHOD OF REDUCING WASTAGE WHERE THE PROBLEM IS MOST SERIOUS.

"THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE POLICE CONSTABLE PAY SCALE RESTORES THE LENGTH OF THE PAY SCALE SO AS TO MAINTAIN A REASONABLE CAREER STRUCTURE AND ENSURES A UNIFORM PAY DIFFERENTIAL WITH THE OTHER DISCIPLINED SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE RANK.

"IT SHOULD ALSO HELP RETENTION AMONG THE MORE SENIOR PCS. THE CONSEQUENTIAL ADJUSTMENTS TO THE SERGEANT AND STATION SERGEANT PAY SCALES ARE NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN INTERNAL RELATIVITIES AND TO REFLECT THE DIFFERENCES IN THE JOB NATURE OF THE RANKS."

THE STUDY GROUP ALSO PROPOSED A NUMBER OF IMPROVEMENTS TO THE DEATH BENEFITS FOR THE FAMILIES OF OFFICERS KILLED ON DUTY. THESE WILL ALSO APPLY TO THE OTHER DISCIPLINED SERVICES.

THE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE JPO PAY SCALES ARE ESTIMATED TO COST \$208 MILLION PER ANNUM.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE WILL BE APPROACHED FOR FUNDING AT THE MEETING ON MAY 22.

"SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF FINANCE COMMITTEE, THE REVISED PAY SCALES WILL COME INTO EFFECT ON THE DATE APPROVAL IS GIVEN," MR WIGGHAM ADDED.

/JPO PAY

JPO Pay Scale

<u>PPS Point</u>	<u>\$ Value</u>
28	18740
27	17810
26	17035
25	16525
24	16035
23	15560
22	15205
21	14820
20	14435
19	14065
18	13680
17	13295
16	12925
15	12570
14	12215
13	11870
12	11535
11	11245
10	10875
9	10545
8	10230
7	9930
6	9630
5	9350
4	9070
3	8795
2	8535
1	8285

Pay Scale Adjustments

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
S. Sgt.	PPS 20 - 27 (\$14,435 - \$17,810)	PPS 21 - 28 (\$14,820 - \$18,740)
Sgt.	PPS 12 - 19 (\$11,535 - \$14,065) (1)	PPS 14 - 21 (\$12,215 - \$14,820) (2)
PC	PPS 1 - 13 (\$8,285 - \$11,870)	PPS 1 - 15 (\$8,285 - \$12,570)

(1) There are at present two omitted points in the PC pay scale, after the first and fifth years of service respectively. Points 12 and 13 are long service increments.

(2) Two additional incremental jumps are incorporated, one on passing out from PTS and another after the second year of service. Points 14 and 15 are long service increments.

POLICE CHIEF WELCOMES RECRUITMENT MEASURES

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THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, MR LI KWAN-HA, TODAY (MAY 13) WELCOMED THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION ON MEASURES TO IMPROVE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION AMONG JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS (JPOS).

MR LI SAID: "THE STUDY GROUP'S REPORT CONTAINS USEFUL RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS.

"I AM PARTICULARLY PLEASED TO SEE THAT THE UNIQUE POSITION OF THE FORCE AS THE GOVERNMENT'S AGENCY OF LAST RESORT HAS BEEN PROPERLY RECOGNISED, AND THAT THE FORCE RECEIVES SPECIAL TREATMENT."

MR LI NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION SENDS OUT A CLEAR MESSAGE FOR THE FUTURE.

"A STRONG POLICE FORCE IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE CONTINUED STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG," HE SAID.

"MOST OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS ON RECRUITMENT ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED. SOME OF THE OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, THOSE RELATING TO CIVILIANISATION AND VOLUNTARY ARMING OF WOMEN POLICE, WILL BE FOLLOWED UP IN THE MANAGEMENT REVIEW."

DESCRIBED AS PARTICULARLY WELCOME ARE THE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF JPOS, IN PARTICULAR, THE PROVISION OF MORE QUARTERS AND THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE JPO PAY SCALES.

THE TOTAL PACKAGE IS EXPECTED TO HAVE A BENEFICIAL EFFECT ON RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT.

"I WELCOME THE SUPPORT FOR THE POLICE FORCE DEMONSTRATED BY GOVERNMENT IN THEIR ACCEPTANCE OF THE STUDY'S FINDING," MR LI SAID.

"I NOW HOPE THAT EARLY IMPLEMENTATION WILL IMPROVE THE FORCE'S ABILITY TO PUT MORE MEN ON THE STREETS OF HONG KONG."

