



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 1993

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 1993

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FOREIGN SECRETARY'S BEIJING VISIT GIVES IMPULSE TO TALKS : GOVERNOR  
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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT HE THOUGHT THE MEETING BETWEEN THE BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY, THE RT HON DOUGLAS HURD, AND THE CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER, MR QIAN QICHEN, IN BEIJING LATER THIS WEEK WOULD TAKE THINGS FORWARD.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER VISITING THE PRINCE PHILIP DENTAL HOSPITAL, MR PATTEN SAID HE HOPED THE MEETING WOULD HELP CONCENTRATE MINDS AND GIVE THE CURRENT SINO-BRITISH TALKS MORE IMPULSE TOWARDS A SATISFACTORY CONCLUSION.

ASKED IF HE AGREED HONG KONG WAS A POLITICAL CITY, AS MR HURD HAD STATED, THE GOVERNOR SAID "WHAT I THINK DOUGLAS HURD DID EXTREMELY ACCURATELY WAS TO DESCRIBE THE CONSEQUENCES OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE, NOT JUST IN HONG KONG, BUT EVERYWHERE."

"LOOK AT OUR FREE PRESS, LOOK AT THE DEBATES AND DISCUSSIONS THAT TAKE PLACE IN DISTRICT BOARDS, IN MUNICIPAL COUNCILS, ON TELEVISION AND IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

"WHEN YOU GET PEOPLE BECOMING BETTER OFF, BECOMING BETTER EDUCATED, WITH TELEVISION, WITH NEWSPAPERS, WITH SATELLITE TV, WITH CELLULAR TELEPHONE, THAT HAS AN EFFECT ON THEIR INTEREST IN WHAT'S GOING ON ABOUT THEM, AND IN THEIR INTEREST IN HAVING A SAY IN WHAT'S GOING ON ABOUT THEM," HE SAID.

"MORE SPECIFICALLY, I AM DELIGHTED THAT DOUGLAS HURD IS GOING TO PEKING ON THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, AND THAT HE IS ABLE TO SPEND SOME TIME WITH US IN HONG KONG TELLING US ABOUT HIS TALKS ON THE WAY BACK FROM PEKING ON FRIDAY EVENING.

"THE SEVENTH ROUND OF TALKS THAT WE'VE HAD WITH MR JIANG ENZHU AND THE CHINESE TEAM HAVE, I THINK, GONE REASONABLY WELL AND I THINK, HAVE JUSTIFIED, THROUGH THE PROGRESS THEY'VE MADE, THE DECISION TO HAVE THE MEETING IN PEKING."

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CALL TO IMPROVE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY  
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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) CALLED ON TRADE UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS TO WORK WITH THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIAL SAFETY RECORD.

SPEAKING DURING A MEETING WITH TRADE UNION LEADERS, MR LAU CHIN-SHEK, MR LEE CHEUK-YAN AND MR CHAN KAM-HONG, MR PATTEN SAID:

"WE MUST WORK TOGETHER TO BREAK THE CULTURE OF RECKLESSNESS WHICH IS MOST EVIDENT IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY WHERE EVERY WORKER HAS A 30 PER CENT CHANCE OF BEING INJURED EVERY YEAR."

/"WE HAVE .....

"WE HAVE TO REPLACE THE RECKLESSNESS CULTURE WITH A SAFETY CULTURE. WE NEED A GENERAL RECOGNITION THAT WORKERS OWE THEMSELVES, THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR WORKMATES, A DUTY OF CARE."

DURING THE MEETING, MR PATTEN DESCRIBED THE GOVERNMENT'S GENERAL EFFORT TO IMPROVE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY.

HE ALSO EXPLAINED THE URGENT STEPS WHICH HAVE BEEN TAKEN FOLLOWING THE JAVA ROAD ACCIDENT ON JUNE 2.

MR PATTEN ASKED THE TRADE UNION LEADERS THREE QUESTIONS:

- \* WHAT CAN THE UNIONS DO TO CHANGE WORKERS' ATTITUDES TO SAFETY?
- \* WHAT ACTION WOULD THEY LIKE TO SEE CONTRACTORS AND SUB-CONTRACTORS TAKE ON CONSTRUCTION SITES?
- \* WHAT FURTHER ACTION CAN THE GOVERNMENT TAKE?

THE GOVERNOR SAID HE FOUND THE MEETING VERY HELPFUL AND REPEATED HIS PLEDGE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD WORK WITH THE UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS TO BRING ABOUT AN IMPROVEMENT IN HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIAL SAFETY RECORD.

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DEMAND REMAINS STRONG IN PORT CONTAINER THROUGHPUT

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HONG KONG'S OVERALL CONTAINER THROUGHPUT FOR THIS YEAR IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO GROW FROM A RECORD BASELINE OF 7.97 MILLION TEU'S (TWENTY-FOOT EQUIVALENT UNITS) LAST YEAR, AT PERCENTAGES IN EXCESS OF THE 14 PER CENT CONTAINER TERMINAL TRIGGERING MECHANISM FIGURE, THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF MARINE, MR IAN DALE SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

ANNOUNCING THE LATEST CONTAINER THROUGHPUT STATISTICS FOR THIS YEAR, MR DALE SAID: "HONG KONG HANDLED A TOTAL OF 2,651,808 TEU'S DURING THE FIRST FOUR MONTHS, REPRESENTING A 19 PER CENT INCREASE OVER THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR."

WHILST THIS IS LESS THAN THE HUGE 29 PER CENT INCREASE THE PORT EXPERIENCED LAST YEAR, WHICH AGAIN PUT HONG KONG AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD LEAGUE TABLE, IT CLEARLY SHOWS A STEADY GROWTH OVER THE FOUR MONTHS OF THIS YEAR AND UNDERLINES THE CONTINUING DEMAND FOR HONG KONG'S MODERN AND EFFICIENT CONTAINER-HANDLING FACILITIES, HE SAID.

CONTAINER-HANDLING IN THE STREAM CONTINUES TO SHOW STRONG DEMAND, EQUALLING THE OVERALL THROUGHPUT INCREASE OF 19 PER CENT.

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RIVER TRADE HAS ACHIEVED A MASSIVE 136 PER CENT INCREASE, ALTHOUGH THIS IS FROM A SMALL BASELINE OF 74,682 TEU'S FOR THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR.

COMMENTING ON FUTURE PROSPECTS, MR DALE SAID: "THERE IS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE STEADY INCREASE IN CONTAINER THROUGHPUT WE ARE NOW EXPERIENCING WILL CONTINUE.

"CONTAINER THROUGHPUT FORECASTS CLEARLY SHOW THE NEED FOR US TO FIRMLY MAINTAIN OUR SCHEDULE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW TERMINALS. IF WE ARE UNABLE TO MEET FULL DEMAND, WE RISK LOSING ELEMENTS OF THIS IMPORTANT TRADE."

THE FOLLOWING IS THE TABLE FOR THE COMPARATIVE CONTAINER STATISTICS IN TEU'S:

	FIRST FOUR MONTHS OF 1992	FIRST FOUR MONTHS OF 1993	INCREASE PERCENTAGE
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KWAI CHUNG CONTAINER TERMINALS	1,449,729	1,630,115	12.4%
STREAM AND ELSEWHERE	709,417	845,638	19.2%
RIVER TRADE	74,682	176,611	136.5%
TOTAL	2,228,317	2,651,808	19.0%

HONG KONG IS THE LARGEST CONTAINER PORT IN THE WORLD AND IS ALSO ONE OF THE BUSIEST PORTS IN TERMS OF VESSEL ARRIVALS AND CARGO AND PASSENGER THROUGHPUT.

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## EXCO MEMBERS SEE PORT DEVELOPMENT

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THREE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS, MS ROSANNA WONG, PROFESSOR EDWARD CHEN AND MR ANDREW LI, THIS (WEDNESDAY) MORNING HAVE AN UPDATE ON THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PORT OF HONG KONG.

THEY FIRST ATTENDED A BRIEFING AT THE MARINE DEPARTMENT AND THEN TOURED THE HARBOUR FOR 45 MINUTES BEFORE CALLING AT THE MODERN TERMINALS LTD (MTL).

ARRIVING AT THE MARINE DEPARTMENT AT 10.30 AM, THE PARTY WAS MET BY THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF MARINE, MR IAN DALE, WHO BRIEFED MEMBERS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE PORT.

MARINE DEPARTMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING THE PORT AND THE AUTONOMOUS HONG KONG SHIPPING REGISTER WHICH HAS A TOTAL FLEET AMOUNTING TO 7.6 MILLION GROSS REGISTERED TONNAGE.

/MEMBERS WERE .....

MEMBERS WERE TOLD THAT HONG KONG WAS THE BUSIEST CONTAINER PORT IN THE WORLD, HANDLING 7.97 MILLION 20-FOOT EQUIVALENT UNITS (TEU'S) IN 1992.

IT IS ALSO ONE OF THE BUSIEST WORLD PORTS IN TERMS OF VESSEL ARRIVALS AND CARGO AND PASSENGER THROUGHPUT.

JOINED BY THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, MR GORDAN SIU AND THE SECRETARY, PORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD, MR TONY CLARK, THE PARTY THEN BOARDED THE LAUNCH "TIN HAU" TO SEE PORT FACILITIES FOR THEMSELVES, AND TO BE BRIEFED ON THE CURRENT AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS.

THE PORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD WAS SET UP IN 1990 TO KEEP DEVELOPMENT PLANS UP-TO-DATE AND TO ACT AS A LINK BETWEEN THE PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT BODIES INVOLVED.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD ADVISES THE GOVERNOR, THROUGH THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, ON ALL ASPECTS OF PORT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT.

EN ROUTE, MEMBERS SAW THE BUSY ACTIVITIES AT THE EXISTING CONTAINER TERMINALS AND THE SOON-TO-BE-COMPLETED TERMINAL 8 IN STONECUTTERS ISLAND - THE FIRST OF ITS FOUR BERTHS WILL COME INTO OPERATION NEXT MONTH.

THEY LEARNT THAT OVERALL PORT TRAFFIC IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO GROW BY ABOUT 6.5 PER CENT A YEAR BETWEEN NOW AND 2011 WHEN TOTAL THROUGHPUT WILL REACH 284.2 MILLION TONNES.

TO MEET THE GROWING NEEDS OF HONG KONG AND CHINA, THE TERRITORY NEEDS A BIGGER PORT WITH A MUCH GREATER CAPACITY AND ROOM TO EXPAND.

MEMBERS THEN ALIGHTED AT BERTH 5 OF MTL WHERE THEY WERE MET BY THE CHAIRMAN, MR DAVID GLEDHILL AND THE MANAGING DIRECTOR, MR MARK LEESE.

THEY WERE TAKEN TO THE CONTROL ROOM FOR A BRIEFING ON TERMINAL OPERATIONS AND KWAI CHUNG CONTAINER PORT DEVELOPMENT.

MR MARK LEESE TOLD MEMBERS THAT MTL OPENED HONG KONG'S FIRST CONTAINER TERMINAL IN 1972.

"SINCE THEN, IT HAS BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE HONG KONG CONTAINER PORT'S GROWTH INTO THE WORLD'S BUSIEST CONTAINER FACILITY, HANDLING 1.67 MILLION OF THE TERRITORY'S TOTAL CONTAINER THROUGHPUT," HE SAID.

MR LEESE EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE CONTINUED DELAYS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONTAINER TERMINAL 9 WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO COME ON STREAM IN MID 1995. IT WOULD HAVE FOUR BERTHS WITH A TOTAL CAPACITY OF 1.6 MILLION TEUS A YEAR.

MTL IS A PRIVATE COMPANY WITH SHAREHOLDERS REPRESENTING A WIDE RANGE OF INTERNATIONAL INTEREST GROUPS, INCLUDING USER SHIPPING LINES, HONG KONG AND PRC CORPORATIONS.

THE PARTY THEN JOINED THE REST OF THE MTL MANAGEMENT FOR LUNCH BEFORE EMBARKING ON THEIR RETURN JOURNEY.

FEE RISE REPORTS DENIED

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COMMENTING ON PRESS REPORTS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT FEES FOR THIRD-CLASS BEDS IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS WOULD BE GRADUALLY INCREASED FROM THE PRESENT \$43 A DAY TO \$430 A DAY, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE HEALTH AND WELFARE BRANCH SAID THIS WAS INCORRECT.

