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INFLATION EASES IN MARCH

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FIGURES RELEASED TODAY (FRIDAY) BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT SHOWED THAT INFLATION HAD EASED MARKEDLY IN MARCH.

THE INCREASE IN THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A) FOR MARCH HAS FALLEN TO 7.8%, COMPARED WITH THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR.

THIS WAS THE LOWEST SINCE DECEMBER 1988. THE CORRESPONDING INCREASE IN FEBRUARY THIS YEAR WAS 8.6%.

WELCOMING THE MARCH FIGURE, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, MR HAMISH MACLEOD, DESCRIBED THIS SIGNIFICANT MODERATION AS ENCOURAGING.

"CONSUMER PRICE INFLATION IN TERMS OF CPI(A) STOOD AT 8.8% IN THE FIRST QUARTER THIS YEAR. THIS REPRESENTED AN APPRECIABLE DROP FROM 9.4% IN THE FOURTH QUARTER LAST YEAR," HE SAID.

"AND 9.5% STILL SEEMS A REALISTIC FORECAST FOR 1993 AS A WHOLE," HE ADDED.

HOWEVER, MR MACLEOD CAUTIONED THAT WHILE THE PRICE INCREASES FOR MANY CONSUMER ITEMS WERE MODERATE, THE INCREASES IN THE COST OF HOUSING AND IN THE PRICES OF VARIOUS CONSUMER SERVICES WERE STILL SIGNIFICANT.

THE MODERATION IN CONSUMER PRICE INFLATION IN MARCH WAS MAINLY DUE TO LOWER PRICES OF FRESH VEGETABLES AND A LESS RAPID INCREASE IN RENT FOR PRIVATE DWELLINGS.

IN ADDITION, THE RELATIVELY HIGH BASE OF COMPARISON IN LAST MARCH RESULTING FROM A CHANGE IN THE TIMING OF THE PERIODICAL RENT REVISIONS IN SOME PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES ALSO CONTRIBUTED.

THE CPI(B) AND THE HANG SENG CPI WERE HIGHER BY 8.5% AND 9.2% RESPECTIVELY IN MARCH THAN IN THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR. THE CORRESPONDING INCREASES IN FEBRUARY 1993 WERE BOTH 9.1%.

THE SLIGHTLY FASTER INCREASE IN THE HANG SENG CPI IN MARCH THAN IN FEBRUARY WAS MAINLY DUE TO HIGHER PRICES OF OUTERCLOTHING AND HIGHER CHARGES FOR PACKAGE TOURS WHICH LARGELY OFFSET THE LOWER PRICES OF FRESH VEGETABLES AND THE LESS RAPID INCREASE IN RENT FOR PRIVATE DWELLINGS.

THE COMPOSITE CPI, WHICH WAS COMPILED BASED ON THE COMBINED EXPENDITURE PATTERN OF HOUSEHOLDS COVERED BY THE THREE CPIS, SHOWED AN INCREASE OF 8.4% IN MARCH OVER THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR. THE CORRESPONDING INCREASE IN FEBRUARY 1993 WAS 8.9%.

COMPARING MARCH 1993 WITH MARCH 1992, THE PRICES OF DURABLE GOODS REGISTERED DECREASES (-0.2% IN THE CPI(A) AND -0.5% IN THE CPI(B)).

/RELATIVELY SLOWER

RELATIVELY SLOWER INCREASES IN PRICES WERE RECORDED FOR FOOD (EXCLUDING MEALS AT RESTAURANTS) (1.3% IN THE CPI(A) AND 1.9% IN THE CPI(B)); FUEL AND LIGHT (4.2% IN BOTH CPI(A) AND CPI(B)); TRANSPORT (5.5% IN THE CPI(A) AND 5.9% IN THE CPI(B)); MISCELLANEOUS GOODS (5.9% AND 5.4%); AND CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR (7.8% AND 8.0%).

ON THE OTHER HAND, RELATIVELY FASTER INCREASES IN PRICES WERE RECORDED FOR HOUSING (13.9% IN THE CPI(A) AND 14.8% IN THE CPI(B)); ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AND TOBACCO (10.7% AND 10.3%); SERVICES (10.6% AND 9.4%); AND MEALS AT RESTAURANTS (9.3% IN BOTH CPI(A) AND CPI(B)). BUT THESE INCREASES WERE GENERALLY SLOWER THAN IN THE PREVIOUS MONTHS.

COMPARING MARCH 1993 WITH FEBRUARY 1993, THE CPI(A) DECREASED BY 0.2% WHILE THE CPI(B) INCREASED MARGINALLY BY LESS THAN 0.05%. THIS COMPARISON WAS, HOWEVER, AFFECTED BY SEASONAL FACTORS.

FOR THE THREE MONTHS ENDING MARCH 1993, THE CPI(A) WAS, ON AVERAGE, HIGHER BY 8.8% THAN IN THE THREE MONTHS ENDING MARCH 1992. THE CORRESPONDING FIGURE FOR THE CPI(B) WAS 9.3%.

FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDING MARCH 1993, THE CPI(A) AND CPI(B) WERE, ON AVERAGE, HIGHER BY 9.1% AND 9.5% RESPECTIVELY THAN IN THE PRECEDING 12-MONTH PERIOD.

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED SERIES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE FOR THE INDICES. THE DESEASONALISED CPI(A) AND CPI(B) BOTH INCREASED AT AN AVERAGE RATE OF 0.7% PER MONTH DURING THE THREE MONTHS ENDING MARCH 1993.

THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX REPORT

MORE DETAILS ARE GIVEN IN THE "CONSUMER PRICE INDEX REPORT" FOR MARCH 1993, WHICH IS AVAILABLE AT \$12 A COPY FROM THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, GROUND FLOOR, CONNAUGHT PLACE, HONG KONG; OR FROM THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT, 19TH FLOOR, WANCHAI TOWER, 12 HARBOUR ROAD, WAN CHAI, HONG KONG.

FOR LOCAL AND OVERSEAS MAILINGS, CONTACT SHOULD BE MADE WITH THE INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT, FRENCH MISSION BUILDING, 1 BATTERY PATH, HONG KONG.

FOR ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE INDICES, PLEASE TELEPHONE THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ON TEL 805 6403.

DETAILS REGARDING THE HANG SENG CPI ARE CONTAINED IN THE HANG SENG CPI REPORT ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF HANG SENG BANK LTD.

Table 1 Consumer Price Indices and Rates of Increase for March 1993
(Oct. 89 - Sep. 90 = 100)

Component	CPI(A)		CPI(B)		Hang Seng CPI		Composite CPI	
	Index for Mar 93	% change over Mar 92	Index for Mar 93	% change over Mar 92	Index for Mar 93	% change over Mar 92	Index for Mar 93	% change over Mar 92
Food	129.7	+5.4	131.5	+6.3	131.5	+8.0	130.7	+6.3
Meals bought away from home	138.7	+9.3	138.5	+9.3	136.3	+11.2	138.1	+9.7
Food, excluding meals bought away from home	120.7	+1.3	121.7	+1.9	123.3	+2.5	121.5	+1.7
Housing	144.0	+13.9	144.8	+14.8	145.1	+14.0	144.7	+14.3
Fuel and light	119.2	+4.2	118.6	+4.2	118.8	+4.3	118.9	+4.2
Alcoholic drinks and tobacco	174.0	+10.7	164.1	+10.3	159.9	+10.2	168.5	+10.5
Clothing and footwear	119.2	+7.8	119.6	+8.0	129.1	+8.3	122.7	+8.1
Durable goods	108.2	-0.2	107.8	-0.5	113.2	+2.0	109.5	+0.3
Miscellaneous goods	121.4	+5.9	119.6	+5.4	118.9	+5.3	120.1	+5.6
Transport	128.5	+5.5	129.1	+5.9	130.4	+5.9	129.2	+5.8
Services	137.5	+10.6	134.2	+9.4	128.7	+8.1	133.5	+9.4
All items	132.0	+7.8	132.2	+8.5	133.1	+9.2	132.4	+8.4

The 1989/90-based consumer price indices are based on the expenditure patterns derived from the 1989/90 Household Expenditure Survey. The CPI(A) is based on the expenditure pattern of about 50% of urban households in Hong Kong, which had an average monthly expenditure of \$2,500-\$9,999 in 1989/90. The CPI(B) is based on the expenditure pattern of the next 30% of urban households, which had an average monthly expenditure of \$10,000-\$17,499 in the same period. The Hang Seng CPI is based on the expenditure pattern of the next 10% of urban households, which had an average monthly expenditure of \$17,500-\$37,499 in 1989/90.