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GUANGDONG GOVERNOR TO VISIT HK

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AT THE INVITATION OF THE GOVERNOR, GOVERNOR ZHU SENLIN OF GUANGDONG WILL VISIT HONG KONG FROM MAY 15 - 19.

THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WILL BE ORGANISING A PROGRAMME FOR HIM ON MAY 16 AND 18.

GOVERNOR ZHU WILL HOLD TALKS WITH THE GOVERNOR. HE WILL ALSO MEET THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL.

/HE WILL

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HE WILL VISIT THE CONTAINER TERMINAL, EASTERN HARBOUR TUNNEL, STOCK EXCHANGE, TAI PO INDUSTRIAL ESTATE AND CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE.

IN ADDITION, THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE WILL SHOW HIM BORDER FACILITIES AND BRIEF HIM ON THE SECURITY SITUATION.

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GOVERNOR VISITS UNIVERSITY

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THE GOVERNOR, LORD WILSON, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) VISITED THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (HKUST).

HE CONGRATULATED THE COUNCIL AND THE STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY ON THEIR RAPID PROGRESS TOWARDS ESTABLISHING HKUST AS ONE OF ASIA'S CENTRES OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE.

LORD WILSON SAID: "AN IMMENSE AMOUNT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED IN A VERY SHORT TIME. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RESEARCH, TEACHING AND STUDENT ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES IS IMPRESSIVE ENOUGH. BUT, EVEN MORE IMPORTANT, HKUST HAS BEGUN TO ESTABLISH A REPUTATION FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE. I CONGRATULATE THE COUNCIL AND THE STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY ON ALL THEY HAVE ACHIEVED."

LORD WILSON SAID HKUST PLAYED A VITAL ROLE IN HONG KONG'S DRIVE TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PLACES IN TERTIARY EDUCATION TO KEEP PACE WITH THE DEMAND FROM SCHOOL LEAVERS.

"IN 1989 WE SET OURSELVES THE TARGET OF EXPANDING TERTIARY EDUCATION TO THE POINT WHERE WE COULD PROVIDE PLACES FOR 18% OF THE 17-20 AGE GROUP.

"WE SHALL ACHIEVE THIS TARGET IN 1995. WE HAVE ALREADY EXPANDED FROM ABOUT 5,000 FIRST-YEAR FIRST DEGREE PLACES IN 1988 TO OVER 10,000 PLACES NOW. WE ARE ON TARGET FOR 14,500 PLACES BY 1995."

LORD WILSON EMPHASISED THE NEED FOR A CAREFULLY CO-ORDINATED DEVELOPMENT OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

"THIS MEANS MAINTAINING A BALANCE BETWEEN ALL SECTORS OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND IMPROVING ACADEMIC STANDARDS."

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL, SIR S.Y. CHUNG, AND THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR CHIA-WEI WOO, ESCORTED LORD WILSON ON A TOUR OF THE CHEMISTRY RESEARCH LABORATORIES, COMPUTER FACILITIES AND THE POSTGRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE HALLS.

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SOCIETIES ORDINANCE TO BE AMENDED

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THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE SOCIETIES ORDINANCE WILL BE AMENDED TO MAKE IT CONSISTENT WITH THE HONG KONG BILL OF RIGHTS (BOR) ORDINANCE.

THE SOCIETIES ORDINANCE IS ONE OF THE SIX ORDINANCES WHICH HAD BEEN EXEMPTED FROM THE OPERATION OF THE BOR FOR ONE YEAR. THE ONE-YEAR FREEZE PERIOD IS DUE TO EXPIRE NEXT MONTH.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT WOULD PROTECT THE FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION WHILE AT THE SAME TIME RETAINING A DEGREE OF REGULATION OVER SOCIETIES AS A CRIME PREVENTION MEASURE AND IN THE INTERESTS OF SECURITY, PUBLIC SAFETY AND PUBLIC ORDER AS PERMITTED UNDER THE BOR.

UNDER EXISTING LEGISLATION, SOCIETIES ARE REQUIRED TO BE REGISTERED TO GAIN LAWFUL STATUS. THIS REQUIREMENT IS CONSIDERED TO BE INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AS SET OUT IN THE BOR.

"THE SOCIETIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 SEEKS TO REPLACE THE EXISTING REGISTRATION SYSTEM WITH A NOTIFICATION SYSTEM," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS ENABLE PEOPLE TO FORM LAWFUL SOCIETIES FREELY WITHOUT THE REQUIREMENT FOR REGISTRATION. THEY ARE ONLY REQUIRED TO NOTIFY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE EXISTENCE OF SUCH SOCIETIES.