HE SAID THE REPORTS, IF NOT CORRECTED, WOULD CAUSE UNNECESSARY ALARM AS WELL AS PERPETUATE MISUNDERSTANDING AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

THE REPORTS ALSO DISTORT THE TRUE CONTENTS OF A CONSULTATION DOCUMENT ON HEALTH CARE DUE TO BE TABLED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL NEXT WEDNESDAY (JULY 14), FOLLOWED BY A THREE-MONTH PUBLIC CONSULTATION.

"IN FACT, THE DOCUMENT TAKES STOCK OF CURRENT HEALTH SERVICES AND OFFERS A NUMBER OF OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMUNITY IN ORDER TO MEET FUTURE NEEDS OF OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, BUILDING ON THE SOUND FOUNDATION OF THE EXISTING ONE," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

COPIES OF THE DOCUMENT WILL BE AVAILABLE AT ALL DISTRICT OFFICES, PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND CLINICS.

THE SPOKESMAN ALSO REAFFIRMED THAT THE EXISTING POLICY THAT NO ONE SHOULD BE DENIED ADEQUATE MEDICAL TREATMENT THROUGH LACK OF MEANS WOULD REMAIN PARAMOUNT.

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86,069 STUDENTS ALLOCATED S1 SCHOOL PLACES

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ALL PRIMARY SIX STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES ALLOCATION SYSTEM HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED SECONDARY ONE PLACES IN GOVERNMENT, AIDED OR PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SAID 86,069 STUDENTS, INCLUDING 3,781 (4.39 PER CENT) WHO HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN OBTAINING DISCRETIONARY PLACES, APPLIED EARLIER THIS YEAR.

OF THE TOTAL 41,418 (48.12 PER CENT) WERE ALLOCATED ACCORDING TO THEIR FIRST CHOICE AND 60,966 (70.83 PER CENT) ACCORDING TO THEIR FIRST THREE CHOICES, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"ALL PLACES ALLOCATED ARE THREE-YEAR PLACES FOR WHICH NO TUITION FEES WILL BE CHARGED," HE ADDED.

IN ADDITION, 11 STUDENTS HAVE BEEN ADMITTED TO PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS WHICH HAVE JOINED THE DIRECT SUBSIDY SCHEME.

ALLOCATION RESULTS WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM PRIMARY SCHOOLS ON FRIDAY (JULY 9).

/STUDENTS SHOULD .....

STUDENTS SHOULD COLLECT THE ADMISSION AND ALLOCATION SLIPS IN THEIR PRIMARY SIX IDENTIFICATION FORM FROM THEIR SCHOOLS.

THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT THERE WOULD ONLY BE ONE REGISTRATION PERIOD, ON JULY 15 (THURSDAY) AND JULY 16 (FRIDAY) THIS YEAR.

"ALL STUDENTS MUST REPORT DURING THE REGISTRATION PERIOD TO THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED. FAILING TO DO SO MAY MEAN THAT THEY HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO TAKE UP THE PLACES," HE SAID.

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT IF BOTH THE STUDENT AND THE PARENT/GUARDIAN WERE AWAY FROM HONG KONG DURING THE REGISTRATION PERIOD, THEY SHOULD AUTHORISE, IN WRITING, REPRESENTATIVES TO REGISTER ON THEIR BEHALF.

COPIES OF LETTERS OF AUTHORISATION ARE OBTAINABLE FROM HEADS OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

IN CASE OF GENUINE DIFFICULTIES THE PARENTS OR STUDENTS SHOULD INFORM THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES ALLOCATION SECTION BEFORE THE END OF THE REGISTRATION PERIOD SO THAT ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS MAY BE MADE.

"AFTER THE REGISTRATION PERIOD, VACANCIES WILL BE FILLED AT THE ENTIRE DISCRETION OF INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS," HE ADDED.

WHEN REPORTING FOR REGISTRATION, STUDENTS SHOULD WEAR THEIR SCHOOL UNIFORMS AND BRING THE FOLLOWING:

- \* PRIMARY SIX IDENTIFICATION FORMS, TO WHICH THEIR INDIVIDUAL ALLOCATION SLIPS ARE ATTACHED;
- \* THE ADMISSION SLIPS;
- \* BIRTH CERTIFICATES, HONG KONG JUVENILE IDENTITY CARDS OR OTHER DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE OF THEIR DATE OF BIRTH AND THEIR STATUS AS PERMANENT RESIDENTS OF HONG KONG;
- \* LATEST SCHOOL REPORTS, IF ANY; AND
- \* TWO RECENT PASSPORT-SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS.

"PARENTS SEEKING TRANSFER FOR THEIR CHILDREN SHOULD DIRECTLY APPROACH THE SCHOOLS OF THEIR CHOICE FOR APPLICATION. ACCEPTANCE IS AT THE ENTIRE DISCRETION OF THE SCHOOLS," HE SAID.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS HAVE TO RETRIEVE THE ADMISSION SLIPS FROM THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS WHICH THEY HAVE REGISTERED DURING THE REGISTRATION PERIOD AND HAND THEM TO THE SCHOOLS OF TRANSFER.

"PARENTS OR STUDENTS ARE REMINDED THAT BY RETRIEVING THEIR ADMISSION SLIPS, THEIR REGISTRATION WITH THE SCHOOLS WILL BE CANCELLED." HE SAID.

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"SHOULD THE TERRITORY BE AFFECTED BY TROPICAL CYCLONES, PERSISTENT HEAVY RAIN OR THUNDERSTORM DURING THE REGISTRATION PERIOD, HEADS OF SCHOOLS AND PARENTS ARE ADVISED TO LISTEN TO ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR ANY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

ANY ENQUIRIES CONCERNING THE ALLOCATION RESULTS SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES ALLOCATION SECTION OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ON TEL 891 2200 DURING OFFICE HOURS.

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TWO LOTS FOR PUBLIC AUCTION

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TWO LOTS OF GOVERNMENT LAND WILL BE OFFERED FOR SALE AT A PUBLIC AUCTION ON FRIDAY (JULY 9).

THE AUCTION WILL BE HELD AT 2.30 PM IN THE THEATRE OF THE HONG KONG CITY HALL.

THE FIRST LOT IS IN AREA 10B, TUEN MUN, NEW TERRITORIES. WITH AN AREA OF ABOUT 2,783 SQUARE METRES, IT IS INTENDED FOR NON-INDUSTRIAL (EXCLUDING GODOWN) PURPOSES.

THE SECOND LOT IS AT TOWN PARK ROAD SOUTH, YUEN LONG, NEW TERRITORIES, IT HAS AN AREA OF ABOUT 10,320 SQUARE METRES EARMARKED FOR PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES.

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ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE AUCTION.

A PRESS AREA WILL BE DESIGNATED. PHOTOGRAPHERS ARE ADVISED TO BRING ALONG TELEPHOTO LENSES.

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THE 30,000TH VIETNAMESE RETURNED HOME

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A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WELCOMED THE LANDMARK OF THE 30,000TH VIETNAMESE TO RETURN TO VIETNAM UNDER THE VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION PROGRAMME OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES.

HE NOTED THAT ALMOST 4,000 MIGRANTS HAVE RETURNED TO VIETNAM UNDER THIS PROGRAMME SINCE JANUARY THIS YEAR.

WITH MORE THAN 1,400 VOLUNTEERS AWAITING TO RETURN HOME IN THE TWO REPATRIATION CENTRES IN WHITEHEAD, THERE ARE SIGNS THAT THE VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION PROGRAMME IS BEGINNING TO REGAIN ITS MOMENTUM.

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"PAST EXPERIENCE INDICATES THAT THE NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS NORMALLY INCREASES TOWARDS THE LATTER HALF OF THE YEAR AND WE HOPE THAT THE HIGH RATE OF DEPARTURES ESTABLISHED IN LATE 1992 WILL RE-EMERGE IN COMING MONTHS," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

THE BATCH RETURNED TODAY COMPRISES 112 MEN, 68 WOMEN, 45 BOYS AND 40 GIRLS.

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PRE-WAR BUILDING IN WESTERN DECLARED DANGEROUS

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THE BUILDING AUTHORITY TODAY (WEDNESDAY) DECLARED A FOUR-STORY PRE-WAR BUILDING AT 16 BONHAM ROAD IN WESTERN DISTRICT TO BE DANGEROUS.

THE BUILDING CONSISTS OF FRONT AND REAR BLOCKS CONNECTED BY BRIDGES.

THE FRONT BLOCK HAS TIMBER AND REINFORCED CONCRETE FLOORS WITH LOAD-BEARING BRICK AND MASONRY WALLS WHILE THE REAR KITCHEN BLOCK HAS CONCRETE FLOOR AND LOAD-BEARING BRICK WALLS.

RECENT INSPECTIONS SHOWED THAT THE PARTY WALL COMMON WITH 12 BONHAM ROAD HAD MOVED. THE ADJOINING BRICK ARCHES AND THE FRONT PORCH/STAIRCASE AREA HAD ALSO MOVED.

OUTWARD MOVEMENT OF THE FRONT PORCH/STAIRCASE AREA AND THE SEVERELY FRACTURED ARCHES GAVE RISE TO CONCERN FOR THE SAFETY OF THE OCCUPANTS.

TEMPORARY STEEL SHORINGS WERE ERECTED BY A GOVERNMENT-APPOINTED CONTRACTOR LAST MONTH TO PREVENT A POSSIBLE COLLAPSE.

MEANWHILE, MOVEMENT OF THE PARTY WALL HAS CAUSED A 20-MILLIMETRE GAP BETWEEN THE GROUND FLOOR SLAB AND THE WALL, AND SEVERE CRACKS ARE FOUND IN THE ARCHES THROUGHOUT THE FRONT BLOCK, PARTICULARLY ON THE GROUND FLOOR WHERE AT LEAST ONE ARCH HAS PARTIALLY COLLAPSED.

THEREFORE, THE BUILDING SHOULD BE CLOSED AND DEMOLISHED AS BEING DANGEROUS.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO APPLY FOR A CLOSURE ORDER FROM THE HONG KONG DISTRICT COURT ON AUGUST 10 WAS POSTED ON THE PREMISES TODAY.

ORDERS REQUIRING THE DEMOLITION OF THE BUILDING WILL BE SERVED ONTO THE OWNERS CONCERNED SHORTLY.

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 1993

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SRC MEETS PARENTS OF MUSIC STUDENTS

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THE SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR JAMES SO, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) MET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MUSIC OFFICE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION.

THE MEETING WAS FRIENDLY AND CONSTRUCTIVE. THERE WAS USEFUL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER ALL OR PART OF THE WORK OF THE MUSIC OFFICE TO THE NON-GOVERNMENT SECTOR, AS PROPOSED IN THE ARTS POLICY REVIEW REPORT.

MR SO REASSURED THE PARENTS THAT THE PROPOSAL WAS STILL UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION AFTER RECEIVING A WIDE RANGE OF PUBLIC VIEWS AND COMMENTS IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS.

MR SO ASSURED THE PARENTS THAT IF APPROVED, ALL THE TRAINEES WOULD BE ABLE TO CONTINUE THEIR TRAINING AT ONE OF THE FIVE EXISTING REGIONAL MUSIC CENTRES.

FEEES TOO WOULD BE SET AT A REALISTIC LEVEL AFFORDABLE TO PARENTS, ALTHOUGH MR SO POINTED OUT THAT IT WOULD BE NORMAL PRACTICE FOR SUCH FEES TO BE REVIEWED FROM TIME TO TIME.

HE STRESSED THAT THE NON-GOVERNMENT SECTOR WITH SUITABLE EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE BUT WITHOUT THE CONSTRAINTS AND FETTERS OF A GOVERNMENT OFFICE WOULD BE ABLE TO CARRY OUT THE WORK OF THE MUSIC OFFICE MORE PROFESSIONALLY AND EFFECTIVELY AND ACHIEVE BETTER VALUE FOR MONEY.

REFERRING TO THE HONG KONG ACADEMY FOR PERFORMING ARTS (APA), MR SO POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS ALREADY PROVIDING ABOUT 500 YOUNG STUDENTS WITH MUSIC TRAINING AT JUNIOR LEVEL, WHICH WAS VERY SIMILAR IN NATURE TO THE MUSIC OFFICE'S TRAINING PROGRAMMES.