Whereas the CPI(A), CPI(B) and Hang Seng CPI are based on the expenditure patterns of groups of households with different magnitudes of household expenditure, the Composite CPI is compiled based on the expenditure pattern of all these households taken together. Thus, while the CPI(A), CPI(B) and Hang Seng CPI show the impact of consumer price changes on different groups of households, the Composite CPI shows the impact of consumer price changes on the household sector generally.

Table 2 Consumer Price Indices for January 1991 - March 1993
(Oct. 89 - Sep. 90 = 100)

<u>Year/month</u>	<u>CPI(A)</u>	<u>CPI(B)</u>	<u>Hand Sent CPI</u>	<u>Composite CPI</u>
1991 January	108.3	108.4	108.6	108.4
February	110.3	110.1	110.2	110.2
March	111.9	111.1	110.7	111.3
April	113.9	113.0	112.0	113.1
May	114.0	113.6	113.4	113.7
June	114.6	114.1	113.9	114.2
July	115.4	114.8	113.9	114.8
August	116.0	115.3	114.6	115.4
September	116.8	116.1	115.8	116.3
October	117.2	116.8	117.4	117.1
November	117.7	117.6	118.7	117.9
December	118.1	118.3	118.5	118.3
1992 January	119.7	119.3	119.4	119.5
February	121.8	121.2	121.0	121.4
March	122.5	121.9	121.8	122.1
April	124.0	123.4	122.9	123.5
May	124.0	123.8	124.2	124.0
June	125.3	125.1	125.2	125.2
July	125.5	125.4	125.4	125.4
August	125.6	125.9	125.8	125.8
September	128.3	127.9	127.5	128.0
October	128.4	128.4	128.6	128.5
November	128.5	129.0	129.9	129.0
December	129.3	129.8	130.0	129.7
1993 January	131.8	131.6	131.5	131.7
February	132.4	132.2	132.0	132.2
March	132.0	132.2	133.1	132.4

/Chart 1

Chart 1 Year-on-year Rates of Increase in CPI(A)

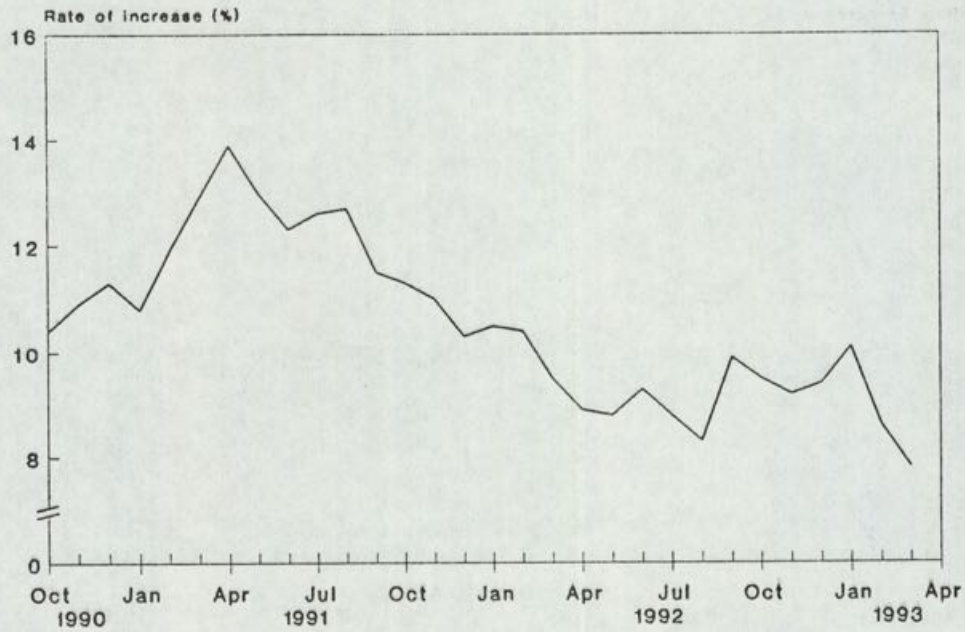
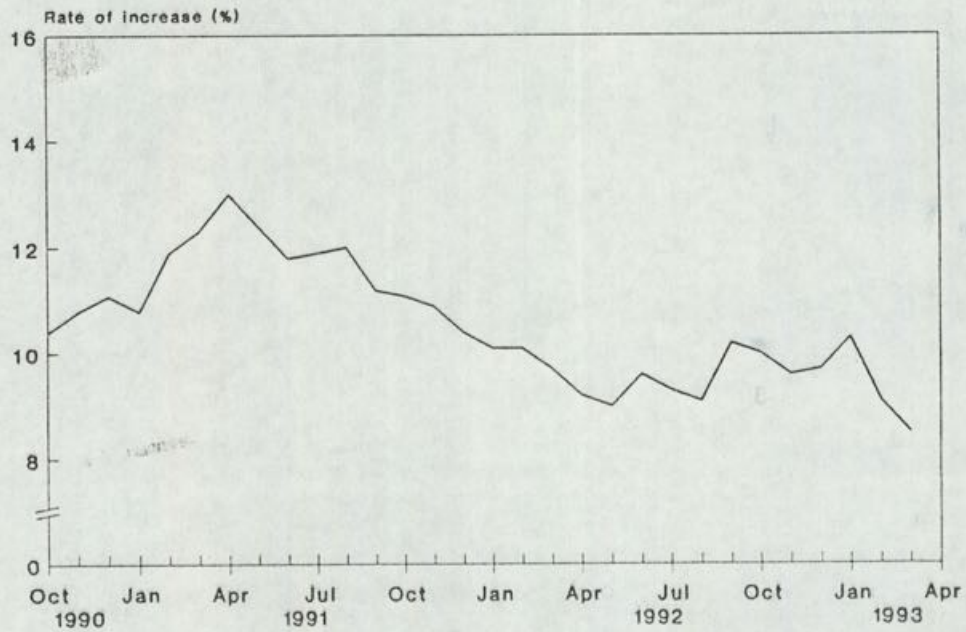


Chart 2 Year-on-year Rates of Increase in CPI(B)