FAILURE TO NOTIFY WILL BE AN OFFENCE, BUT SOCIETIES WHICH DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT WILL NOT AUTOMATICALLY BE REGARDED AS UNLAWFUL.

"WHEN A SOCIETY NOTIFIES THE GOVERNMENT OF ITS ESTABLISHMENT, IT IS ONLY REQUIRED TO GIVE ITS NAME, ITS OBJECTS, ITS ADDRESS AND THE NAMES OF ITS OFFICE BEARERS," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE ADDED THAT UNDER THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY COULD PROHIBIT THE OPERATION OF A SOCIETY IF HE BELIEVED THAT SUCH OPERATION WOULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO THE SECURITY OF HONG KONG, PUBLIC SAFETY OR PUBLIC ORDER.

THESE GROUNDS FOR PROHIBITION ARE COMPATIBLE WITH THE BOR AND THEIR SCOPE IS MUCH NARROWER THAN THE EXISTING POWER WHICH THE REGISTRAR OF SOCIETIES HAS FOR REFUSING THE REGISTRATION OF A SOCIETY.

UNDER THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS, CERTAIN PRESUMPTIONS IN RELATION TO SOCIETIES WOULD BE LIMITED IN THEIR APPLICATION.

THE PRESUMPTION OF EXISTENCE OF A SOCIETY WHERE ANY BOOKS, ACCOUNTS, WRITINGS, LISTS OF MEMBERS, SEALS, BANNERS OR INSIGNIA OF A SOCIETY ARE FOUND IN POSSESSION OF ANY PERSON WOULD APPLY TO TRIAD SOCIETIES ONLY.

/THE PRESUMPTION

THE PRESUMPTION OF A PERSON'S ASSISTANCE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF A SOCIETY WHERE SUCH ITEMS ARE FOUND IN HIS POSSESSION WOULD APPLY TO BOTH TRIAD AND PROHIBITED SOCIETIES.

"IT IS NECESSARY TO RETAIN THESE PRESUMPTIONS - NOW IN A FORM COMPATIBLE WITH THE BOR - TO ENSURE AN EFFECTIVE FIGHT AGAINST TRIADS AND OTHER CRIMINAL ELEMENTS," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE SPOKESMAN ALSO SAID THE TITLE OF THE REGISTRAR OF SOCIETIES HELD BY THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, WILL BE CHANGED TO "SOCIETIES OFFICER" TO REFLECT HIS NEW ROLE.

THE AMENDMENT BILL WILL BE GAZETTED ON FRIDAY (MAY 15) AND BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON MAY 20.

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APRIL AIR QUALITY REPORT RELEASED

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THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT (EPD) TODAY (WEDNESDAY) RELEASED AIR QUALITY INFORMATION FOR LAST MONTH - THE 10TH MONTHLY ANNOUNCEMENT MADE BY THE DEPARTMENT.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT NORMALLY CONTAINS MONITORING RESULTS OBTAINED AT ITS MONG KOK, CENTRAL/WESTERN AND KWAI CHUNG MONITORING STATIONS.

FOR THIS RELEASE, HOWEVER, NO DATA IS AVAILABLE FOR THE CENTRAL/WESTERN STATION, WHERE ALL MONITORING ACTIVITIES HAVE TEMPORARILY BEEN SUSPENDED OWING TO CONSTRUCTION WORKS THERE.

THE REPORTED AIR POLLUTANTS INCLUDE SULPHUR DIOXIDE (SO₂) AND NITROGEN DIOXIDE (NO₂) WHICH ARE MONITORED CONTINUOUSLY ROUND THE CLOCK, AND TOTAL SUSPENDED PARTICULATES (TSP) AND RESPIRABLE SUSPENDED PARTICULATES (RSP) WHICH ARE SAMPLED FOR 24 HOURS EVERY SIX DAYS.

THE GENERAL SO₂ AND NO₂ LEVELS IN APRIL WERE RATHER HIGH, ALTHOUGH THEY DID NOT EXCEED THE HONG KONG AIR QUALITY OBJECTIVES.

VERY HIGH LEVELS OF TSP AND RSP LEVELS WERE OBSERVED ON APRIL 15, WHEN BOTH EXCEEDED THEIR RELEVANT DAILY AIR QUALITY OBJECTIVES.

ALSO ON THAT DAY, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THESE DAILY OBJECTIVES WERE EXCEEDED WIDELY AT OTHER MONITORING STATIONS THROUGHOUT HONG KONG.