HE EMPHASISED THAT THE APA WAS JUST ONE OF THE POSSIBILITIES BEING CONSIDERED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

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CAMP FUN FOR 648 CYC MEMBERS

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STARTING FROM TODAY (WEDNESDAY) OVER 648 COMMUNITY YOUTH CLUB (CYC) MEMBERS FROM SECONDARY SCHOOLS ARE ENJOYING A THREE-DAY COMMUNITY SERVICE CAMP AT THE WU KAI SHA YOUTH VILLAGE.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SAID THE CAMP WAS AN ACTIVITY TO CELEBRATE THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SCHEME WHICH WAS SET UP IN 1978.

"THROUGH THIS CAMP, WE ALSO HOPE TO PROMOTE CIVIC AWARENESS AMONG CYC MEMBERS; PROVIDE THE CAMPERS WITH LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND SHARE EXPERIENCE IN COMMUNITY SERVICE," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

/THE ASSISTANT .....

WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 1993

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THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS), MR HO CHE-LEUNG, WILL BE INVITED TO OFFICIATE AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF COMMUNITY SERVICE CAMP ON FRIDAY.

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE CLOSING CEREMONY TO BE HELD AT THE WU KAI SHA YOUTH VILLAGE, MA ON SHAN, NEW TERRITORIES, AT 10.30 AM ON FRIDAY (JULY 9).

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ONE CANDIDATE NOMINATED FOR LEGCO BY-ELECTION

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ONE CANDIDATE HAS BEEN NOMINATED FOR THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BY-ELECTION IN RESPECT OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCY TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE IS 41-YEAR-OLD MR TSO SHIU-WAI, A COMPANY DIRECTOR. HIS CONTACT TELEPHONE IS 459 7667.

THIS BRINGS TO ONE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED SINCE THE TWO-WEEK NOMINATION PERIOD BEGAN ON JUNE 25.

THE BY-ELECTION WILL BE HELD ON JULY 28 TO FILL THE SEAT OF MR GILBERT LEUNG KAM-HO.

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FRESH WATER CUT IN TSIM SHA TSUI

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FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO SOME PREMISES IN TSIM SHA TSUI WILL GO OFF FROM 11 PM ON FRIDAY (JULY 9) TO 6 AM THE FOLLOWING DAY TO FACILITATE WASTE DETECTION WORK ON WATER MAINS.

THE SUSPENSION WILL AFFECT ALL THE PREMISES AT SALISBURY ROAD AND THOSE BOUNDED BY NATHAN ROAD, PEKING ROAD, ASHLEY ROAD AND MIDDLE ROAD.

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 1993

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND  
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION
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OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	2,800
REVERSAL OF LAF	NIL
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	2,800
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-220
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	2,580
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	TWJ 112.5 *-0.1* 7.7.93

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS

EF NOTES/HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS

TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.55 PCT	13 MONTHS	2408	4.375	100.50	3.95
1 MONTH	3.02 PCT	16 MONTHS	2411	4.625	100.78	4.07
3 MONTHS	3.27 PCT	19 MONTHS	2502	4.75	100.84	4.25
6 MONTHS	3.50 PCT	22 MONTHS	2505	3.75	98.87	4.44
12 MONTHS	3.87 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 32,434 MN

CLOSED JULY 7, 1993

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# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

## SUPPLEMENT

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MEASURES TAKEN TO PREVENT SHARK ATTACKS

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THE REGIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT IS TAKING STEPS TO LAY SHARK PREVENTION NETS ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS AT SELECTED POPULAR BEACHES, THE SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR JAMES SO, SAID.

THIS IS IN ADDITION TO THE MEASURES BEING TAKEN BY A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM, HE ADDED.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHIM PUI-CHUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR SO SAID AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP, CHAIRED BY A DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MET ON JUNE 18 TO CO-ORDINATE VARIOUS MEASURES.

THE GROUP COMPRISES REPRESENTATIVES OF THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT, THE REGIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE POLICE, THE MARINE DEPARTMENT AND THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION.

IT HAS DECIDED THAT THE MEASURES CURRENTLY UNDERTAKEN BY THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS AND THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WOULD CONTINUE.

THESE INCLUDE THE HOISTING OF SHARK WARNING SIGNALS AND RED FLAGS ON AFFECTED AND NEARBY BEACHES, GIVING VERBAL WARNINGS THROUGH THE PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM EVERY 15 MINUTES TO WARN SWIMMERS AGAINST ENTERING THE WATER, AND KEEPING A CLOSE WATCH ON NEARBY WATERS AND CONSTANT PATROL IN THE VICINITY OF THE SWIMMING AREA IN MOTORISED RESCUE CRAFT BY LIFEGUARDS.

OTHER PRECAUTIONS TO BE ADOPTED INCLUDE:

- \* DEPLOY MORE LIFEGUARDS IN AFFECTED AREAS AND IN SOME OF THE MORE POPULAR BEACHES, AND STEP UP SURVEILLANCE BY THE USE OF ADDITIONAL MOTORISED BOATS;
- \* OPEN SOME PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS EARLIER TO CATER FOR EARLY-MORNING SWIMMERS; AND
- \* WIDELY DISTRIBUTE PAMPHLETS AND POSTERS ON MEASURES TO AVOID SHARK ATTACKS.

MR SO ALSO TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT THREE CASES OF SUSPECTED SHARK ATTACKS OCCURRED IN HONG KONG WATERS OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS.

IN THE FIRST CASE, A 65-YEAR-OLD WOMAN WAS KILLED WHILE SWIMMING ABOUT 500 METRES OFF SILVERSTRAND BEACH, SAI KUNG, ABOUT 6.35 AM ON JUNE 8, 1991.

THE SECOND CASE INVOLVED A 42-YEAR-OLD MAN WHO WAS FATALLY WOUNDED WHILE SWIMMING ABOUT 150 METRES OFF SHEUNG SZ WAN, SAI KUNG, ABOUT 8 AM ON JUNE 1 THIS YEAR.

IN THE THIRD CASE, A 61-YEAR-OLD MAN WAS FATALLY ATTACKED BY A SHARK WHILE SWIMMING ABOUT THREE METRES OFF SILVERSTRAND BEACH, SAI KUNG, ABOUT 7.30 AM ON JUNE 11 THIS YEAR.

MORE INSPECTIONS OF PASSENGER HOISTS IN THE PIPELINE

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THE NEED FOR SPECIAL INSPECTION ARRANGEMENT FOR PASSENGER HOISTS IN THE LONGER TERM WILL BE A SUBJECT FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE WORKING GROUP SET UP UNDER THE WORKS BRANCH TO LOOK INTO FURTHER MEANS OF ENHANCING THE SAFE USE OF HEAVY MACHINERIES AND LIFTING APPLIANCES ON CONSTRUCTION SITES, INCLUDING PASSENGER HOISTS.

IN THE MEANTIME, A CODE OF PRACTICE ON PASSENGER HOISTS WILL BE PREPARED WITH A VIEW TO RATIONALISING THE STANDARDS IN CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, TESTING AND EXAMINATION OF SUCH EQUIPMENT.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR MICHAEL LEUNG, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON SAMUEL WONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE SECRETARY NOTED THAT IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE PASSENGER HOIST ACCIDENT AT JAVA ROAD, THE GOVERNMENT HAD CARRIED OUT ONE ROUND OF INSPECTION AND A SECOND ROUND WAS STILL ONGOING.

THE FIRST ROUND COVERING 86 HOISTS MAINLY FOCUSED ON WHETHER CONTRACTORS HAD COMPLIED WITH SAFETY REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW.

"THESE INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF AN EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT FALL ARRESTER, INTERLOCKING DEVICES FOR THE GATES, THE NOTICE FOR THE SAFE WORKING LOAD AND THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PERSONS ALLOWED TO BE CARRIED, THE RELEVANT CERTIFICATES AND REPORTS OF TEST, EXAMINATIONS AND INSPECTIONS UNDER THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CONSTRUCTION SITES (SAFETY) REGULATIONS," SAID MR LEUNG.

"NO OTHER IRREGULARITIES WERE FOUND APART FROM THOSE RELATING TO THE GATES."

HE NOTED THAT THE IRREGULARITIES CONSTITUTED OFFENCES UNDER THE CONSTRUCTION SITES (SAFETY) REGULATIONS AND AS A RESULT SIX SUMMONSES HAD BEEN TAKEN OUT AGAINST THE OFFENDERS.

IN THE SECOND ROUND OF JOINT INSPECTIONS BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT AND THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT, KNOWN AS THE SPECIAL RANDOM CHECK EXERCISE, INSPECTIONS ON THE HOIST CAGE, LANDINGS, HOISTWAY, ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS AND A FULL-LOAD TEST WILL BE COVERED.

THE SAFETY DEVICE WHICH IS USED TO STOP THE HOIST FROM RAPID DESCENT DURING AN ACCIDENT WILL ALSO BE TESTED.

MR LEUNG SAID MORE INSPECTIONS OF SITES WITH HOISTS WOULD BE CARRIED OUT AND PROSECUTION ACTION TAKEN IF THERE WERE BREACHES OF THE RELEVANT SAFETY REGULATIONS.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 1993

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CORONER'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON SAFE USE  
OF PASSENGER HOISTS ADOPTED

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THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR MICHAEL LEUNG, SAID FOLLOWING THE TELFORD GARDEN CORONER'S INQUEST, THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS THAT WERE DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE SAFE USE OF PASSENGER HOISTS WERE ACCEPTED.

HOWEVER, HE ADDED, HAVING REGARD TO PRACTICES OVERSEAS, RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH GENERALLY FELL OUTSIDE THE AMBIT OF GOVERNMENT CONTROL WERE NOT IMPLEMENTED.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HENRY TANG YING-YEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR LEUNG NOTED THAT ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE COURT, THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY HAD DISCONTINUED THE USE OF ALL PASSENGER HOISTS OF THE SAME MODEL AS THE ONE IN TELFORD GARDEN AFTER IT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED THAT THE ACCIDENT WAS ATTRIBUTED TO THE DEFECTIVE DESIGN OF THE MODEL.

ON LEGISLATIVE CONTROL, ALL RELEVANT REQUIREMENTS WERE STUDIED TO ENSURE THAT THERE WERE ADEQUATE PROVISIONS IN INDUSTRIAL SAFETY LAWS.

HE SAID: "FOR EXAMPLE, REGULATIONS 17 AND 18 OF THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS REGULATIONS REQUIRE THE REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS AND DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES."

"THIS WAS CONSISTENT WITH THE CORONER'S RECOMMENDATION REGARDING MANDATORY REPORTING OF INCIDENTS."

THE PROVISIONS UNDER THE CONSTRUCTION SITES (SAFETY) REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE SAFETY OF PASSENGER HOISTS WERE ALSO REVIEWED AND GENERALLY FOUND TO BE ADEQUATE.

AS REGARDS THE RECOMMENDATION TO REQUIRE THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT TO CERTIFY THE STRUCTURAL SAFETY OF ALL HOIST TYPES, MR LEUNG SAID THIS WAS NOT CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE.

"SUCH RESPONSIBILITY SHOULD REST WITH THE MANUFACTURER AND OWNER OF A HOIST, SIMILAR TO THE PRACTICE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND MANY OTHER COUNTRIES.

"LIKewise, THE RECOMMENDATION PROPOSING THAT ANY MANUFACTURERS' MODIFICATION SHOULD BE APPROVED BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WAS NOT ADOPTED," MR LEUNG ADDED.

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GOOD PROGRESS IN REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

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THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT GOOD PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE IN RESETTLING VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

"OUR AIM IS TO RESETTLE ALL VIETNAMESE REFUGEES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE," HE SAID.

NEARLY 1,300 HAVE LEFT HONG KONG SO FAR THIS YEAR, AND OVER 23,500 SINCE JANUARY 1989.

ON JULY 1, THERE WAS A TOTAL OF 2,231 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN THE TERRITORY.

OF THEM, 1,146 HAVE ALREADY BEEN ACCEPTED FOR RESETTLEMENT AND SHOULD BE DEPARTING OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MRS ELSIE TU, HE SAID THE REMAINING CASELOAD WAS BEING RE-EXAMINED BY THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR) OR BEING CONSIDERED FOR RESETTLEMENT.

MR ASPREY SAID THERE WOULD BE DIFFICULTIES IN RESETTLING SOME OF THE REFUGEES IN THIS CATEGORY, PRINCIPALLY BECAUSE OF THEIR CRIMINAL RECORDS.