/Chart 3

Chart 3 Year-on-year Rates of Increase in Hang Seng CPI

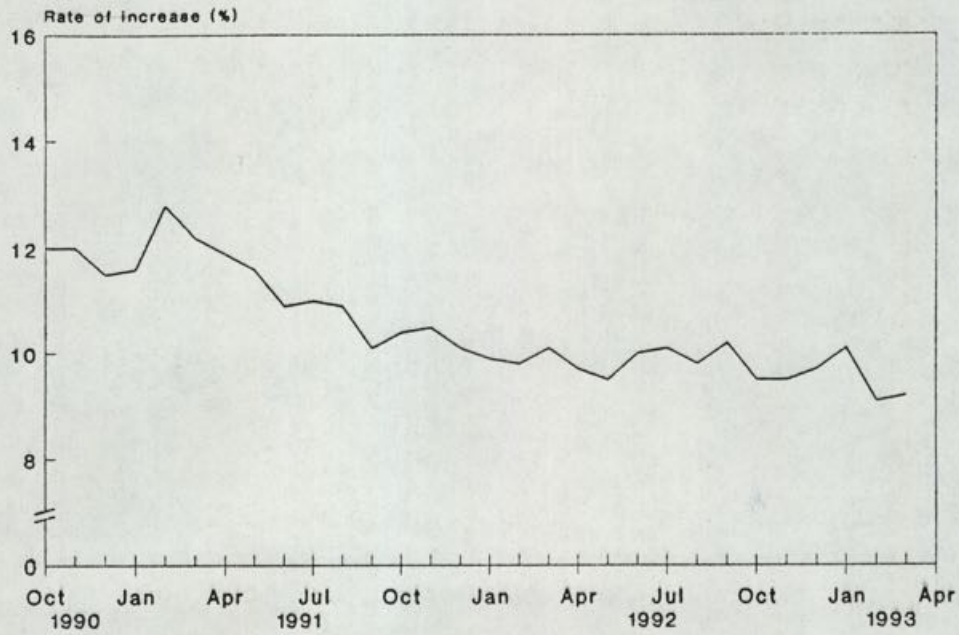
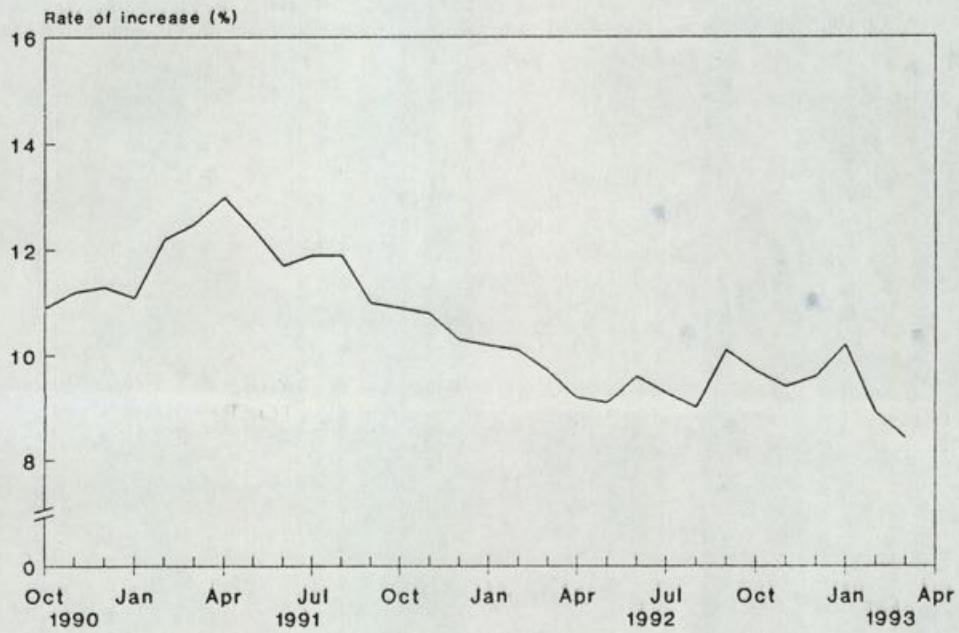


Chart 4 Year-on-year Rates of Increase in Composite CPI



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WATER SAFE FOR CONSUMPTION

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THE WATER SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT (WSD) TODAY (FRIDAY) ASSURED CONSUMERS IN EASTERN HONG KONG AND KOWLOON AREAS THAT THEIR TAP WATER IS SAFE FOR CONSUMPTION DESPITE REPORTS OF EARTHLY SMELL IN THE LAST TWO DAYS.

TESTS HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED ON A LARGE NUMBER OF WATER SAMPLES TAKEN FROM THE AREAS AND THEY HAVE ALL CONFIRMED THAT THE QUALITY OF THE TAP WATER FULLY COMPLIES WITH INTERNATIONAL HEALTH STANDARDS, A WSD SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THE WATER TO THESE AREAS IS SUPPLIED FROM PAK KONG TREATMENT WORKS WHICH ALSO COVERS OTHER PARTS OF THE TERRITORY INCLUDING NGAU TAU KOK, NGAU CHI WAN, YAU TONG, TSANG KWAN O AND THE EASTERN PART OF HONG KONG ISLAND.

"THE RAW WATER SUPPLIED TO PAK KONG TREATMENT WORKS COMES FROM EITHER HIGH ISLAND RESERVOIR, PLOVER COVE RESERVOIR OR THE CATCHMENT AREAS.

"UNDER NORMAL OPERATION, THE SOURCES OF RAW WATER SUPPLIED TO TREATMENT WORKS ARE SWITCHED FROM TIME TO TIME TO SUIT THE AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCE FROM VARIOUS RESERVOIRS."

THE SPOKESMAN NOTED THAT IN THE AFTERNOON OF APRIL 20, THE SUPPLY SOURCE OF RAW WATER TO PAK KONG RESERVOIR WAS SWITCHED FROM HIGH ISLAND RESERVOIR TO PLOVER COVE RESERVOIR WHERE THE WATER WAS CONVEYED THROUGH AN AQUEDUCT SYSTEM COMPRISING SUBMARINE PIPELINES AND WATER TUNNELS.

"AS IN THE PAST, MEASURES WERE TAKEN BY PROGRESSIVELY MIXING THE RAW WATER SUPPLIED FROM PLOVER COVE RESERVOIR WITH HIGH ISLAND RESERVOIR, AND BY CONTINUOUSLY MONITORING THE QUALITY OF THE WATER ENTERING AND LEAVING THE TREATMENT WORKS.

"IN THE FOLLOWING MORNING, A SUDDEN SURGE OF AMMONIA CONTENT IN THE INCOMING WATER AT PAK KONG TREATMENT WORKS WAS DETECTED.

"ALTHOUGH THE AMMONIA CONTENT WAS FOUND TO BE STILL WITHIN ACCEPTABLE LIMITS, IMMEDIATE COUNTER-ACTION WAS TAKEN TO INCREASE THE DOSAGE OF CHLORINE CORRESPONDINGLY IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE QUALITY OF THE TREATED WATER," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"IN FACT," HE ADDED, "THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SUCH HIGH AMMONIA CONTENT WAS ENCOUNTERED IN THE RAW WATER SINCE THE COMMISSIONING OF THE PAK KONG TREATMENT WORKS IN 1989.

"IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE EARTHLY SMELL IN THE WATER FOUND BY SOME OF THE CONSUMERS PROBABLY ORIGINATED FROM THE HIGHER THAN NORMAL RESIDUAL CHLORINE CONTENT IN THE TAP WATER.

/"THE CAUSE

"THE CAUSE OF THE SUDDEN SURGE IN AMMONIA CONTENT IN THE RAW WATER HAS NOT YET BEEN ASCERTAINED AT THE MOMENT BUT IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN ORIGINATED FROM SOMEWHERE ALONG THE LONG LENGTH OF THE TRANSFER AQUEDUCT BETWEEN PLOVER COVE RESERVOIR AND PAK KONG TREATMENT WORKS."