THE EVIDENCE SO FAR INDICATES THAT THIS DUST POLLUTION IS ORIGINATED FROM OUTSIDE THE TERRITORY. IN COLLABORATION WITH THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY AND THE GOVERNMENT CHEMIST, THE EPD ARE CONDUCTING FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS INTO ITS NATURE AND SOURCE.

/THE SPOKESMAN

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 1992

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THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE PURPOSE OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS TO MAKE THE PUBLIC MORE AWARE OF THE GENERAL AIR QUALITY LEVELS TO WHICH THEY MIGHT BE EXPOSED.

THESE AIR POLLUTANTS MAINLY COME FROM COMBUSTION OF FUEL IN INDUSTRIAL PLANTS AND MOTOR VEHICLES ENGINES.

TSP AND RSP ARE ALSO GENERATED BY CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES AND SOME MANUFACTURING PROCESSES, AS WELL AS NATURAL SOURCES.

THE DAILY HONG KONG AIR QUALITY OBJECTIVES OF SO₂ AND NO₂, TSP AND RSP ARE 350, 150, 260 AND 180 MICROGRAMS PER CUBIC METER RESPECTIVELY.

THESE OBJECTIVES ARE COMPARABLE TO INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED AIR QUALITY STANDARDS RECOMMENDED FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE GENERAL HEALTH OF THE PUBLIC.

HIGH LEVELS OF SO₂ CAUSE RESPIRATORY ILLNESS, REDUCE LUNG FUNCTION AND INCREASE MORTALITY RATE.

NO₂ CAUSES RESPIRATORY IRRITATION, INCREASES SUSCEPTIBILITY TO RESPIRATORY INFECTION AND IMPAIRS LUNG DEVELOPMENT.

TSP ACTS SYNERGISTICALLY WITH OTHER GASEOUS POLLUTANTS AND RSP CAUSES RESPIRATORY ILLNESS, REDUCES LUNG FUNCTION AND MORE FORMS OF RSP MAY CAUSE CANCER.

THE MONG KOK, CENTRAL/WESTERN AND KWAI CHUNG STATIONS BROADLY REPRESENT AIR QUALITY RESPECTIVELY AT LOCATIONS CLOSE TO ROAD TRAFFIC IN BUILT-UP URBAN DISTRICT, COMBINED COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS, AND DISTRICTS CLOSE TO INDUSTRIAL AREAS.

CURRENTLY THE EPD OPERATES A TOTAL OF 11 FIXED AIR QUALITY MONITORING STATIONS, INCLUDING THE THREE MENTIONED ABOVE.

THE OTHER EIGHT STATIONS ARE AT KWUN TONG, SHAM SHUI PO, TSIM SHA TSUI, TSEUNG KWAN O, TSUEN WAN, HONG KONG SOUTH, TAI PO AND SHA TIN.