HOWEVER, HE SAID IT WOULD BE PREMATURE TO SEEK TO DEFINE THE EXACT NUMBER WHO MIGHT NEVER BE RESETTLED.

"WE KEEP IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH UNHCR AND THE CONSULATES OF THE RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES, AND WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION TO ENSURE THAT EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO SPEED UP THE RESETTLEMENT OF THOSE WHO HAVE NOT YET BEEN ACCEPTED FOR RESETTLEMENT," HE SAID.

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REPORTS ON INTERNATIONAL TREATIES

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THERE ARE FOUR INTERNATIONAL TREATIES UNDER WHICH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS REQUIRED TO REPORT PERIODICALLY ON THE STATE OF THEIR IMPLEMENTATION IN HONG KONG, THE SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL SZE, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THEY ARE:

- \* INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION,
- \* INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS,
- \* INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, AND

/\* CONVENTION AGAINST .....

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\* CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHRISTINE LOH IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR SZE SAID THE GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTED TO THE PREPARATION OF THE RELEVANT REPORTS BY PREPARING AND SUBMITTING TO THE UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT DRAFT REPORTS IN RESPECT OF HONG KONG.

"THE DUE DATES FOR THE NEXT REPORTS UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS AND THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS BOTH FALL IN JUNE 1994," HE SAID.

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CENTRAL/MID-LEVELS ESCALATOR READY IN SEPTEMBER  
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THE CENTRAL TO MID-LEVELS ESCALATOR SYSTEM IS EXPECTED TO BE READY FOR USE IN LATE SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR K Y YEUNG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MRS MIRIAM LAU TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR YEUNG SAID TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF USERS AND TO PREVENT VANDALISM, THE ESCALATOR SYSTEM WOULD BE PATROLLED BY FOUR ATTENDANTS DURING THE OPERATING HOURS OF 6 AM TO 10 PM EACH DAY.

HE SAID THE OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE SYSTEM WOULD BE ACCOMMODATED IN A CONTROL ROOM ON CAINE ROAD WHERE HE WOULD BE ABLE TO MONITOR THE WHOLE SYSTEM BY CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION.

HE WILL ALSO BE ABLE TO DIRECT USERS AND ISSUE SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS THROUGH A PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM.

BOTH THE CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AND THE PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM WILL BE CONNECTED TO THE POLICE REGIONAL COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTRE, HONG KONG ISLAND.

MR YEUNG SAID WATCHMEN WOULD BE DEPLOYED TO PREVENT VANDALISM OUTSIDE OPERATING HOURS.

A PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN, INCLUDING THE DISTRIBUTION OF A USERS' GUIDE TO THE SYSTEM, LEAFLETS, POSTERS AND PRESS RELEASES, IS BEING ORGANISED TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC IN THE USE OF THE NEW SYSTEM, MR YEUNG SAID.

NOTICES WOULD ALSO BE PROMINENTLY DISPLAYED AT ENTRANCES TO THE SYSTEM ADVISING THE PUBLIC ON ITS SAFE USAGE, HE ADDED.

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PROPOSALS ON RETIREMENT PROTECTION SYSTEM UNDER STUDY

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THE FUTURE OF A RETIREMENT PROTECTION SYSTEM IS A HIGHLY COMPLEX SUBJECT, INVOLVING A SERIES OF DIFFICULT JUDGEMENTS WHICH WILL HAVE PROFOUND CONSEQUENCES ON THE LONG-TERM SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, FINANCIAL AND MONETARY POLICIES.

"IT IS NOT THEREFORE AN ISSUE THAT WE CAN AFFORD TO RUSH TO A CONCLUSION," THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR MICHAEL LEUNG, SAID WHEN REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HUI YIN-FAT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR LEUNG NOTED THAT DURING THE MOTION DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON FEBRUARY 3, A NUMBER OF MAJOR ISSUES WERE RAISED.

THESE, TOGETHER WITH THE 176 PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS MADE IN RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT, ARE NOW BEING ANALYSED AND STUDIED CAREFULLY WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION.

THE MAJOR ISSUES INCLUDE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A COMPULSORY RETIREMENT PROTECTION SYSTEM AND THE EXISTING SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM; AND WHETHER THERE SHOULD BE GOVERNMENT GUARANTEE AGAINST FINANCIAL RISKS ARISING FROM PRIVATE MANAGEMENT OF DECENTRALISED SCHEMES.

"I CAN HOWEVER ASSURE THIS COUNCIL THAT WE ARE ALREADY HANDLING THE SUBJECT AS QUICKLY AS WE CAN," MR LEUNG SAID.

"WE AIM TO REACH A MORE DEFINITE CONCLUSION ON THE BEST WAY FORWARD BY THE END OF THIS YEAR," HE ADDED.

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APPEAL PROCEDURES REVIEWED

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IN THE COURSE OF THE INVESTIGATION OF A RECENT CASE, THE JUDICIARY HAS TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW COMPLETELY ITS PROCEDURES ON APPEALS AGAINST DECISIONS MADE BY THE OBSCENE ARTICLES TRIBUNAL, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID FORD, SAID.

IT HAS ALREADY MADE THE NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS, HE SAID.

RECOUNTING THE CASE IN HIS WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON EMILY LAU IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), SIR DAVID SAID ANY PARTY TO ANY PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE TRIBUNAL MAY APPEAL TO THE HIGH COURT AGAINST ITS DECISION ON A POINT OF LAW BY GIVING NOTICE OF APPEAL TO THE REGISTRAR OF SUPREME COURT.

WHERE SUCH NOTICE IS GIVEN, THE REGISTRAR IS REQUIRED TO FIX A DATE FOR THE HEARING OF THE APPEAL WITHIN A PERIOD OF UP TO 56 DAYS.

/THE DATE .....

THE DATE IS FIXED NORMALLY BY THE CLERK OF COURT ON BEHALF OF THE REGISTRAR WHEN THE RELEVANT DOCUMENTS ARE RECEIVED FROM THE TRIBUNAL.

SIR DAVID SAID IN THE RECENT CASE, THE DOCUMENTS FROM THE TRIBUNAL ARRIVED LATER THAN USUAL.

"BY THE TIME THE CLERK OF COURT SAW THE PARTIES TO FIX A DATE FOR THE HEARING, THE TIME LIMIT FOR FIXING THE DATE HAD ALREADY EXPIRED," HE SAID.

THE CROWN THUS OBJECTED TO THE APPEAL BEING LISTED AND THE CLERK OF COURT DECIDED TO DECLINE TO FIX A DATE FOR THE HEARING.

THE APPEAL PARTY THEN ISSUED FORMAL PROCEEDINGS IN THE HIGH COURT FOR AN ORDER REQUIRING THE REGISTRAR TO FIX A DATE AND THE JUDGE RULED IN FAVOUR OF THE APPEAL PARTY.

ALSO AN ORDER FOR COST WAS MADE AGAINST THE REGISTRAR.

SIR DAVID SAID IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE COURT RULING, THE REGISTRAR ORDERED AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CASE.

"IT TRANSPIRED THAT THE CLERK OF COURT HAD, IN HIS OWN BETTER JUDGMENT, TAKEN THE DECISION TO REFUSE TO FIX THE DATE FOR HEARING THE APPEAL.

"THE CASE COULD HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO THE PRACTICE MASTER IN THE REGISTRY FOR GUIDANCE," HE SAID.

THE PRACTICE MASTER WAS ABLE TO GIVE ANY DIRECTIONS WHICH MIGHT BE REQUIRED ON QUESTIONS OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE, INCLUDING DIRECTING THE CLERK OF COURT TO SET THE APPEAL DOWN.

"HAVING EXAMINED THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CASE, THE REGISTRAR CONCLUDED THAT THE DECISION OF THE CLERK OF COURT WAS AN ERROR OF JUDGMENT."

"IT DID NOT INVOLVE DERELICTION OF DUTY ON THE PART OF ANY OFFICIALS," SIR DAVID SAID.

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CRITERIA FOR EXTENDING SERVICE OF  
OVERSEAS AGREEMENT OFFICERS

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THERE ARE AT PRESENT 20 OVERSEAS AGREEMENT OFFICERS OVER THE AGE OF 60 SERVING 16 RANKS IN NINE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MRS ANSON CHAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHEUNG MAN-KWONG, MRS CHAN SAID THE FURTHER EMPLOYMENT OF AN AGREEMENT OFFICER BEYOND THE AGE OF 60 WAS CONSIDERED ONLY IN VERY EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

"THE OFFICER HAS TO BE OF GOOD CONDUCT AND PERFORMANCE AND ALSO PHYSICALLY FIT," SHE SAID.

"HE MAY BE FURTHER EMPLOYED BEYOND THE AGE OF 60 IF THERE IS A STRONG NEED FOR HIS SERVICE TO BE RETAINED."

HOWEVER, THIS WILL BE BASED ON AN ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- \* THERE ARE RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND SUCCESSION PROBLEMS;
- \* THERE ARE SPECIALIST AND/OR OPERATIONAL GROUNDS FOR RETAINING THE OFFICER;
- \* THE EXTENSION OF SERVICE IS REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN AN ADEQUATE LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE IN THE RANK; AND
- \* THE FURTHER EMPLOYMENT WILL NOT CAUSE A PROMOTION BLOCKAGE.

MRS CHAN POINTED OUT THAT THESE CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES APPLIED TO BOTH OVERSEAS AND LOCAL OFFICERS AND THAT DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON SUCH FURTHER EMPLOYMENT MUST BE PUT TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION FOR ADVICE BEFORE APPROVAL.

"IN THE CASE OF AN OVERSEAS AGREEMENT OFFICER, IN ADDITION TO THE CRITERIA OUTLINED ABOVE, FURTHER EMPLOYMENT BEYOND THE AGE OF 60 IS CONSIDERED ONLY WHERE NO SUITABLE LOCAL REPLACEMENT IS AVAILABLE," SHE ADDED.

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### 36 BUS FIRES IN PAST THREE YEARS

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THERE WERE 36 CASES OF BUSES CATCHING FIRE WHILE CARRYING PASSENGERS BETWEEN 1990 AND 1992, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR K Y YEUNG, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SAID ACCORDING TO THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THESE FIRES WERE BELIEVED TO HAVE RESULTED FROM A VARIETY OF CAUSES INCLUDING COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS COMING INTO CONTACT WITH THE EXTERNAL WALLS OF THE HOT ENGINE AND/OR EXHAUST PIPE, ELECTRICAL SHORT-CIRCUITING AND DISCARDED LIGHTED SMOKING MATERIALS.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ZACHARY WONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR YEUNG NOTED THAT BUS CHASSIS WERE NORMALLY DESIGNED AND FITTED WITH FIRE PREVENTION FEATURES, SUCH AS SHIELDS TO PREVENT GREASE BEING THROWN ONTO HOT EXHAUST PIPES AND INSULATION OF ELECTRIC WIRING SYSTEMS.

"THESE FITTINGS AND EQUIPMENT AS WELL AS ALL OTHER PARTS OF A BUS ARE SUBJECTED TO VIGOROUS ANNUAL INSPECTIONS BY THE VEHICLE EXAMINERS OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT BEFORE THEIR LICENCES ARE RENEWED UNDER THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE AND ITS SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION.

/"IN ADDITION, .....

"IN ADDITION, SPOT CHECKS ARE CARRIED OUT BY THE DEPARTMENT TO ENSURE THAT THE BUSES ARE IN A SATISFACTORY SAFE OPERATING CONDITION," MR YEUNG SAID.

AS A PRECAUTION, THE ORDINANCE ALSO REQUIRES ALL BUSES TO CARRY FIRE EXTINGUISHERS. THESE ARE REGULARLY INSPECTED TO ENSURE THAT THEY REMAIN IN AN EFFICIENT WORKING CONDITION.

THE SMOKING (PUBLIC HEALTH) (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1992, WHICH EXTENDED THE PROHIBITION ON SMOKING FROM THE LOWER DECK OF A PUBLIC BUS TO ALL PARTS OF IT FROM AUGUST 1, 1992, SHOULD REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF DISCARDED CIGARETTES FOUND ON BUSES, AND HENCE THE BUS FIRES SO CAUSED, MR YEUNG ADDED.