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE DEPARTMENT WAS CLOSELY MONITORING THE SITUATION TO ENSURE THAT THE QUALITY OF THE WATER SUPPLIED TO THE CONSUMERS WAS SATISFACTORY AT ALL TIMES.

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NEW SCHEMES TO BENEFIT PNEUMOCONIOTICS

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AN IMPROVED COMPENSATION PACKAGE IS NOW IN HAND TO PROVIDE CONTINUED SUPPORT TO PNEUMOCONIOSIS SUFFERERS, THE PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MRS CARRIE YAU, SAID TODAY (FRIDAY).

SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE, MRS YAU SAID THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS (COMPENSATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993, WHICH INCLUDED A PROPOSED PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION SCHEME (PCS) FOR SUCH PATIENTS DIAGNOSED AFTER 1981, HAD BEEN ENDORSED BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL AND WAS GAZETTED TODAY.

SHE SAID THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO PROVIDE FURTHER RELIEF TO THE SUFFERERS BECAUSE THEIR HEALTH SUBSEQUENTLY DETERIORATE AFTER RECEIVING COMPENSATION, EITHER IN A LUMP SUM OR BY TWO INSTALMENTS, FOLLOWING THE ENACTMENT OF THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS (COMPENSATION) ORDINANCE (PCO) IN 1981.

"THE NEW SCHEME WILL MAKE A NUMBER OF IMPROVEMENTS TO THE BENEFITS A PNEUMOCONIOTIC MAY RECEIVE," MRS YAU SAID.

"THE MOST SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IS TO INTRODUCE MONTHLY COMPENSATION PAYMENTS PAYABLE UNTIL A PNEUMOCONIOTIC'S DEATH.

THIS ARRANGEMENT WILL PROVIDE A SOURCE OF CONTINUED SUPPORT TO THE PNEUMOCONIOTICS, SHE ADDED.

MRS YAU SAID IN ORDER TO FINANCE THE NEW COMPENSATION PACKAGE, THE RATE OF LEVY ON THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION, AND QUARRYING INDUSTRIES WOULD BE RAISED FROM 0.02 PER CENT TO 0.3 PER CENT OF THE VALUE OF CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS EXCEEDING \$1 MILLION AND OF QUARRY PRODUCTS IN 1993.

"A FURTHER INCREASE TO 0.4 OR 0.45 PER CENT MAY BE REQUIRED IN 1994 DEPENDING ON THE ACTUAL PATTERN OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE," SHE SAID.

WITH REGARD TO PNEUMOCONIOTICS DIAGNOSED BEFORE 1981, MRS YAU SAID A NEW EX-GRATIA SCHEME WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED, SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF FUNDS BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

/"THE EX-GRATIA

"THE EX-GRATIA SCHEME IS DISTINCT FROM THE PCS UNDER THE PCO WHICH IS FUNDED BY A LEVY ON THE CONSTRUCTION AND QUARRYING INDUSTRIES," MRS YAU SAID.

"IT IS NOT A FORM OF COMPENSATION," SHE STRESSED.

SHE SAID THIS GROUP OF PEOPLE HAD ALREADY RECEIVED EX-GRATIA PAYMENTS ON AN ONE-OFF BASIS.

"THIS GROUP OF PEOPLE, THOUGH NOT ELIGIBLE TO CLAIM COMPENSATION, DESERVE SUPPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY," SHE SAID.

MRS YAU ALSO SAID IN PARALLEL WITH IMPROVING THE BENEFITS TO THE PNEUMOCONIOTICS, IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO STRENGTHEN PUBLICITY AND EDUCATION IN ORDER TO RAISE EMPLOYERS' AND WORKERS' AWARENESS OF THE DISEASE.

AT THE SAME TIME, LEGISLATIVE MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN TO TIGHTEN UP CONTROL OVER WORKING IN DUSTY ENVIRONMENT.

THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, MRS ANGELA HO, ALSO GAVE DETAILS OF THE PCS AND THE EX-GRATIA SCHEME.

"UNDER THE PCS, A PNEUMOCONIOTIC WHO SUFFERS INCAPACITY WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY PAYMENT UNTIL HIS DEATH," MRS HO SAID.

MRS HO SAID THE AMOUNT OF MONTHLY PAYMENTS WOULD BE INFLATION-ADJUSTED ANNUALLY AND A PNEUMOCONIOTIC MAY ASK TO BE RE-EXAMINED EVERY TWO YEARS.

"IF HE SUFFERS ADDITIONAL INCAPACITY, THE AMOUNT OF PAYMENT WOULD BE REVISED UPWARD," SHE SAID.

ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT FEATURE OF THE IMPROVED SCHEME IS THAT IT WILL ALLOW A PNEUMOCONIOTIC WHO HAS ALREADY RECEIVED COMPENSATION TO CLAIM FURTHER COMPENSATION FOR ANY ADDITIONAL INCAPACITY HE MAY HAVE SUFFERED.

"HE CAN APPLY TO JOIN THE NEW SCHEME AT ANY TIME AND HIS ENTITLEMENT TO ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION WILL COMMENCE ON THE DATE ON WHICH THE AMENDMENT BILL COMES INTO EFFECT PROVIDED THE APPLICATION IS MADE WITHIN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS," MRS HO SAID.

"BASED ON SOME 2,000 EXISTING CASES, MORE THAN 75 PER CENT OF THE PNEUMOCONIOTICS WERE ASSESSED TO HAVE SUFFERED FROM INCAPACITY OF 20 PER CENT OR LESS.

"ASSUMING THAT THEIR DEGREE OF INCAPACITY HAS DOUBLED SINCE THEIR LAST MEDICAL ASSESSMENT, THE AMOUNT OF MONTHLY PAYMENT PAYABLE TO THEM WOULD BE IN THE RANGE OF \$1,372 TO \$2,744," SHE SAID.

ON THE PROPOSED EX-GRATIA SCHEME, MRS HO SAID THE AMOUNT OF EX-GRATIA PAYMENT WOULD BE \$2,200 A MONTH PAYABLE ON A QUARTERLY BASIS.

"THE SUM WILL BE PAID TO THE PNEUMOCONIOTIC IN ADVANCE AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH QUARTER," SHE SAID.

"IF A PRE-1981 PNEUMOCONIOTIC DIES AS A RESULT OF THE DISEASE, A SUM NOT EXCEEDING \$10,000 WILL BE PAYABLE FOR HIS FUNERAL EXPENSES," MRS HO SAID, ADDING THAT BOTH THE AMOUNT OF EX-GRATIA PAYMENTS AND THE FUNERAL EXPENSES WILL BE INFLATION-ADJUSTED ANNUALLY.

"WE INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THE TWO SCHEMES AT THE SAME TIME TO PROVIDE IMPROVED BENEFITS TO ALL PNEUMOCONIOTICS.

"WE HOPE THAT BOTH SCHEMES COULD COME INTO OPERATION WITHIN ONE MONTH AFTER THE ENACTMENT OF THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS (COMPENSATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993.

"WE SHALL ISSUE LETTERS TO THE PNEUMOCONIOTICS INFORMING THEM OF THEIR RIGHT TO CLAIM FURTHER BENEFITS AND INVITING THEM TO MAKE APPLICATIONS," SHE ADDED.

ENQUIRIES ON PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION CAN BE MADE TO THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT'S PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION UNIT ON TEL 852 4034.

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INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993

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THE INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993 IS GAZETTED TODAY (FRIDAY).