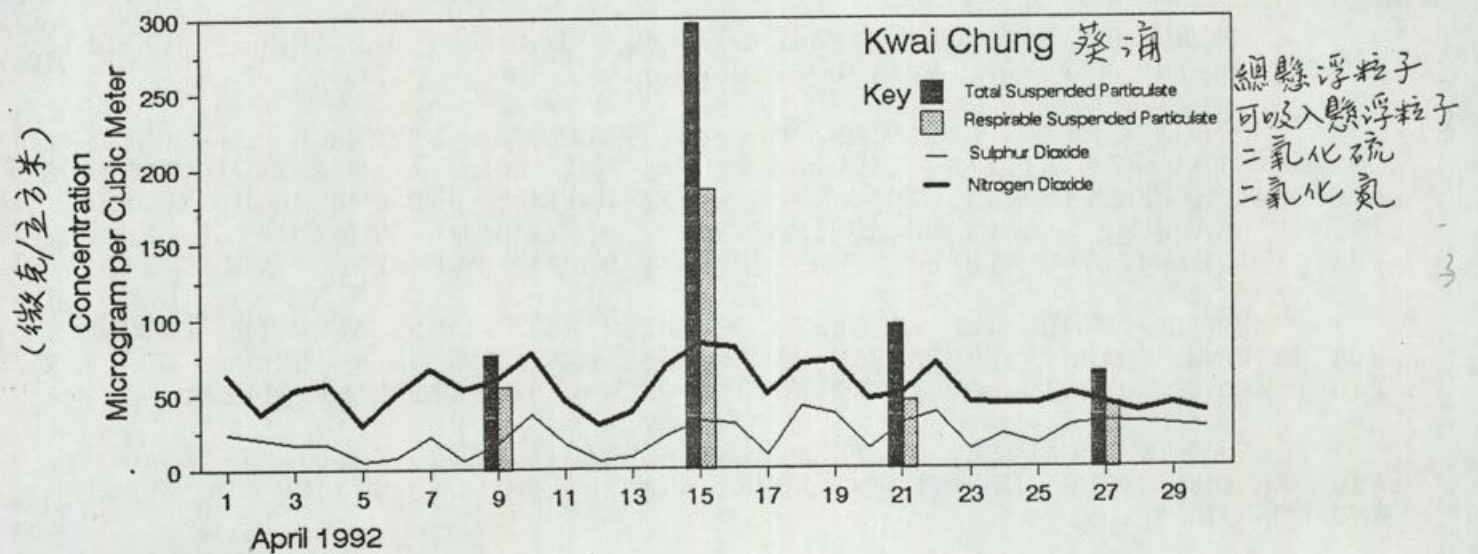
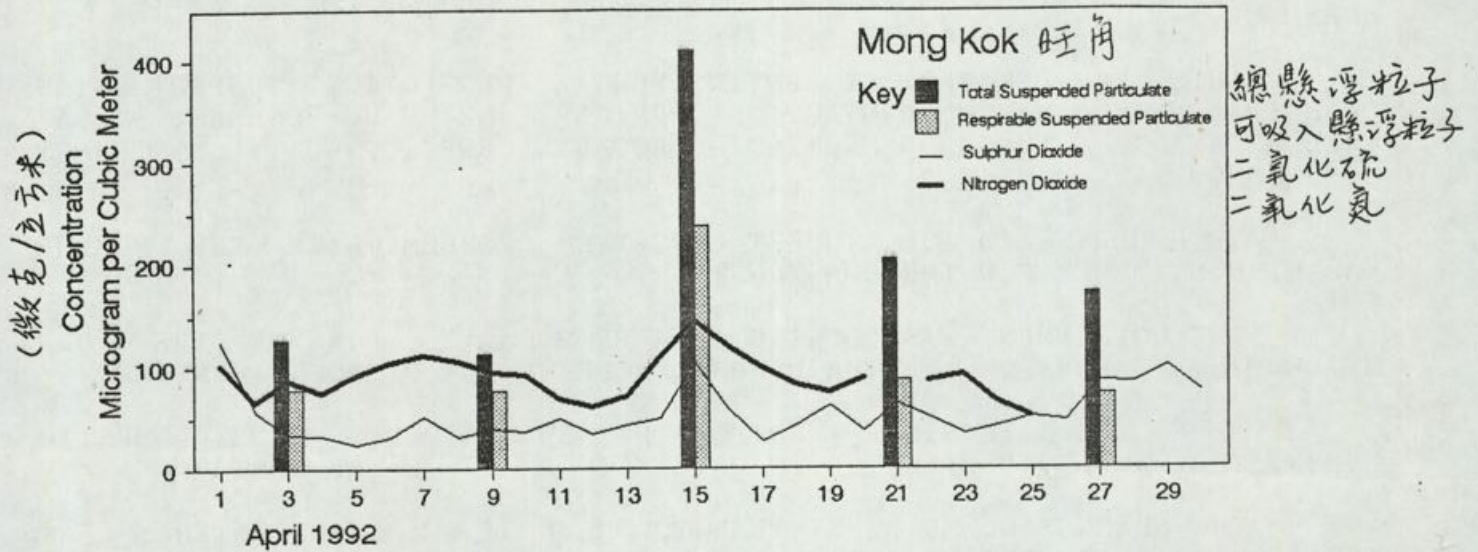
NOTE TO EDITORS:

AN ILLUSTRATION SHOWING THE SUMMARY AIR QUALITY REPORT FOR APRIL THIS YEAR WILL BE FAXED.

ENQUIRIES MAY BE DIRECTED TO A PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICER, MR RAYMOND LEUNG, ON TEL. 810 3049.

/HONG KONG

一九九二年四月份空氣質素報告 Hong Kong Air Quality Report for April 1992



STRATEGIC SEWAGE DISPOSAL SCHEME NEVER SHELVED

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THE STRATEGIC SEWAGE DISPOSAL SCHEME, ONE OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE LONG-TERM STRATEGIC SEWAGE DISPOSAL STRATEGY AIMED AT PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH AND THE WATER ENVIRONMENT, HAS NEVER BEEN SHELVED THOUGH IT WAS ABOUT THREE YEARS BEHIND THE ORIGINAL RATHER OPTIMISTIC SCHEDULE.