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#### RED LIGHT CAMERA SCHEME A SUCCESS

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A PILOT SCHEME STARTED IN JANUARY THIS YEAR, UNDER WHICH AN AUTOMATIC CAMERA HAS BEEN PLACED AT ROAD JUNCTIONS TO IDENTIFY VEHICLES THAT IGNORE RED TRAFFIC LIGHTS, HAS BEEN A SUCCESS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR K Y YEUNG, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON LAM KUI-CHUN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR YEUNG SAID ONE CAMERA WAS BEING USED IN THE PILOT SCHEME AND IT WAS BEING ALTERNATED BETWEEN TWO ROAD JUNCTIONS.

UP TO MAY 31 THIS YEAR, 605 RED LIGHT VIOLATIONS HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED USING THE CAMERA. AS A RESULT, 207 FIXED PENALTY TICKETS AND TWO SUMMONSES HAD BEEN ISSUED, AND THE REMAINING 396 CASES WERE BEING PROCESSED.

AN ANALYSIS OF ENFORCEMENT DATA HAD REVEALED A 47 PER CENT REDUCTION IN RED LIGHT VIOLATIONS AT JUNCTIONS WHERE THE CAMERA WAS IN USE, MR YEUNG SAID, ADDING THAT PLANS WERE BEING MADE TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL CAMERAS.

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#### ADDITIONAL TUNNEL SAFETY MEASURES BEING CONSIDERED

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CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO IMPLEMENTING ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES WITH A VIEW TO FURTHER IMPROVING TUNNEL SAFETY WHEN ONE TUBE IS CLOSED.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR K Y YEUNG, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HUANG CHEN-YA IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

/THESE MEASURES .....

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THESE MEASURES INCLUDE ERECTING LARGER DIRECTIONAL SIGNS, IMPOSING A 50 KM PER HOUR SPEED LIMIT, AND ARRANGING FOR MORE FREQUENT RADIO BROADCASTS OF SAFETY MESSAGES WITHIN THE TUNNELS.

MR YEUNG SAID IN THE PAST THREE YEARS, SIX FATAL ACCIDENTS AND 66 CAUSING SERIOUS INJURY HAD OCCURRED WITHIN ROAD TUNNELS AND THEIR APPROACH/EXIT AREAS.

THREE OF THE FATAL ACCIDENTS AND 36 CAUSING SERIOUS INJURY OCCURRED WHILE ONE TUBE OF A TUNNEL WAS CLOSED AND THE OTHER TUBE WAS BEING USED FOR TWO-WAY TRAFFIC.

IN THE SAME PERIOD, THE OVERALL ACCIDENT RATE IN TUNNELS WAS 0.58 ACCIDENT PER MILLION VEHICLE KILOMETRES, WHICH COMPARED FAVOURABLY WITH THE RATE OF 1.72 PER MILLION VEHICLE KILOMETRES ON ALL ROADS, MR YEUNG NOTED.

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## AIRPORT IMMIGRATION CLEARANCE TIME FAVOURABLE

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THE IMMIGRATION CLEARANCE TIME AT KAI TAK AIRPORT IN GENERAL COMPARES QUITE FAVOURABLY WITH OTHER AIRPORTS, GIVEN ITS HIGH USAGE AND THE PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"WE ARE AWARE, HOWEVER, THAT PASSENGER VOLUME AT KAI TAK MUST BE EXPECTED TO INCREASE BEFORE A REPLACEMENT AIRPORT COMES INTO OPERATION.

"WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE NEXT YEAR SOME MORE RESOURCES FOR IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT FOLLOWING THE COMPLETION OF SCREENING OF VIETNAMESE ASYLUM SEEKERS," HE SAID.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HOWARD YOUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR ASPREY SAID THE DEPARTMENT HAD MADE A NUMBER OF IMPROVEMENTS IN PRODUCTIVITY AND CLEARANCE TIMES OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS TO COPE WITH THE INCREASED PRESSURE.

A RECENT IMPROVEMENT HAS BEEN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRAVEL RECORD AND IMMIGRATION CONTROL AND ENFORCEMENT SYSTEM.

MR ASPREY SAID THIS HAD ACHIEVED A SIGNIFICANT SHORTENING OF THE PROCESSING TIME FOR RESIDENTS ON ARRIVAL, FROM A MINUTE AND A HALF TO A MINUTE, AND ON DEPARTURE FROM A MINUTE TO HALF A MINUTE.

THE FINAL STAGE OF THE IMPROVEMENT WAS ACHIEVED ONLY LAST MONTH, HE ADDED.

IN 1995, THE EXISTING COMPUTER TERMINALS WILL BE REPLACED BY OPTICAL READERS WHICH WILL REDUCE FURTHER THE TIME NEEDED TO CLEAR HONG KONG IDENTITY CARD AND MACHINE READABLE PASSPORT HOLDERS, HE SAID.

/THE DEPARTMENT .....

THE DEPARTMENT RECEIVED SEVEN COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE CLEARANCE TIME IN 1991, NINE LAST YEAR AND FIVE IN THE FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR.

OF THE 21 CASES, 16 INVOLVED PASSENGERS WHO HAD APPARENTLY BEEN CLEARED IN LESS THAN THE 30-MINUTE TARGET TIME. THE REMAINING FIVE CASES ALL OCCURRED DURING MID-DAY PEAK PERIODS.

"IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT HAS NOW REVISED ITS MANNING PATTERN TO GIVE MAXIMUM COVERAGE DURING THOSE PERIODS," HE SAID.

THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANISATION RECOMMENDED A STANDARD OF 45 MINUTES FOR AIRPORT CLEARANCE OVERALL, BUT NOT FOR IMMIGRATION CLEARANCE ALONE.

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USE OF MOBILE TELEPHONE WHILE DRIVING IS DISCOURAGED

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THE PRACTICE OF USING MOBILE TELEPHONES WHILE DRIVING CAN CAUSE TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS, AND IS DISCOURAGED.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR K Y YEUNG, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON TANG SIU-TONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR YEUNG SAID IN THE ROAD USERS' CODE, MOTORISTS WERE ADVISED TO STOP THEIR CARS IN A SAFE PLACE IF THEY WISHED TO USE THEIR MOBILE TELEPHONES.

"WHILE THERE IS NO LEGISLATION SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITING THE PRACTICE, MOTORISTS MAY BE PROSECUTED FOR CARELESS DRIVING IF THE USE OF A MOBILE TELEPHONE CAN BE SHOWN TO HAVE CAUSED A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT," HE SAID.

THERE WERE TWO TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS RECORDED IN 1991 AND THREE IN 1992 IN WHICH THE USE OF MOBILE TELEPHONES WHILE DRIVING WAS CONSIDERED A CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR.

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COMPLAINTS SYSTEM AGAINST REGISTERED SURVEYORS TO STAY

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THERE IS NO PLAN AT THIS STAGE TO CHANGE THE SYSTEM FOR THE PUBLIC TO LODGE COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE ETHICAL STANDARD OF REGISTERED SURVEYORS TO THE SURVEYORS REGISTRATION BOARD.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR WORKS, MR S K KWEI, IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ALBERT CHAN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR KWEI SAID SIMILAR TO OTHER PROFESSIONS, THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED THAT IT WAS MORE APPROPRIATE FOR THE RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION BOARD TO MONITOR THE OPERATIONS OF ITS MEMBERS.

VIEWS OF THE ADMINISTRATION ARE REFLECTED TO THE BOARD THROUGH THE BOARD MEMBER APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR.

THE BOARD HAS THE POWER TO REMOVE REGISTERED SURVEYORS COMMITTING SERIOUS DISCIPLINARY OFFENCES FROM THE REGISTER.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC BY ENGAGING REGISTERED SURVEYORS HAVE DIRECT ACCESS FOR ANY COMPLAINTS ON THE PROFESSIONAL ETHICS OF AN INDIVIDUAL ESTATE SURVEYOR.

"MEMBERS CAN REST ASSURED THAT THE PROCEDURES ARE KEPT UNDER REVIEW FOR IMPROVEMENT IF FOUND NECESSARY," MR KWEI SAID.

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HOUSING AUTHORITY'S GAS SUPPLY POLICY EXPLAINED

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IT IS THE HOUSING AUTHORITY'S POLICY THAT TOWNGAS WILL BE ADOPTED FOR NEW ESTATES WHERE AVAILABLE AND A PIPED LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS SUPPLY WILL ONLY BE ADOPTED WHERE THE FORMER IS NOT LIKELY TO BECOME AVAILABLE, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON FRED LI IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR EASON SAID THIS POLICY WAS FORMULATED AFTER VERY THOROUGH CONSIDERATION AND HAD BEEN REVIEWED FROM TIME TO TIME, MOST RECENTLY IN 1990.

FACTORS CONSIDERED BY THE AUTHORITY INCLUDE PLANNING FLEXIBILITY, COST, SAFETY, SECURITY OF SUPPLY, THE NEED FOR ON-SITE GAS STORAGE AND POSSIBLE ADAPTABILITY TO NATURAL GAS IN FUTURE.

HE SAID PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS AS CONSUMERS OF TOWNGAS WERE NO DIFFERENT FROM OTHER TOWNGAS CONSUMERS AND WERE NOT SUBJECT TO A DIFFERENT TARIFF STRUCTURE SO THEIR INTERESTS WERE JUST AS WELL PROTECTED AS OTHER CONSUMERS'.

OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS, THE DIFFERENCE IN CHARGES FOR TOWNGAS AND LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS HAD BEEN MARGINAL, HE SAID.

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CONSERVATION OF COUNTRY PARKS AND RURAL LANDSCAPE  
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ONE OF THE MAIN COMPONENTS IN THE CURRENT REVIEW OF THE TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND THE VARIOUS SUB-REGIONAL PLANNING STRATEGIES BENEATH IT IS A STRATEGY FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE COUNTRY PARKS AND RURAL LANDSCAPE, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON JIMMY MCGREGOR IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR EASON SAID THE BROAD CONCEPT WAS THAT RURAL LAND OTHER THAN AREAS REQUIRED FOR DEVELOPMENT TO SUSTAIN ANTICIPATED POPULATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH SHOULD BE DESIGNATED FOR CONSERVATION, AGRICULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL PURPOSES.

ABOUT HALF OF THE RURAL AREA IS ALREADY COVERED BY THE COUNTRY PARK DESIGNATION.

"OTHER PROPOSALS EMERGING FROM THE PLANNING STRATEGIES WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN THE RURAL OUTLINE ZONING PLANS WHICH WILL REPLACE THE CURRENT GENERATION OF DEVELOPMENT PERMISSION AREA PLANS ARE PREPARED," HE SAID.

ON WHETHER LAND CURRENTLY USED FOR OPEN STORAGE OF CONTAINERS AND SCRAP METAL COULD BE REVERTED TO ITS ORIGINAL STATE, MR EASON SAID THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE DID NOT EMPOWER THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE ENFORCEMENT OR REINSTATEMENT ACTION AGAINST LAND USES WHICH EXISTED BEFORE THE PUBLICATION OF THE RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PERMISSION AREA PLAN (DPA).

HE SAID USES ESTABLISHED WITHOUT PERMISSION AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF A DPA PLAN WHICH CONTRAVENED THE LAND USE ZONING COULD BE DEALT WITH BY ENFORCEMENT AND REINSTATEMENT ACTION.

"IN THE LONGER TERM, NEW ARRANGEMENTS TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM OF 'EXISTING USES' WILL BE REQUIRED AND CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO THIS IN THE CONTENT OF THE REVIEW OF THE ORDINANCE," MR EASON SAID.

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CRIME INFORMATION FORMS HELP POLICE INVESTIGATION  
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CRIMINAL INFORMATION FORM SCHEME, AS A CHANNEL OF PASSING CRIME INFORMATION TO THE POLICE, IS OF CONSIDERABLE HELP TO CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS.

ON AVERAGE, ONE ARREST RESULTS FROM EVERY THREE FORMS RECEIVED.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LEE WING-TAT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID THE POLICE USED THE INFORMATION RECEIVED ON SUCH FORMS AS INTELLIGENCE TO HELP THEIR INVESTIGATIONS.

/MR ASPREY .....

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MR ASPREY SAID THE NUMBER OF CRIME INFORMATION FORMS RECEIVED IN EACH OF THE PAST FIVE YEARS HAD BEEN INCREASING STEADILY.