THE BILL PROVIDES THAT WHERE SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION HAS BEEN MADE BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL SETTING A FEE OR CHARGE, THE POWER TO VARY THE FEE OR CHARGE MAY IN ADDITION BE EXERCISED BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.

THE BILL WILL EMPOWER THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL TO DIRECT THAT THE COUNCIL'S APPROVAL FOR THE REVISION OF PARTICULAR FEES SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE SOUGHT.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID: "THERE IS A NEED TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF ROUTINE ADMINISTRATIVE WORK PUT BEFORE THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL SO AS TO ALLOW THE COUNCIL MORE TIME TO FOCUS ON BROADER POLICY AND STRATEGIC ISSUES. THE BILL WILL HELP TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE."

HE EMPHASISED THAT SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION WOULD CONTINUE TO BE TABLED AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AS AT PRESENT.

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S POWER TO MONITOR AND CHALLENGE FEE PROPOSALS WOULD THUS NOT BE IN ANY WAY AFFECT, HE SAID.

"THE BILL WILL NOT APPLY TO FEES FOR WHICH THE LAW REQUIRES THAT THE SPECIFIC APPROVAL OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BE OBTAINED," HE ADDED.

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CAR REGISTRATION TAX BILL

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THE MOTOR VEHICLES (FIRST REGISTRATION TAX) (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL 1993 WAS GAZETTED TODAY (FRIDAY).

"THE BILL FULFILS THE PLEDGE MADE BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IN HIS BUDGET SPEECH TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION CLOSING A TAX LOOPHOLE WHEREBY SOME MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS CAN ARTIFICIALLY DEPRESS THE COST, INSURANCE AND FREIGHT (CIF) VALUE OF THEIR VEHICLES, IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF FIRST REGISTRATION TAX (FRT) PAYABLE," A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE BILL CHANGES THE BASIS FOR THE CALCULATION OF FRT FROM THE BASIC CIF VALUE TO THE RETAIL PRICE.

"SINCE THE PURPOSE OF THE BILL IS NOT TO RAISE NEW REVENUE, THE TAX RATES PAYABLE HAVE BEEN REVISED DOWNWARDS SUBSTANTIALLY.

"THE AIM IS TO ENSURE THAT THERE ARE NO SIGNIFICANT INCREASES IN THE AVERAGE PRICE OF ORDINARY MOTOR VEHICLES," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE EMPHASISED THAT THERE WOULD BE LITTLE OR NO CHANGE TO THE FRT PAYABLE ON COMMERCIAL VEHICLES.

THE FRT PAYABLE AND THEREFORE THE PRICE OF CERTAIN MAKES AND MODELS OF PRIVATE CARS MAY DECREASE WHILE THAT OF OTHERS MAY INCREASE SLIGHTLY.

"WE HOPE THAT THE BILL WILL BE WELCOMED BY MOST MAJOR CAR DISTRIBUTORS AS WELL AS THE GENERAL PUBLIC," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"FOR CAR DISTRIBUTORS, THE BILL WILL CREATE A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD AND HELP TO REDUCE SUDDEN PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

"FOR CONSUMERS, A MAJOR ADVANTAGE OF THE BILL IS THAT IT WILL ALLOW THE PUBLIC TO KNOW FOR THE FIRST TIME HOW MUCH FRT THEY ARE PAYING AND THE BASIS ON WHICH IT IS CALCULATED," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

"THERE IS NO PROVISION FOR THIS IN THE EXISTING LAW."

UNDER THE BILL, ALL MOTOR VEHICLE IMPORTERS AND DISTRIBUTORS MUST BE REGISTERED. THE DISTRIBUTORS MUST PUBLISH A LIST OF RETAIL PRICES AND DELIVER UPDATED LISTS TO THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT (C FOR T) FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF FRT.

THE FRT PAID WILL THEN BE BASED ON THE PUBLISHED RETAIL PRICE.

"C FOR T WILL ISSUE A PRACTICE NOTE TO CLARIFY FOR DISTRIBUTORS AND THE PUBLIC HOW THE BILL WILL OPERATE IN PRACTICE.

"THE COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE WILL ACT AS C FOR T'S AGENT IN ENFORCING THE BILL'S PROVISIONS," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

THE BILL WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON MAY 5.

FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 1993

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UNLEADED PETROL MORE FRIENDLY TO ENVIRONMENT

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AIR QUALITY AT URBAN POLLUTION SPOTS WILL BE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED IF TAXIS, PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES (PLB'S) AND LIGHT VANS ARE TO OPERATE ON UNLEADED PETROL, A GROUP OF GREEN PLB OPERATORS WERE TOLD TODAY (FRIDAY).

AT A REGULAR MEETING BETWEEN THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT AND THE GROUP, PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OFFICER OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT (EPD), MR RAYMOND LEUNG, SAID AT CERTAIN LOCATIONS, SUCH AS BUSY URBAN CENTRES, LIGHT DUTY VEHICLES ARE ACCOUNTABLE FOR OVER 50 PER CENT OF THE PARTICULATES IN THE AIR.

THE EPD PROPOSED VEHICLE EMISSION CONTROL STRATEGY WHICH WAS ENDORSED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MONDAY, INCLUDES PROPOSED MEASURES TO REQUIRE NEW TAXIS, PLB'S AND LIGHT VANS TO OPERATE ON UNLEADED PETROL.

"THE IMPROVEMENT WILL BE SIGNIFICANT," MR LEUNG SAID. "NEW UNLEADED PETROL VEHICLES EMIT NEGLIGIBLE AMOUNT OF PARTICULATES, AND LOWER LEVEL OF OTHER POLLUTANTS SUCH AS NITROGEN OXIDES."

THIS PROPOSAL IS AT A VERY INITIAL STAGE, AND THE DEPARTMENT WILL CONSULT ALL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED AS WELL AS THE INDUSTRY, MR LEUNG SAID.

"WE ARE PLEASED TO SAY THAT WE KEEP A CONSTANT DIALOGUE WITH THE INDUSTRY AND WE ARE ALWAYS READY TO LISTEN TO THEIR VIEWS," HE ADDED.

MR LEUNG STRESSED THAT THE PROPOSAL WAS INTENDED TO APPLY TO NEW VEHICLES ONLY, AND THAT EXISTING VEHICLES WOULD NOT BE REQUIRED TO MAKE CHANGES.

"WE ARE CONSCIOUS OF THE LIKELY IMPLICATIONS ON COSTS AND WE ARE CONSIDERING SEVERAL POSSIBLE MEASURES TO ADDRESS THIS," HE SAID.

THE PROPOSAL IS ONE OF THE FOUR INITIATIVES RECOMMENDED IN THE VEHICLE EMISSION CONTROL STRATEGY.

THE OTHER THREE PROPOSALS INCLUDE REQUIRING NEW LARGE DIESEL VEHICLES TO MEET TIGHTENED EMISSION STANDARDS; INCREASING VEHICLE INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS; AND EXPLORING NEW VEHICLE EMISSION CONTROL TECHNOLOGY SUCH AS ELECTRIC VEHICLES AND TRANSPORTATION PLANNING.

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HK AND MALAYSIA SIGN AGREEMENT TO FIGHT DRUG TRAFFICKING

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THE HONG KONG AND MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENTS TODAY (FRIDAY) SIGNED AN AGREEMENT TO STRENGTHEN CO-OPERATION IN THE SUPPRESSION OF DRUG TRAFFICKING.