THIS WAS STATED BY ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT'S PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OFFICER, MR PAUL HOLMES, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) AT A LUNCHEON MEETING OF ROTARY CLUB OF CITY NORTHWEST HONG KONG.

MR HOLMES SAID THE BIGGEST LONG-TERM PROBLEM WITH THE SCHEME WAS FINDING MONEY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION.

THE GOVERNMENT WAS LOOKING AT A PROPOSAL TO FINANCE THE WORK BY LEVYING CHARGES ON ALL THE USERS OF THE SEWAGE DISPOSAL SERVICE.

MR HOLMES SAID SINCE A LOT OF THE SEWAGE COMES FROM DOMESTIC USERS, THEY WOULD BE EXPECTED TO PAY THEIR SHARE OF THE COST.

THE CHARGES COULD BE SIMILAR TO THE COST OF CLEAN WATER - AN EQUATION THAT IS NEITHER SURPRISING NOR UNREASONABLE.

MR HOLMES SAID THE SEWAGE DISPOSAL STRATEGY HAD THREE ELEMENTS TO TACKLE THE WATER POLLUTION PROBLEM.

FIRST, THE PROVISION OF AN ADEQUATE SEWERAGE SYSTEM, TO COLLECT THE COMMUNITY'S LIQUID WASTE, SECOND, A STRATEGIC SEWAGE DISPOSAL SCHEME TO GET RID OF THE WASTE SAFELY, AND THE THIRD ELEMENT IS A PACKAGE OF LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES THAT WILL ENSURE THAT THE FIRST TWO ELEMENTS CAN OPERATE SAFELY AND EFFECTIVELY.

"WORK ON ALL THE ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN IN PROGRESS FOR SEVERAL YEARS. SEWERAGE MASTER PLANS HAVE NOW BEEN DRAWN UP FOR EIGHT AREAS COVERING OVER TWO-THIRDS OF THE TERRITORY'S POPULATION.

"A NEW LOCAL SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS IS BEING BUILT AT STANLEY, AND VARIOUS OTHER IMPROVEMENT WORKS ARE IN VARIOUS STAGES OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION.

"A TOTAL OF OVER THREE BILLION DOLLARS IS ALREADY COMMITTED TO THIS WORK."

HE SAID AMENDMENTS TO THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ORDINANCE CAME INTO FORCE AT THE END OF 1990, AND A COMPREHENSIVE NEW SET OF STANDARDS WAS PUBLISHED IN JANUARY, 1991. THIS HAD PROVED TO BE EFFECTIVE IN NEARLY A YEAR AND A HALF IN OPERATION.

"THERE ARE STILL IMPORTANT AREAS OF THE TERRITORY WHERE THIS LAW IS NOT IN FORCE, AND THIS INCLUDES THE INDUSTRIAL AREAS AROUND VICTORIA HARBOUR. THE REASON FOR THE DELAY IS SIMPLY A SHORTAGE OF MANPOWER.

"ENFORCEMENT OF WATER POLLUTION CONTROLS IS VERY LABOUR INTENSIVE. HOWEVER, THE EPD IS EXAMINING EVERY POSSIBILITY IN ITS EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE LABOUR DEMANDS OF EFFECTIVE WATER POLLUTION CONTROLS, AND WE HOPE TO HAVE THE LAW EFFECTIVELY IN FORCE WITHIN ABOUT THREE YEARS.

"THE STRATEGIC SEWAGE DISPOSAL SCHEME IS THE MOST COMPLEX ELEMENT OF THE STRATEGY AND INVOLVES BY FAR THE MOST COSTLY INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS.

"THE DRAINAGE SERVICES DEPARTMENT IS MANAGING AN ENGINEERING FEASIBILITY STUDY, WHICH IS LOOKING AT SPECIFIC TUNNEL ROUTES AND DIFFERENT TREATMENT OPTIONS.

"THE EPD IS RESPONSIBLE FOR A MARINE INVESTIGATION, WHICH IS BEING CARRIED OUT IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AUTHORITIES UNDER WHOSE JURISDICTION THE EVENTUAL OUTFALL WILL COME.

"THE INTENTION OF THIS SCHEME IS TO ENSURE THAT THE DISCHARGE OF TREATED SEWAGE EFFLUENT WILL NOT HAVE ANY ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT EITHER IN CHINESE WATERS OR ON THE COAST OF HONG KONG AND NEIGHBOURING CHINESE ISLANDS."