FROM 1988 UP TO MAY 31, THIS YEAR, A TOTAL OF 8,049 FORMS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED AND THE NUMBER OF ARRESTS ATTRIBUTABLE TO INFORMATION IN THE FORMS IS 2,791.

HE SAID THE POLICE PUBLIC RELATIONS BUREAU HAD MADE A CONSIDERABLE EFFORT TO EXPAND THE DISTRIBUTION OF CRIME INFORMATION FORMS.

"AND IT HAS HAD REASONABLE SUCCESS IN ENCOURAGING THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY BY SEEKING THE CONSENT AND CO-OPERATION OF COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES TO ALLOW THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE FORMS AT THEIR PREMISES," THE SECRETARY SAID.

THESE FORMS ARE AVAILABLE AT ALL POST OFFICES, DISTRICT OFFICES, MANAGEMENT OFFICES OF PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES, HOTELS AND BANKS; A TOTAL OF MORE THAN 700 LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY.

THE FORMS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT CERTAIN SUPERMARKETS, CHAIN CONVENIENCE STORES, DISPENSARIES AND A NUMBER OF MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES AND OWNERS' CORPORATIONS IN MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS.

THE SCHEME STARTED IN 1980.

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BRIDGING COURSE FOR STUDENTS SEEKING TRANSFER  
TO PRE-VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

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THIRTY-FIVE STUDENTS OF GRAMMAR SCHOOLS WERE TRANSFERRED TO PRE-VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS AFTER COMPLETING A BRIDGING COURSE IN THE SUMMER OF 1992, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR MICHAEL LEUNG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THEY WERE AMONG THE 45 STUDENTS WHO HAD ATTENDED AND COMPLETED THE PILOT BRIDGING COURSE AIMED FOR GRAMMAR SCHOOL STUDENTS SEEKING TRANSFER TO SECONDARY TWO OF PRE-VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TIK CHI-YUEN, MR LEUNG SAID EXPENDITURE ON THE COURSE TOTALLED \$249,000, OF WHICH \$198,000 WERE SPENT ON THE SALARY OF THE TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF WHILE THE REST ON MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

THERE HAS NOT BEEN ANY DEMAND SO FAR FROM PRE-VOCATIONAL SCHOOL STUDENTS WISHING TO TRANSFER TO GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.

"STUDENTS ARE ADMITTED TO PRE-VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS ON THE BASIS OF A CLEAR AND POSITIVE PREFERENCE BY THEMSELVES AND THEIR PARENTS FOR THIS TYPE OF EDUCATION," MR LEUNG EXPLAINED.

"BEFORE ADMISSION, THESE STUDENTS ALSO TAKE AN APTITUDE TEST WHICH SHOWS THAT THEY HAVE A GENUINE INTEREST AND INCLINATION IN STUDYING TECHNICAL AND COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS," HE ADDED.

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GOVT TO CONSIDER RAIL LINK TO TUEN MUN

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONSIDER A SUGGESTION BY SOME LEGCO MEMBERS FOR A TUEN MUN EXTENSION - FROM TIN SHUI WAI TO TUEN MUN NORTH - OF THE WESTERN CORRIDOR RAIL LINK RECOMMENDED IN THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STUDY.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR K Y YEUNG IN A MOTION DEBATE ON THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STUDY IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR YEUNG EMPHASISED THAT THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT HAVE A CLOSED MIND ON THE QUESTION OF EXTENDING THE PROPOSED RAIL SYSTEM TO TUEN MUN. THE ISSUE WOULD BE CONSIDERED FURTHER BEFORE THE STRATEGY IS FINALISED.

COMMENTING ON OTHER ALTERNATIVES TO THE RECOMMENDED WESTERN CORRIDOR RAIL ALIGNMENT, MR YEUNG SAID A COASTAL ROUTE FROM TUEN MUN TO TSUEN WAN WOULD BE EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE TO BUILD, COSTING ABOUT \$12 BILLION.

THE ALIGNMENT COULD ONLY BE USED FOR A COMMUTER SERVICE AND WOULD NOT BE A SUITABLE ROUTE FOR CROSS-BORDER PASSENGER AND FREIGHT SERVICES.

ON ANOTHER PROPOSAL TO LINK THE WESTERN CORRIDOR TO THE PROPOSED ZHUHAI BRIDGE, MR YEUNG SAID: "IF AND WHEN PLANS ARE RECEIVED, THEY WILL CERTAINLY BE LOOKED AT BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WHOLE TRANSPORT NETWORK FOR THE NORTHWEST NEW TERRITORIES, INCLUDING OUR RAILWAY PROPOSALS."

MR YEUNG SAID THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISE ON THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STUDY WILL END ON JULY 31. THE VARIOUS VIEWS, COMMENTS AND INTERESTS EXPRESSED WILL NEED TO BE CAREFULLY ANALYSED, BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT FIRMS UP A FINAL STRATEGY WITH INDICATIONS OF RELATIVE PRIORITIES BETWEEN PROJECTS.

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SPEECH OF SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, MR MICHAEL CARTLAND  
IN MOTION DEBATE ON POLICY ON SERVICE INDUSTRY IN LEGCO

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MR PRESIDENT,

THE PROPOSER OF THIS MOTION HAS PRESENTED US WITH A VERY BROAD PROPOSITION WHICH HE USED IN HIS OPENING SPEECH VERY MUCH IN THE MANNER OF A CHRISTMAS TREE ON WHICH HE AND OTHERS HAVE HUNG AN ENORMOUS ARRAY OF ORNAMENTS. IT WOULD TAKE ME FROM NOW UNTIL THE CHRISTMAS AFTER NEXT TO ATTEMPT TO ADDRESS THEM ALL IN ANY DEGREE OF DEPTH. I SHOULD THEREFORE CONFINE MYSELF LARGELY TO ADDRESSING THE WORDING OF THE MOTION ITSELF, NOT BECAUSE MANY OF THE USEFUL AND INTERESTING POINTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE BY SOME SPEAKERS IN THIS DEBATE ARE NOT WORTHY OF CONSIDERATION, BUT SIMPLY BECAUSE IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO DO THEM ALL JUSTICE IN THE CONTEXT OF A DEBATE THAT IS AS BROAD AS THIS WHERE ALMOST ANYTHING CAN BE RAISED AND HAS BEEN. MEMBERS MAY BE ASSURED THAT THEIR POINTS HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY NOTED.

MR PRESIDENT, THE STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE HONG KONG ECONOMY, TO WHICH THIS MOTION REFERS, HAS BEEN PROCEEDING FOR MANY YEARS AS AN AUTONOMOUS PROCESS DRIVEN BY MARKET FORCES. IT IS NOT A MANAGED PROCESS AND CERTAINLY DOES NOT CALL FOR A MANAGED RESPONSE. A RELATIVE DECLINE IN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LOCAL MANUFACTURING HAS TAKEN PLACE, WHILE THE SERVICE SECTORS HAVE CONTINUOUSLY GROWN IN IMPORTANCE. BETWEEN 1981 AND 1991 THE SHARE OF THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN THE GDP FELL FROM 23% TO 16%, WHILE THAT OF THE SERVICE SECTORS AS A WHOLE ROSE FROM 64% TO 73%. THE CHANGES IN THE SHARES IN TOTAL EMPLOYMENT WERE EVEN MORE DRAMATIC. IN 1981, MANUFACTURING PROVIDED JOBS TO 39% OF OUR TOTAL WORKFORCE; IN 1992 IT WAS ONLY 24%. BY CONTRAST, THE SERVICE SECTORS AS A WHOLE EMPLOYED 66% OF OUR WORKFORCE IN 1992, UP FROM 50% IN 1981. BY ANY RECKONING HONG KONG NOW CLEARLY HAS THE PROFILE OF A PREDOMINANTLY SERVICE-ORIENTED ECONOMY.

PROMPTED BY THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES EMERGING FROM THE OPEN DOOR POLICY OF CHINA, TO WHICH MANY SPEAKERS HAVE REFERRED, THE STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF OUR ECONOMY HAS BEEN PROCEEDING AT A PHENOMENAL PACE. RESOURCES HAVE BEEN MOVING QUICKLY ACROSS FROM THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR TO SUCH ACTIVITIES AS WHOLESALE/RETAIL AND IMPORT/EXPORT TRADE; RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS; TRANSPORT, STORAGE AND COMMUNICATIONS; AND FINANCIAL, INSURANCE AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL AND SUPPORTING BUSINESS SERVICES. IT IS REMARKABLE THAT WE HAVE EXPERIENCED LITTLE STRUCTURAL UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE PROCESS. EMPLOYMENT HAS BEEN DECLINING VERY RAPIDLY IN MANUFACTURING WHILST CONCURRENTLY IT HAS BEEN RISING EQUALLY QUICKLY IN THE MAIN SERVICE SECTORS, WITH THE NET RESULT THAT THE OVERALL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE HAS REMAINED PERSISTENTLY LOW. THE HIGH DEGREE OF ADAPTABILITY AND VERSATILITY OF OUR WORKFORCE, WHICH THUS FAR HAS CONTRIBUTED MUCH TO EASING THE PROCESS OF STRUCTURAL CHANGE, WOULD BE HARD TO MATCH ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD.

/OVER THE .....

OVER THE YEARS THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE MARKET PRACTITIONERS THEMSELVES, HAVE BEEN THE MAIN DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE STRUCTURAL CHANGE. THIS IS ONLY RIGHT. NO ONE, OTHER THAN THE ENTREPRENEURS AND THEIR EMPLOYEES, KNOWS BETTER ABOUT THE PROSPECTIVE TRENDS AND DIRECTIONS OF THEIR OWN MARKETS AND THE SPECIFIC BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES UNFOLDING BEFORE THEM. THEY HAVE ENJOYED SUCCESS AND PROFITS IN MAKING THEIR OWN DECISIONS FOR CHANGE. THEY ARE CERTAINLY CAPABLE OF CONTINUING TO DO SO. EXTERNAL DIRECTION AND PRESSURE FOR ANY PARTICULAR TYPE OF MARKET DEVELOPMENT, ESPECIALLY IF IT WERE TO COME FROM THE GOVERNMENT, MAY WELL BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE AND WOULD MOST PROBABLY NOT BE WELCOMED, AND QUITE RIGHTLY NOT, BY THE BUSINESSES CONCERNED.

WHAT THE GOVERNMENT AIMS TO PROVIDE, AND HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY PROVIDING, IS A SOUND BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND AN EXCELLENT NETWORK OF ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE BASIS OF WHICH INDIVIDUAL COMPANIES, IN WHATEVER SECTORS, CAN SEEK TO MAXIMISE THEIR OWN PROFIT POTENTIAL AND THEREBY PROSPER. IN PARALLEL WITH THIS, INDIVIDUAL COMPANIES HAVE TO FACE THEIR OWN COMMERCIAL RISKS, MAKE ADEQUATE CONTINGENCIES FOR POSSIBLE ADVERSE DEVELOPMENTS AND, IF FORTUNE IS AGAINST THEM, BEAR THE CONSEQUENCE OF LOSSES. OUR POLICY FOR THE ECONOMY IS SOUND AND HAS SERVED HONG KONG WELL. IT WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO, INDEED IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF IT ARE RECOGNISED BY THE JOINT DECLARATION AND THE BASIC LAW. THE MAIN FOUNDATIONS OF THIS POLICY INCLUDE:-

- ADHERENCE TO FREE MARKET PRINCIPLES AND A FREE TRADE REGIME
- A SOUND LEGAL SYSTEM AND EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONS FOR COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES
- A SIMPLE TAX SYSTEM WITH A LOW TAX RATE
- THE RELATIVELY SMALL SIZE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN RELATION TO THE ECONOMY
- ADEQUATE REGULATIONS IN THE FINANCIAL SECTOR TO ENSURE MARKET INTEGRITY AND ORDERLY FUNCTIONING WHILST MAINTAINING A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD AND WITHOUT STIFLING PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVE
- STRONG COMMITMENT TO MAINTAINING MONETARY AND EXCHANGE RATE STABILITY
- SUBSTANTIAL INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT GENERALLY
- INVESTING DIRECTLY IN OR OTHERWISE FACILITATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF ESSENTIAL ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE, AND ENSURING AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF LAND

ALL OF THESE ELEMENTS ARE CRUCIAL FOR THE LONGER-TERM DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE SECTORS, AS INDEED THEY ARE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ECONOMY AS A WHOLE.