THE AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED BY THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, AND THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL OF MALAYSIA, Y BHG TAN SRI ABU TALIB BIN OTHMAN, AT A BRIEF CEREMONY HELD AT THE NARCOTICS DIVISION.

"THE AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR MUTUAL ASSISTANCE RELATING TO THE TRACING, FREEZING, SEIZURE AND CONFISCATION OF THE PROCEEDS OF DRUG TRAFFICKING. IT IS VALID FOR THREE YEARS, EXTENDABLE ANNUALLY THEREAFTER BY MUTUAL CONSENT," A SPOKESMAN FOR THE NARCOTICS DIVISION SAID.

THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT UNDER THE AGREEMENT, CONFISCATION ORDERS MADE BY THE COURTS IN THE TWO JURISDICTIONS WOULD BE ENFORCEABLE IN EACH OTHER'S TERRITORY ON A RECIPROCAL BASIS.

BESIDES MALAYSIA, HONG KONG HAS CONCLUDED BILATERAL AGREEMENTS AND ARRANGEMENTS WITH CANADA, THE USA, AUSTRALIA, THE UK (ENGLAND AND WALES, NORTHERN IRELAND, SCOTLAND, GUERNSEY, JERSEY AND THE ISLE OF MAN) AND GIBRALTAR.

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TTRA TO BE SET UP

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AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE WILL BE SET UP TO ADVISE THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION ON MEASURES TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED IN THE OVERALL REVIEW OF THE TARGETS AND TARGET-RELATED ASSESSMENT (TTRA) SCHEME.

IT WILL ALSO ADVISE ON ACTION TO IMPROVE THE TTRA FRAMEWORK AND A REALISTIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.

THE COMMITTEE COMPRISES SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS, PARENTS, TEACHER EDUCATORS AND EDUCATION DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES.

ANNOUNCING THIS TODAY (FRIDAY), THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, MR DOMINIC S W WONG, SAID: "APPOINTMENTS WILL BE MADE IN THE NEAR FUTURE IN ORDER TO ENABLE THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO START WORK NEXT MONTH AND TO SUBMIT A REPORT WITHIN SIX MONTHS."

MR WONG SAID HE HAD INDICATED PUBLICLY ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT "AN OPEN AND FLEXIBLE ATTITUDE WOULD BE ADOPTED WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TTRA SCHEME".

/"HAVING CONSIDERED

"HAVING CONSIDERED THE FINDINGS OF THE OVERALL REVIEW AND THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY VARIOUS PEOPLE ON THIS SUBJECT, I HAVE CONCLUDED THAT TTRA IS A MAJOR AND LONG-TERM CURRICULUM REFORM REQUIRING SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES AND THE COMMITMENT AND CO-OPERATION OF ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.

"THUS ALL THE DEVELOPMENTAL AND PREPARATORY WORK SHOULD BE COMPLETED FIRST, AND ALL THE KEY ISSUES ADDRESSED, BEFORE THE TTRA SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED."

"I HAVE DECIDED, THEREFORE, THAT IMPLEMENTATION SHOULD BE DEFERRED," HE ADDED. "THE TTRA SCHEME WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED IN PRIMARY 4 FROM MAY 1993."

MR WONG FURTHER POINTED OUT THAT "IN ORDER TO MINIMISE DISRUPTION IN TEACHING AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION, IN FUTURE TTRA WILL ONLY BE INTRODUCED FROM THE BEGINNING OF A NEW SCHOOL YEAR."

EXPLAINING THE FINDINGS OF THE OVERALL REVIEW, MR WONG SAID: "THERE IS WIDE SUPPORT FOR THE CONCEPT AND SPIRIT OF TTRA. THE NEW APPROACH IS GENERALLY ACCEPTED BY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS AND TEACHER EDUCATORS AS A FOREWORD-LOOKING EDUCATIONAL REFORM WHICH WILL IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HONG KONG."

"IT WILL BRING ABOUT IMPROVED CO-ORDINATION AMONG SUBJECT TEACHERS, A MORE LIVELY CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE AND A HIGHER LEVEL OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION."

IN THE MEANTIME, THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO PREPARE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TTRA SCHEME. BASIC DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCE MATERIALS (SUCH AS LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT TASKS FOR USE BY TEACHERS) WILL BE PRODUCED, TRIED OUT AND REVISED. TEACHER TRAINING WILL BE INTENSIFIED. PUBLICITY WORK WILL BE STEPPED UP.

"MEANWHILE SCHOOLS MAY TRY OUT TTRA IN SOME CLASSES ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS," MR WONG SAID. "THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WILL PROVIDE THEM WITH GUIDANCE, SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE."

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TEXTILES TRADER REGISTRATION SCHEME ANNOUNCED

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THE TRADE DEPARTMENT WILL INTRODUCE A TEXTILES TRADER REGISTRATION SCHEME (TTRS) TO SUPPLEMENT CERTAIN EXISTING TEXTILES LICENSING ARRANGEMENTS AND TO REPLACE THE CURRENT TRANSHIPMENT CARGO EXEMPTION SCHEME (TCES) IN RESPECT OF TEXTILES.

ACCORDING TO THE AMENDED SUBSIDIARY REGULATIONS UNDER THE IMPORT AND EXPORT ORDINANCE GAZETTED TODAY (FRIDAY), TEXTILES TRADERS REGISTERED UNDER THE TTRS WILL BE EXEMPTED FROM TEXTILES LICENSING REQUIREMENTS IN RESPECT OF ALL IMPORTS, RE-EXPORTS AND DOMESTIC EXPORTS TO NON-RESTRAINED MARKETS WITH EFFECT FROM JULY 1 THIS YEAR.

/"THE TTRS

"THE TTRS IS A REGISTRATION AND NOTIFICATION SYSTEM," A SPOKESMAN FOR THE TRADE DEPARTMENT EXPLAINED.

"REGISTERED TRADERS WILL ONLY BE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT TO THE CARRIER AT THE TIME OF SHIPMENT A NOTIFICATION CONTAINING INFORMATION ON THE CONSIGNMENT IN QUESTION. THE NOTIFICATION WILL THEN BE RETURNED TO THE TRADE DEPARTMENT BY THE CARRIER, TOGETHER WITH THE MANIFEST.

"TRADERS ARE NO LONGER REQUIRED TO COME TO THE DEPARTMENT IN PERSON TO OBTAIN THE RELEVANT LICENCES BEFORE THE IMPORTATION OR EXPORTATION OF THOSE TEXTILES COVERED BY THE SCHEME," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE TTRS WAS A MORE CONVENIENT ALTERNATIVE TO THE EXISTING LICENSING ARRANGEMENTS. IT IS NOT A REPLACEMENT OF THE EXISTING TEXTILES LICENSING SYSTEM AND IS NOT COMPULSORY.

"TRADERS WHO PREFER TO APPLY TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE RELEVANT LICENCES BEFORE SHIPMENT CAN CONTINUE TO DO SO," HE SAID.

THE TTRS WILL ALSO ENSURE THAT CARRIERS AND FORWARDERS WILL CONTINUE TO ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF THE SMOOTH AND EXPEDITIOUS FLOW OF TRANSHIPMENT ARRANGEMENTS CURRENTLY ALLOWED UNDER THE TCES.

IN ORDER TO BETTER TRACK DOWN ILLEGAL TRANSHIPMENT OF TEXTILES PRODUCTS, CARRIERS AND FORWARDERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT DETAILS OF EACH CONSIGNMENT TO THE DEPARTMENT.