MR HOLMES SAID THOUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SEWAGE DISPOSAL STRATEGY MAY IMPOSE SOME COSTS ON INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS, IT WILL BRING ALONG BENEFITS THAT FAR OUTWEIGH THOSE COSTS.

"THESE BENEFITS MAY COME IN A VARIETY OF WAYS, SUCH AS IMPROVED WORKER PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH BETTER HEALTH, RECOVERY OF VALUABLE ENERGY AND MATERIALS, BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AND INCREASED TOURIST SPENDING.

"THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE WILL BENEFIT FROM THE THREE-FOLD STRATEGY OF IMPROVED SEWERAGE, ADEQUATE SEWAGE DISPOSAL FACILITIES, AND LEGAL CONTROLS ON POLLUTION.

"WE ARE MAKING STEADY PROGRESS WITH ALL THESE ACTIVITIES, BUT THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WE FACE IN THE FUTURE IS FINDING AN EFFECTIVE AND ACCEPTABLE MEANS TO FUND THE MAJOR CONSTRUCTION WORKS."

POWER FOR HIGH COURT TO AFFIRM CONVICTION PROPOSED

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THE MAGISTRATES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1992 PROPOSES TO GIVE HIGH COURT THE POWER TO AFFIRM THE CONVICTION OF A DEFENDANT NOTWITHSTANDING THAT THE POINT RAISED ON THE APPEAL MIGHT BE DECIDED IN FAVOUR OF THE CONVICTED PERSON, PROVIDED IT IS SATISFIED THAT NO MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE HAS OCCURRED.

THE POWER IS LIKELY TO BE USED WHERE AN APPEAL RAISES A TECHNICAL ISSUE ONLY, WHICH DOES NOT AFFECT THE ESSENTIAL CORRECTNESS OF THE ORIGINAL CONVICTION.

UNDER EXISTING LAW, THIS POWER IS ALREADY AVAILABLE TO THE COURT OF APPEAL UPON CRIMINAL APPEALS FROM HIGH COURT OR DISTRICT COURT TRIALS.

HOWEVER, THE HIGH COURT DOES NOT HAVE THIS POWER WHEN DETERMINING APPEALS FROM THE MAGISTRATES COURTS.

IN A CASE HEARD AT THE END OF 1988, THE COURT OF APPEAL RECOMMENDED THAT A SPECIFIC PROVISION FOR SUCH A DISCRETIONARY POWER BE INCLUDED IN STATUTE LAW.

THE COURT OF APPEAL STATED THAT THE EXPEDITIOUS AND FAIR DISPATCH OF APPEALS FROM MAGISTRATES IN HONG KONG WOULD GREATLY BE FACILITATED BY SUCH A POWER.

WITHOUT THIS POWER, JUDGES ARE OBLIGED TO ORDER NEW TRIALS OF CASES THAT HAVE SUCCEEDED IN APPEALS ON PURELY TECHNICAL ISSUES ALTHOUGH THE MAGISTRATES' VERDICTS ARE SAFE.

THE BILL WILL BE GAZETTED THIS FRIDAY AND WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON MAY 27.

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UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS TO BE CLOSED

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THE BUILDING AUTHORITY IS SEEKING TO CLOSE THE UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS ON TWO BUILDINGS IN KWUN TONG AND SHAM SHUI PO SO THAT THEY CAN BE DEMOLISHED WITHOUT DANGER TO THE OCCUPIERS AND THE PUBLIC.

THE UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURES IN KWUN TONG ARE LOCATED AT FLATS A, G AND H, FIRST FLOOR OF MEE ON BUILDING, 39-49 HANG ON STREET.

IN SHAM SHUI PO, THE WORKS ARE SITUATED AT THE FRONT PORTIONS OF THE ROOF OF 208 AND 210 FUK WING STREET.

NOTICES OF INTENTION TO APPLY FOR CLOSURE ORDERS UNDER THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE FROM THE HONG KONG DISTRICT COURT ON JULY 15 AND AUGUST 28 RESPECTIVELY WERE POSTED ON THE PREMISES TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

DEMOLITION WORKS ARE EXPECTED TO START AS SOON AS THE CLOSURE ORDERS ARE ISSUED.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 1992

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THREE PIECES OF GOVT LAND TO LET BY TENDER

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

THE FIRST SITE IS LOCATED AT CHOI SHEK LANE, KWUN TONG AND HAS AN AREA OF ABOUT 4,050 SQUARE METRES.