AT THIS POINT MR PRESIDENT I WOULD RECALL THE WORDING OF THE MOTION. AS MR MCGREGOR AND MR VINCENT CHENG POINTED OUT, IT APPEARS TO CARRY THE IMPLICATION THAT HONG KONG IS NOT YET A MAJOR SERVICE CENTRE IN ASIA AND THAT RELEVANT POLICIES NEED TO BE FORMULATED AND COMMITTEES ESTABLISHED TO MAKE IT ONE. IF THIS ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE INTENDED MEANING OF THE MOTION, AND I FIND IT VERY HARD TO BELIEVE THAT IT CAN, IT WOULD BE AN EXTRAORDINARY PROPOSITION INDEED. FOR SOME YEARS NOW, HONG KONG HAS BEEN WELL RECOGNISED INTERNATIONALLY TO BE A MAJOR SERVICE CENTRE ALREADY, NOT JUST IN ASIA BUT IN THE WORLD AS A WHOLE. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE IN THE AREAS OF BANKING AND OTHER FINANCIAL SERVICES, SHIPPING, AIRLINES, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND TOURISM, TO NAME BUT A FEW. HONG KONG HAS BECOME A MAJOR SERVICE CENTRE ON THE BASIS OF THE POLICIES, LONG SINCE FORMULATED AND ALREADY WELL-ESTABLISHED, TO WHICH I HAVE JUST REFERRED. THESE POLICIES ARE FIRMLY ENTRENCHED IN OUR ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND HAVE BEEN WELL TESTED OVER THE YEARS. THEY HAVE CONTRIBUTED SUBSTANTIALLY TO OUR ECONOMIC SUCCESS. IT WOULD BE ILL-ADVISED, TO SAY THE LEAST, EVEN TO CONSIDER GOING FOR ANYTHING MATERIALLY DIFFERENT - PARTICULARLY AT A TIME WHEN THE WORLD IS LITTERED WITH THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEBRIS LEFT BY THE ABJECT FAILURE OF THE INTRUSIVE, INTERVENTIONARY POLICIES OF THOSE WHO TRIED TO CONTROL, DIRECT AND COMMAND THEIR ECONOMIES INSTEAD OF ALLOWING THEIR MARKETS TO FUNCTION FREELY.

IT IS, NEVERTHELESS, TRUE THAT WE IN HONG KONG ARE NOT LIVING IN A STATIC WORLD. SITUATIONS DO CHANGE. BUSINESSES ARE BECOMING MORE COMPLEX AND INTERTWINED. THERE HAS TO BE A PROCESS OF CONTINUOUS ADAPTATION FOR THE HONG KONG ECONOMY TO REMAIN IN THE BEST POSITION TO REAP BENEFITS AND TO MINIMISE HAZARDS. IT FOLLOWS THAT SPECIFIC ASPECTS IN DIFFERENT SERVICE POLICY AREAS MAY HAVE TO BE ADJUSTED WHEN THE NEED ARISES, ALTHOUGH OUR OVERALL POLICY BASIS, WHICH I HAVE JUST GONE INTO AT SOME LENGTH, SHOULD REMAIN INTACT. IT EQUALLY FOLLOWS THAT WE DO NOT SEE THE NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW. RATHER, WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO DEVELOP OUR CONSULTATIVE, REGULATORY AND ADJUSTMENT MECHANISMS ON A SECTOR-SPECIFIC BASIS, RECOGNISING THAT THE ENORMOUS BREADTH AND DIVERSITY OF THE SERVICE SECTORS NECESSITATES SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT APPROACHES IN DIFFERENT AREAS THAT OFTEN HAVE LITTLE IN COMMON WITH EACH OTHER.

MR PRESIDENT, LET ME OFFER A FEW EXAMPLES MAINLY FROM MY OWN POLICY AREA OF FINANCIAL SERVICES TO ILLUSTRATE HOW POLICY FORMULATION IS ALREADY OPERATING WITH EXISTING COMMITTEES IN THE INDIVIDUAL SERVICE SECTORS TO ENABLE EFFECTIVE ADAPTATION TO SECTORAL DEVELOPMENTS. THROUGH THESE MECHANISMS WE PRESERVE THE BASIC VIRTUES OF OUR OVERALL ECONOMIC STANCE WHILST BEING ALERT TO ANY DEMONSTRATED NEED FOR CHANGE OR POSSIBILITY OF IMPROVEMENT.

ON BANKING, THROUGH A CONSULTATIVE MECHANISM INVOLVING THE GOVERNMENT'S BANKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE AS WELL AS CLOSE LIAISON WITH THE RELEVANT INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS, NAMELY THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS AND THE DTC ASSOCIATION, A NEW AND LESS MECHANISTIC SYSTEM OF BANKING SUPERVISION HAS BEEN DEVELOPED FOLLOWING THE INTRODUCTION IN 1986 OF A NEW BANKING ORDINANCE. THIS PLACES GREATER EMPHASIS ON SUPERVISORY JUDGMENT AND DISCRETION. THE MAIN OBJECTIVE IS TO ENSURE STABILITY IN THE BANKING SYSTEM AND THAT THE BUSINESS OF AUTHORISED INSTITUTIONS IS CONDUCTED IN A PRUDENTIAL MANNER. EMPHASIS IS ALSO PLACED ON ENSURING THAT SUPERVISORY STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS ARE CONSTANTLY REVIEWED AND UPDATED TO KEEP ABREAST OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MARKET AND RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS. A FEW EXAMPLES OF SUCH EFFORTS INCLUDE:-

- COMPLIANCE WITH THE BASLE CAPITAL ADEQUACY STANDARDS BY LOCALLY INCORPORATED INSTITUTIONS AT THE END OF 1989, THREE YEARS AHEAD OF THE TARGET FOR THE WORLD;
- THE REFORM TO THE THREE-TIER SYSTEM IN 1991 INTRODUCING THE CATEGORY OF RESTRICTED LICENCE BANKS TO REPLACE THE CATEGORY OF LICENSED DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES;
- AND MORE RECENTLY, THE INTRODUCTION OF REQUIREMENTS ENABLING THE SUPERVISORY AUTHORITY TO REQUIRE AUDITORS TO REPORT ON THE ADEQUACY OF THE INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS OF AUTHORISED INSTITUTIONS.

ON INSURANCE, THROUGH THE ESTABLISHED CONSULTATIVE MECHANISM OF THE GOVERNMENT'S INSURANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND THE INDUSTRY'S HK FEDERATION OF INSURERS AND ASSOCIATED BODIES, A REGULATORY SYSTEM IS BEING DEVELOPED WITH THE AIM OF ENSURING THE INTEGRITY OF THE MARKET WHILST STILL PERMITTING MARKET FORCES TO DETERMINE PRICING AND RISK COVER. THE MAIN REGULATORY CONSIDERATIONS ARE THE SOLVENCY OF THE INSURERS AND THE PROTECTION OF POLICY-HOLDERS' INTERESTS. THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY WILL MONITOR AND SUPPLEMENT SELF-REGULATION BY THE INDUSTRY OF ITS BROKERS AND AGENTS WITHIN A FRAMEWORK OF SUPPORTIVE LEGISLATION.

ON SECURITIES AND FUTURES, THE MAIN CONSULTATIVE AND ADVISORY MECHANISM IS PROVIDED BY THE SECURITIES AND FUTURES COMMISSION (SFC) WHICH MAINTAINS VERY CLOSE CONTACT WITH MARKET PRACTITIONERS, THE STOCK EXCHANGE COUNCIL AND THE FUTURES EXCHANGE BOARD. MAJOR MARKET DEVELOPMENT MEASURES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AND IMPLEMENTED SINCE THE STOCK MARKET CRASH OF 1987 SUCH AS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SFC ITSELF, AS WELL AS THE CENTRAL CLEARING AND SETTLEMENT SYSTEM WHICH HAS GREATLY IMPROVED RISK MANAGEMENT AND THEREBY ENHANCED CONFIDENCE IN THE MARKET. THIS YEAR ALONE HAS SEEN IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS WITH THE LAUNCH OF INDEX OPTIONS TRADING ON THE FUTURES EXCHANGE AND THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE LISTING OF CHINESE STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES ON THE STOCK EXCHANGE. FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN VIEW INCLUDE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE AUTOMATED ORDER-MATCHING AND EXECUTION SYSTEM AS WELL AS SHORT SELLING AND OPTIONS TRADING ON INDIVIDUAL SHARES ON THE STOCK EXCHANGE. GOVERNMENT HAS SPECIFICALLY SHOWN ITS SUPPORT WITH A FURTHER REDUCTION OF STAMP DUTY AND THE TRANSACTION LEVY. THE SECURITIES SECTOR OFFERS AN EXCELLENT ILLUSTRATION OF HOW GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR CAN AND DO CO-OPERATE TO PROVIDE A NECESSARY REGULATORY FRAMEWORK WITHOUT IMPEDING THE OPERATION OF MARKET FORCES.

IN THE AREA OF COMPANIES REGULATION, THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMPANY LAW REFORM WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1984 TO ENSURE THAT THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK UNDER WHICH BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED IN HONG KONG FACILITATES THE OPERATION OF THE MARKET, WHILE PROVIDING A SET OF GROUND RULES THAT GIVE AN ESSENTIAL LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE TO INVESTORS, CREDITORS AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES. THE STANDING COMMITTEE IS COMPOSED CHIEFLY OF PRIVATE SECTOR PRACTITIONERS INCLUDING MEMBERS FROM BANKING, ACCOUNTANCY AND COMMERCIAL LAW, FROM THE COMPANY SECRETARIAL SECTOR AND THE STOCK EXCHANGE, IN ADDITION TO MEMBERS FROM THE REGULATORY AGENCIES. IT REPORTS ANNUALLY THROUGH ME TO THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL. THROUGH THIS MEANS THE COMPANIES REGULATORY FRAMEWORK IS KEPT UNDER CONSTANT REVIEW. THE VIEWS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ARE GIVEN CONSIDERABLE WEIGHT BY THE ADMINISTRATION. WE HAVE IMPLEMENTED OR ARE IN THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING THE VAST MAJORITY OF ITS RECOMMENDATIONS.

MR PRESIDENT, THESE ARE JUST SOME EXAMPLES OF EXISTING MECHANISMS FOR POLICY FORMULATION AND FACILITATING SERVICE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT. THERE ARE MANY OTHERS, SUCH AS IN THOSE POLICY AREAS COVERED BY MY COLLEAGUES THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND THE SECRETARY FOR WORKS, AS WELL AS THE DEPARTMENTS UNDER THEIR PURVIEW.

THERE IS HOWEVER ONE AREA WHERE SERVICES ARE BEING LOOKED AT, IF NOT COMPREHENSIVELY, AT LEAST ON AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD BASIS - AND THAT IS IN THE CONTEXT OF TRADE. ONE OF THE AREAS IN WHICH THE URUGUAY ROUND OF GATT NEGOTIATIONS IS FAR MORE AMBITIOUS THAN ITS PREDECESSORS IS IN SEEKING TO EXTEND THE 'EQUAL ACCESS', 'NON-DISCRIMINATORY' GATT PRINCIPLES ON TRADE IN GOODS, TO THE MUCH BROADER, MORE COMPLEX AND DIVERSE FIELD OF TRADE IN SERVICES. THIS CAN ONLY BE TO HONG KONG'S ADVANTAGE, JUST AS GATT MEMBERSHIP HAS BEEN WITH REGARD TO GOODS. HONG KONG HAS THEREFORE BEEN AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN THE SERVICE NEGOTIATIONS, WORKING FOR A STRONG AND COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT WITH MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION. HONG KONG HAS THRIVED IN A FREE-MARKET ENVIRONMENT AND OUR SERVICE SECTORS STAND TO GAIN MUCH FROM THE LIBERALISATION AND DEREGULATION IN OTHER MARKETS THAT SHOULD FOLLOW FROM A SUCCESSFUL MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON TRADE IN SERVICES.