MEANWHILE, HE EMPHASISED THAT THE LICENSING ARRANGEMENTS IN RESPECT OF DOMESTIC EXPORT OF TEXTILE PRODUCTS, WHETHER UNDER QUOTA OR NOT, TO RESTRAINED MARKETS WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED.

IN OTHER WORDS, THE EXISTING TEXTILES CONTROL REGISTRATION AND RELATED LICENSING PROCEDURES WILL CONTINUE.

APPLICATIONS FOR REGISTRATION OF TEXTILES TRADERS UNDER THE TTRS WILL BE ACCEPTED FROM NEXT SATURDAY (MAY 1).

UPON APPROVAL, THE REGISTRATION WILL BE VALID FOR 12 MONTHS AND SUBJECT TO ANNUAL RENEWAL. THE CURRENT ANNUAL REGISTRATION FEE IS \$2,000.

"TRADERS ARE INVITED TO APPLY FOR REGISTRATION EARLY IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SCHEME STARTING JULY 1," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE TRADE DEPARTMENT WILL SHORTLY PUBLISH CIRCULARS GIVING OUT DETAILS OF REGISTRATION PROCEDURES.

THESE CIRCULARS WILL BE MAILED TO TEXTILES IMPORTERS REGISTERED WITH THE TRADE DEPARTMENT AS WELL AS THOSE WHO ARE SUBSCRIBERS TO THE DEPARTMENT'S CIRCULARS.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC INTERESTED CAN GET COPIES OF THE CIRCULARS FROM THE TRADE DEPARTMENT ENQUIRY COUNTER ON THE GROUND FLOOR, TRADE DEPARTMENT TOWER, 700 NATHAN ROAD, KOWLOON.

AMENDMENTS TO PILOTAGE ORDINANCE PUBLISHED

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VARIOUS AMENDMENTS TO THE PILOTAGE ORDINANCE THAT AIMS TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY AND SAFETY IN THE PORT HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE TODAY (FRIDAY).

THE MARINE DEPARTMENT'S SENIOR MARINE OFFICER (PORT OPERATIONS), MR MIKE WAREHAM SAID: "IN ORDER TO INTRODUCE FLEXIBILITY WHEN INVESTIGATING MINOR PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT OF A LICENSED PILOT, A BOARD OF DISCIPLINE CONSISTING OF MEMBERS OF THE PILOTAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO BE APPOINTED BY THE PILOTAGE AUTHORITY (DIRECTOR OF MARINE) HAS BEEN PROPOSED."

THE PROPOSAL, UNDER THE PILOTAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993, PROVIDES AN ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE TO THE HOLDING OF PRELIMINARY INQUIRIES WHICH IS A VERY DETAILED INVESTIGATION AND IS NOT SUITABLE FOR DEALING WITH MINOR CASES.

THE BOARD IS EMPOWERED TO RECEIVE EVIDENCE AND SUMMON WITNESSES TO INVESTIGATE MINOR MISCONDUCT OF A PILOT.

IT IS ALSO EMPOWERED TO RECOMMEND A RANGE OF LESSER SANCTIONS AGAINST PILOTS TO THE PILOTAGE AUTHORITY.

TO ENHANCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PILOTAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND OTHER RELATED ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS ON THE PILOTAGE SYSTEM, THERE ARE OTHER AMENDMENTS IN THE BILL THAT INCLUDE THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PILOTAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, THE COMPULSORY RETIREMENT AGE OF PILOTS, AND NEW DOCKYARD APPROACH AREAS.

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NEW COMMANDING OFFICER OF REGIMENT NAMED

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THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (FRIDAY) THAT LIEUTENANT COLONEL K B L SIMSON HAD BEEN APPOINTED TO SUCCEED LIEUTENANT COLONEL NICHOLAS SIMON COOMBE AS COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG REGIMENT (THE VOLUNTEERS) WITH EFFECT FROM MAY 6.

LT COL K B L SIMSON, AGED 40, WAS COMMISSIONED INTO THE QUEEN'S OWN HUSSARS FROM THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY SANDHURST IN 1973.

DURING HIS EARLY YEARS, HE SERVED IN THE BRITISH ARMY OF THE RHINE COMMANDING A TROOP OF CHIEFTAIN TANKS AND HAD TWO TOURS AS AN INTELLIGENCE OFFICER IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

HE ALSO SPENT TWO YEARS IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE. HE HAD BEEN A MAJOR OF A TANK SQUADRON IN HIS REGIMENT.

IN 1992 HE WAS APPOINTED TO A DIVISIONAL STAFF JOB IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND WAS PROMOTED TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL A YEAR LATER.

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ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

THE NEWLY APPOINTED COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE VOLUNTEERS, LT COL K B L SIMSON, WILL MEET THE MEDIA NEXT FRIDAY (APRIL 30).

THE PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD AT 3 PM IN THE GIS PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM, FIFTH FLOOR, BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, CENTRAL, HONG KONG.

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.

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SUBMARINE OUTFALL TO DISCHARGE SEWAGE TO SIU MO TO
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THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO CONSTRUCT A TWO-KILOMETRE SUBMARINE SEWAGE OUTFALL FOR DISCHARGING THE EFFLUENT TREATED IN SIU HO WAN, NORTH LANTAU INTO THE DEEP WATERS TO THE SOUTH OF SIU MO TO.

DURING THE INITIAL PHASES OF NORTH LANTAU DEVELOPMENT, THE EFFLUENT WILL BE TREATED WITH COARSE SCREENING AND GRIT REMOVAL BEFORE FINE SCREENING AT THE TREATMENT WORKS. IT WILL THEN BE DISCHARGED VIA THE OUTFALL.

THIS TREATMENT IS SUFFICIENT TO COMPLY WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES.

IN THE LONG TERM, THE TREATMENT FACILITIES MAY BE UPGRADED TO TREAT THE SEWAGE THOROUGHLY BEFORE DISCHARGE.

WORKS OF THE SUBMARINE OUTFALL ARE EXPECTED TO START WITHIN AN AREA OF ABOUT 14.55 HECTARES OF FORESHORE AND SEABED BETWEEN SIU HO WAN AND SIU MO TO IN MID-1994 FOR COMPLETION BY MID-1997.

THE EXTENT OF THE AREA AFFECTED IS DESCRIBED IN A NOTICE GAZETTED TODAY (FRIDAY).

ANY PERSON WHO CONSIDERS THAT HE HAS AN INTEREST, RIGHT OR EASEMENT IN OR OVER THE FORESHORE AND SEABED INVOLVED MAY SUBMIT A WRITTEN OBJECTION TO THE DIRECTOR OF BUILDINGS AND LANDS ON OR BEFORE JUNE 23.

THE NOTICE OF SUCH OBJECTION SHALL DESCRIBE THE INTEREST, RIGHT OR EASEMENT OF THE OBJECTOR AND THE MANNER IN WHICH HE WILL BE AFFECTED.

THE GAZETTE NOTICE, IN BOTH ENGLISH AND CHINESE, AND ITS RELATED PLAN CAN BE SEEN ON NOTICE BOARDS POSTED NEAR THE SITE.

THE PLAN CAN ALSO BE SEEN AT THE SURVEY AND MAPPING OFFICE, BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG (WHERE COPIES CAN BE PURCHASED ON ORDER) AND AT THE ISLANDS DISTRICT OFFICE, 20TH FLOOR, HARBOUR BUILDING, 38 PIER ROAD, CENTRAL, HONG KONG.

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ROAD WORKS IN TSUEN WAN AND SIU SAI WAN
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THE TERRITORY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT INTENDS TO CARRY OUT ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS IN TSUEN WAN AND SIU SAI WAN TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW.