IT IS INTENDED FOR OPEN STORAGE OF GOODS (EXCLUDING CONTAINERS AND VEHICLES LICENSED UNDER THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE).

SITUATED AT WO TIK STREET, TSUEN WAN, THE SECOND SITE OCCUPIES AN AREA OF ABOUT 4,350 SQUARE METRES.

IT IS DESIGNATED FOR A FEE-PAYING PUBLIC CAR PARK FOR THE PARKING OF PRIVATE CARS AND LIGHT GOODS VEHICLES ONLY.

THE REMAINING SITE IS ALSO INTENDED FOR A FEE-PAYING PUBLIC CAR PARK, BUT EXCLUDES THE PARKING OF CONTAINER VEHICLES.

IT IS LOCATED AT AREA 123, TSEUNG KWAN O, SAI KUNG AND HAS AN AREA OF ABOUT 2,870 SQUARE METRES.

THE TENANCIES OF THE THREE SITES ARE FOR TWO YEARS AND QUARTERLY THEREAFTER.

SUBMISSION OF TENDERS WILL BE CLOSED AT NOON ON MAY 29.

FORMS OF TENDER, TENDER NOTICES AND CONDITIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM, AND TENDER PLANS OF THE SITES INSPECTED AT THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG; THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE KOWLOON, 10TH FLOOR, YAU MA TEI CARPARK BUILDING, 250 SHANGHAI STREET AND THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES IN THE RESPECTIVE DISTRICTS.

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AUCTION OF SPECIAL CAR NUMBERS
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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT WILL HOLD ANOTHER AUCTION OF SPECIAL VEHICLE REGISTRATION NUMBERS ON SATURDAY (MAY 16) AT 9.30 AM AT THE CITY HALL RECITAL HALL.

A TOTAL OF 40 SPECIAL CAR NUMBERS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR BIDDING. THEY ARE:

EW1105	EV1218	EW2322	EV618
EV8718	BC11	3219	EW3228
EW1623	EK6663	EU608	EV243
XX600	EW1119	AC2221	AZ400
EV190	CS8888	EY9779	EW802
BB6793	EV1813	EV169	AF350
EW203	EW693	EW7771	EW2212
3799	EX9000	ED3	BB252
EW1163	BS557	EW390	EW6838
AN5705	EV2668	EV7877	EW3303

SUCCESSFUL BIDDERS MUST PAY BY CHEQUE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE BIDDING.

A TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN REMINDED BIDDERS THAT THE VEHICLE REGISTRATION NUMBER WOULD BE ASSIGNED ONLY TO A VEHICLE REGISTERED IN THE NAME OF THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF THE AUCTION.

THE CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION MUST BE PRODUCED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE AUCTION IF THE VEHICLE REGISTRATION MARK IS TO BE REGISTERED UNDER THE NAME OF A BODY CORPORATE.

PROCEEDS OF THE AUCTION WILL AS USUAL GO TO THE GOVERNMENT LOTTERIES FUND.

THE COMING AUCTION WILL BE THE 175TH ORGANISED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SINCE MAY 1973.

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FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON FRIDAY
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THE FINANCE COMMITTEE WILL HOLD A MEETING ON THE TSING MA BRIDGE AT 2.30 PM ON FRIDAY (MAY 15) IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO OBSERVE THE COMMITTEE'S PROCEEDINGS FROM THE CHAMBER'S PUBLIC GALLERIES. THEY MAY MAKE RESERVATIONS BY CALLING 869 9492.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 1992

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ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

THE COMMITTEE'S PAPERS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR ADVANCE READING FROM 2.30 PM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AT THE OMELCO PRESS OFFICE. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CONTENTS OF THE PAPERS WILL BE EMBARGOED FOR USE UNTIL THE MEETING ENDS.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS
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	DATE	\$ MILLION
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CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT ON	12.5.92	988
EFFECT OF FORWARDS TO BE SETTLED ON	13.5.92	-90
EFFECT OF OPERATIONS THIS MORNING		+90
EFFECT OF OPERATIONS THIS AFTERNOON		+45*
* O/N ASST TO BE REVERSED ON 14 MAY		
TRADE WEIGHTED INDEX 112.0 *-0.5* 13.5.92		

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS		HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS				
TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	3.27 PCT	18 MONTHS	2311	6.25	102.33	4.69
1 MONTH	3.38 PCT	21 MONTHS	2402	5.50	100.76	5.10
3 MONTHS	3.48 PCT					
6 MONTHS	3.75 PCT					
12 MONTHS	4.17 PCT					
TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 7,914 MN						
CLOSED 13 MAY 1992						

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