IN TSUEN WAN, IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO THE ACCESS ROAD TO CHUEN LUNG VILLAGE WILL BE CARRIED OUT UNDER THE RURAL PLANNING AND IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY TO PROVIDE BETTER ACCESS TO THE VILLAGE.

THE WORKS, INVOLVING RECONSTRUCTION, ROAD WIDENING AND PROVISION OF FOOTPATHS AND LAY-BYS, ARE PROGRAMMED TO START IN MID-1993.

THE DEPARTMENT ALSO INTENDS TO BUILD FOUR ROADS AT THE SIU SAI WAN RECLAMATION AREA AS PART OF THE AREAS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

WORKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ROAD WORKS INCLUDE CONSTRUCTION OF FOOTPATHS, ANCILLARY DRAINAGE WORKS AND THE INSTALLATION OF STREET LIGHTS AND SIGNS.

MEANWHILE, THE GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN APPROVAL FOR A DEVELOPER TO UPGRADE AND REALIGN A SECTION OF SO KWUN WAT ROAD IN TUEN MUN AND CONSTRUCT A NEW ROAD FOR A RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL PROJECT IN SO KWUN WAT.

NOTICES FOR ALL THE PROPOSED ROAD WORKS HAVE BEEN GAZETTED TODAY (FRIDAY).

PLANS SHOWING THE ROAD WORKS CAN BE SEEN AT THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, PUBLIC ENQUIRY SERVICES CENTRE, GROUND FLOOR, HARBOUR BUILDING, 38 PIER ROAD, CENTRAL, AND AT THE RESPECTIVE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE AND THE DISTRICT OFFICE IN TSUEN WAN, HONG KONG EAST AND TUEN MUN.

THOSE WHO OBJECT TO THE WORKS SHOULD SEND IN THEIR OBJECTION IN WRITING TO THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, EAST WING, SECOND FLOOR, LOWER ALBERT ROAD, HONG KONG, ON OR BEFORE JUNE 22.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 1993

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RADIO PROGRAMME TO PROMOTE CLOSE FAMILY TIES STARTS TOMORROW

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THE FIRST OF A RADIO SERIES ON FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION WILL BE ON AIR ON RADIO 5 OF RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG AT 11 AM TOMORROW (SATURDAY).

THE HOUR-LONG PROGRAMME, ENTITLED "HARMONIOUS LIFE", IS TO BE BROADCAST LIVE FOR 14 WEEKENDS.

"THE RADIO PROGRAMME, JOINTLY PRODUCED BY THE RTHK AND THE COMMITTEE ON FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN, IS AIMED AT PROMOTING HARMONIOUS FAMILY RELATIONS," THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN, MISS CHUNG WOON-CHEUNG, SAID TODAY (FRIDAY).

THE FIRST THREE PARTS WOULD FEATURE WAYS TO SUSTAIN HAPPY MARRIAGE.

THE OTHER PARTS WILL FOCUS ON EFFECTIVE PARENTING, ADVICE FOR YOUTHS AND MEANS TO UPHOLD HARMONIOUS TIES AMONG GRANDPARENTS, PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

AUDIENCE WILL ALSO HAVE A CHANCE TO WIN PRIZES BY CALLING IN TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS. THE HOTLINE FOR THE PROGRAMME IS 336 3756.

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261 RETURN TO VIETNAM

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A GROUP OF 261 VIETNAMESE MIGRANTS TODAY (FRIDAY) RETURNED TO VIETNAM UNDER THE UNHCR'S VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION PROGRAMME.

COMPRISING 105 MEN, 73 WOMEN, 50 BOYS AND 33 GIRLS, THEY WERE THE 149TH BATCH TO GO BACK UNDER THE PROGRAMME.

THE GROUP BRINGS TO 2,049 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE MIGRANTS WHO HAVE RETURNED VOLUNTARILY THIS YEAR, AND TO 28,361 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RETURNEES SINCE THE PROGRAMME STARTED IN MARCH 1989.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 1993

- 20 -

TRANSFER OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES TO PHILIPPINES TO RESUME

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THE PHILIPPINES CONSULATE GENERAL IN HONG KONG HAS INFORMED THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR MIGRATION THAT THE PROBLEM ON THE TRANSFER TO THE PHILIPPINES OF NEWLY SCREENED-IN VIETNAMESE REFUGEES HAS BEEN RESOLVED AND TRANSFERS MAY BEGIN AGAIN IN MAY.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN TODAY (FRIDAY) WELCOMED THE RESUMPTION OF THE TRANSFERS, NOTING THAT THIS WAS SIMPLY A TECHNICAL PROBLEM OVER NUMBERS.

"WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THE PHILIPPINE AUTHORITIES FOR THEIR QUICK RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM AND ARE PLEASED THAT THOSE REFUGEES WHO HAVE BEEN TEMPORARILY STRANDED HERE WILL BE ABLE TO DEPART IN MAY."

THE TRANSFER TO THE PHILIPPINES OF NEWLY SCREENED-IN VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WAS RECENTLY SUSPENDED DUE TO QUERIES REGARDING THE NUMBER OF VISAS ISSUED AND THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES TRANSFERRED.

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GENERAL HOLIDAYS FOR 1994 PUBLISHED

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THE FOLLOWING LIST OF GENERAL HOLIDAYS FOR 1994 WAS PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE TODAY (FRIDAY):

EVERY SUNDAY		
THE FIRST WEEKDAY IN JANUARY	SATURDAY	JANUARY 1
LUNAR NEW YEAR'S DAY	THURSDAY	FEBRUARY 10
THE SECOND DAY OF LUNAR NEW YEAR	FRIDAY	FEBRUARY 11
THE THIRD DAY OF LUNAR NEW YEAR	SATURDAY	FEBRUARY 12
GOOD FRIDAY	FRIDAY	APRIL 1
THE DAY FOLLOWING GOOD FRIDAY	SATURDAY	APRIL 2
EASTER MONDAY	MONDAY	APRIL 4
CHING MING FESTIVAL	TUESDAY	APRIL 5
THE BIRTHDAY OF THE QUEEN	SATURDAY	JUNE 11
THE MONDAY FOLLOWING THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY	MONDAY	JUNE 13
TUEN NG FESTIVAL	TUESDAY	JUNE 14
THE SATURDAY PRECEDING THE LAST MONDAY IN AUGUST	SATURDAY	AUGUST 27
LIBERATION DAY, BEING THE LAST MONDAY IN AUGUST	MONDAY	AUGUST 29
THE DAY FOLLOWING THE CHINESE MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL	WEDNESDAY	SEPTEMBER 21
CHUNG YEUNG FESTIVAL	THURSDAY	OCTOBER 13
THE FIRST WEEKDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY	MONDAY	DECEMBER 26
THE SECOND WEEKDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY	TUESDAY	DECEMBER 27

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FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 1993

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS
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	\$ MILLION -----
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	2,450
REVERSAL OF LAF	-300
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	2,150
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-90
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	2,060
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	TWI 111.9 **0.0* 23.4.93

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS		HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS				
TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.76 PCT	13 MONTHS	2405	5.50	102.47	3.14
1 MONTH	2.79 PCT	16 MONTHS	2408	4.375	101.38	3.32
3 MONTHS	2.83 PCT	19 MONTHS	2411	4.625	101.77	3.48
6 MONTHS	2.98 PCT	22 MONTHS	2502	4.75	101.88	3.70
12 MONTHS	3.17 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 14,405 MN

CLOSED 23 APRIL 1993

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