IT WAS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND THAT THE GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGED THE FORMATION OF THE HONG KONG COALITION OF SERVICE INDUSTRIES (HKCSI) WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1990 UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE HONG KONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. THE HKCSI'S AIMS INCLUDE:-

- PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICE INDUSTRIES BOTH IN HONG KONG AND INTERNATIONALLY,
- REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF SERVICE INDUSTRIES IN HONG KONG, FORMULATING POLICIES AND MAKING SUBMISSIONS ON BEHALF OF ITS MEMBERS,
- ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING CO-OPERATION BETWEEN MEMBERS OF HONG KONG'S SERVICE INDUSTRIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACHIEVING COMMON GOALS, AND
- PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A "SERVICE FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT" IN HONG KONG.

THE HKCSI THEREFORE PROVIDES A FOCAL POINT FOR LIAISON BETWEEN THE SERVICE SECTOR AND THE GOVERNMENT. WE HAVE BEEN WORKING PARTICULARLY CLOSELY IN CONNECTION WITH THE URUGUAY ROUND NEGOTIATIONS. SINCE ITS INCEPTION THE HKCSI HAS BEEN ACTIVE NOT ONLY LOCALLY BUT INTERNATIONALLY. IT HOSTED THE SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF COALITIONS OF SERVICE INDUSTRIES IN OCTOBER 1991 WITH SPEAKERS FROM ITS COUNTERPART ORGANISATIONS AROUND THE WORLD AS WELL AS INTERNATIONAL TRADE ORGANISATIONS, INCLUDING GATT AND THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

MY OWN BRANCH KEEPS IN TOUCH WITH THE HKCSI'S FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE. OTHER GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES ATTEND MEETINGS OF DIFFERENT SECTORAL COMMITTEES ESTABLISHED BY THE HKCSI AS WELL AS ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

THE EXISTENCE OF THE COALITION CERTAINLY HELPS TO EXPAND AND STRENGTHEN OUR RANGE OF CONTACTS WITH THE SERVICE INDUSTRIES AND TO ENSURE CLOSER CO-OPERATION ON THE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE SECTOR. THERE MAY WELL BE SCOPE FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF SUCH BROAD-BASED ADVISORY MECHANISMS IN FUTURE.

ONE OTHER RECENTLY ESTABLISHED BODY, ALBEIT WITH A WIDER ECONOMIC PURVIEW THAN JUST SERVICES, DESERVES A MENTION IN THE CONTEXT OF REFLECTING THE VIEWS OF INDUSTRY AND ENSURING THAT HONG KONG RETAINS ITS PRE-EMINENCE AS A COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL CENTRE. THIS IS THE GOVERNOR'S BUSINESS COUNCIL WHICH HAS AN ALL-EMBRACING REMIT, COVERING THE FULL SPECTRUM OF THE ECONOMY. IT ADVISES THE GOVERNOR ON, AMONG OTHER THINGS, :

- HOW TO KEEP HONG KONG THE MOST BUSINESS-FRIENDLY LOCATION IN ASIA;
- THE IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON BUSINESS, SO AS TO MODIFY OR ABOLISH THOSE THAT STAND IN THE WAY OF PROGRESS; AND
- HOW TO MAXIMISE THE POTENTIAL OF ALL OUR RESOURCES AND OF OUR POSITION AT THE HEART OF THE ASIAN ECONOMY.

INEVITABLY, WITH SUCH A REMIT, THE GOVERNOR'S BUSINESS COUNCIL IS BOUND TO COVER SUBJECTS RELEVANT TO THE INTERESTS AND CONCERNS OF SERVICE INDUSTRIES SUCH FOR INSTANCE AS THE SUPPLY OF LABOUR.

BEFORE CONCLUDING, I SHOULD MENTION ONE PARTICULAR ASPECT WHICH HAS BEEN PICKED UP IN THIS DEBATE AND WHICH WARRANTS MORE FOCUSED ATTENTION AND THE DEVOTION OF MORE RESOURCES, NOT ONLY BY THE GOVERNMENT BUT ALSO BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP, AND THAT IS SERVICE SECTOR PRODUCTIVITY. WHILE THE SERVICE SECTORS ARE THE FASTEST DEVELOPING IN RECENT YEARS THERE IS EVIDENCE, THOUGH NOT CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE, SUGGESTING THAT THESE SECTORS ARE THE ONES HAVING SLOWER INCREASES IN PRODUCTIVITY, AT LEAST SLOWER THAN IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR. PERHAPS THE TASKS IN SERVICES ARE MORE VARIED AND INVOLVE MORE HUMAN INPUT HENCE RENDERING THEM LESS AMENABLE TO MECHANISTIC PROCESSING. PERHAPS AN OFFICE OFFERS FAR LESS SCOPE FOR AUTOMATION THAN A FACTORY. BUT IT WILL BE USEFUL FOR US TO ENSURE THAT WHATEVER SCOPE THERE IS FOR PRODUCTIVITY TO BE FURTHER IMPROVED, WHETHER BY UPGRADING THE QUALITY OF THE STAFF CONCERNED OR BY COMPLEMENTING THEM WITH EQUIPMENT SUPPORT, WILL BE IDENTIFIED AND UTILISED. I AM SURE THAT MEMBERS WILL SHARE MY INTEREST IN THIS AREA. INVESTMENT IN CAPITAL EQUIPMENT WHERE IT WILL PAY OFF NEEDS NO URGE BY THE GOVERNMENT. AS TO THE PLANNING OF MANPOWER SUPPLY AND UPGRADING ITS QUALITY, MY CLOSE COLLEAGUE THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER IS PLAYING HIS ROLE FULLY.

/MR PRESIDENT, .....

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MR PRESIDENT, TO SUM UP THE ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE TO THE MOTION, WE DO NOT SEE THE NEED TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH REQUIREMENTS. THE MAIN REQUIREMENTS ARE ALREADY WELL-KNOWN AND REFLECTED IN WELL-ESTABLISHED POLICIES. FINER DETAILING AND ADJUSTMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS IN THE LIGHT OF CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD BEST BE MADE THROUGH SPECIFIC MONITORING AND APPRAISAL, WHICH IS IN FACT AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR ON-GOING WORK. AS I SAID EARLIER, OUR ECONOMIC POLICIES ARE FUNDAMENTALLY SOUND AND HAVE BEEN FACILITATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE SECTORS. NUMEROUS COMMITTEES IN VARIOUS SPHERES, MANY WITH NON-OFFICIAL PARTICIPATION, HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH US TO PROMOTE SUCH DEVELOPMENT. WE VALUE THE VIEWS FROM THOSE COMMITTEES AND THEIR USEFUL CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD CONTINUE. THESE EXISTING COMMITTEES ARE MAINLY SECTOR-SPECIFIC TO REFLECT THE DIFFERING NEEDS OF THE VARIOUS SERVICE INDUSTRIES, BUT SOME MORE BROADLY BASED MECHANISMS HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED AND THERE MIGHT BE FURTHER SCOPE FOR SUCH DEVELOPMENT IN FUTURE. FINALLY, IT IS CLEAR THAT HONG KONG IS ALREADY A MAJOR SERVICE CENTRE NOT JUST IN ASIA BUT IN THE WORLD. NEVERTHELESS, ALL OF US WILL NO DOUBT AGREE THAT WE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER, AS IN THE PAST, TO HELP HONG KONG'S SERVICE SECTORS CONTINUE TO DEVELOP AND FLOURISH.

MR PRESIDENT, TO THE EXTENT THAT WE HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH THE SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS IN THE MOTION, THOUGH NOT WITH ITS SPIRIT OF SEEKING TO ENHANCE THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE SECTORS, THE OFFICIAL MEMBERS WILL NOT SUPPORT THE MOTION.

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## BILL AMENDED TO CONFORM WITH BILL OF RIGHTS

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) AMENDED A BILL TO ENSURE THAT "STOP ORDERS" ISSUED TO A TAX DEFAULTER UNDER THE INLAND REVENUE ORDINANCE CONFORM FULLY WITH THE BILL OF RIGHTS.

AFTER THE AMENDMENTS MADE TO THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO.5) BILL 1992, THE DISCRETION TO ISSUE STOP ORDERS WILL LIE WITH A DISTRICT JUDGE RATHER THAN THE COMMISSIONER OF INLAND REVENUE.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE PASSED BILL IS TO BALANCE THE NEED TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH BOTH THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS, WITH THE NEED TO HAVE IN PLACE A RELIABLE AND EFFICIENT SYSTEM FOR PREVENTING TAX DEFAULTERS FROM ABSCONDING FROM HONG KONG.

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MORE LEGAL MUSCLES PROPOSED TO REGULATE LISTED COMPANIES

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LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS DESIGNED TO BETTER EQUIP THE SECURITIES AND FUTURES COMMISSION TO FULFIL ITS ROLE AS THE LEAD REGULATOR ON LISTED COMPANIES WERE TABLED AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE SECURITIES AND FUTURES COMMISSION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993, THE SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, MR MICHAEL CARTLAND, SAID THESE PROPOSALS WOULD SUPPLEMENT THE INVESTIGATORY POWER OF THE COMMISSION WHILE MINIMISING POSSIBLE OVERLAP OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIFFERENT REGULATORS.

UNDER THE BILL, THE COMMISSION WILL BE PROVIDED WITH THE POWER TO CONDUCT PRELIMINARY INSPECTIONS ON RECORDS AND DOCUMENTS OF LISTED COMPANIES.

AS A REGULATOR OF LISTED COMPANIES, THE COMMISSION ENCOUNTERS FROM TIME TO TIME CIRCUMSTANCES SUGGESTING FRAUD, MISFEASANCE OR MISCONDUCT IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE AFFAIRS OF THESE COMPANIES AS WELL AS FAILURE BY THEM TO DISCLOSE INFORMATION TO THEIR SHAREHOLDERS.

AT PRESENT, THE COMMISSION DOES NOT HAVE THE STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO INVESTIGATE SUCH CASES.

"THIS IS CONSIDERED UNDESIRABLE SINCE THE COMMISSION IS DENIED THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE PROMPT INVESTIGATORY ACTIONS AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY," HE SAID.

TO FACILITATE THE EFFECTIVE REGULATION OF LISTED COMPANIES, IT IS PROPOSED THAT THE COMMISSION BE PROVIDED WITH THE POWER TO INITIATE PRELIMINARY INSPECTIONS ON RECORDS AND DOCUMENTS OF LISTED COMPANIES.

IT IS ALSO PROPOSED THAT THE COMMISSION BE ALLOWED TO APPLY TO THE COURTS FOR ORDERS TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF SHAREHOLDERS OF LISTED COMPANIES.

MR CARTLAND SAID IN ANY EVENT, THE COMMISSION MUST CONSULT THE MONETARY AUTHORITY BEFORE ANY AUTHORISED INSTITUTIONS OR THEIR RELATED COMPANIES COULD BE REQUIRED TO PRODUCE RECORDS AND DOCUMENTS FOR INSPECTION.

FURTHERMORE, THE POWER TO APPLY FOR COURT ORDERS WOULD NOT APPLY TO AUTHORISED INSTITUTIONS.

AS REGARDS AUTHORISED INSURERS UNDER THE INSURANCE COMPANIES ORDINANCE, NO EXEMPTION WILL BE GIVEN BUT THE COMMISSION WILL NEED TO CONSULT THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY BEFORE REQUIRING SUCH COMPANIES TO PRODUCE THEIR RECORDS AND DOCUMENTS.

BILL TO REGULATE STOCK EXCHANGE LISTING

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THE GOVERNMENT TODAY (WEDNESDAY) INTRODUCED A BILL INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO ENSURE THE EFFECTIVE REGULATION OF LISTING MATTERS BY THE STOCK EXCHANGE.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE STOCK EXCHANGES UNIFICATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993, THE SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, MR MICHAEL CARTLAND, SAID AN EFFECTIVE REGULATION WAS CRUCIAL TO MAINTAINING THE CONFIDENCE OF INVESTORS IN THE STOCK MARKET AND THUS TO THE REPUTATION OF HONG KONG AS AN INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE.

THE BILL SEEKS TO CLARIFY THE POWER OF THE STOCK EXCHANGE OF HONG KONG LIMITED TO MAKE LISTING RULES AND TO ENSURE THAT IT ENJOYS STATUTORY IMMUNITY IN CARRYING OUT ITS LISTING FUNCTIONS.

IN DECEMBER 1991, THE SECURITIES AND FUTURES COMMISSION DEVOLVED THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR LISTING MATTERS TO THE EXCHANGE AND THESE FUNCTIONS ARE PERFORMED ON THE BASIS OF LISTING RULES MADE BY THE EXCHANGE UNDER THE STOCK EXCHANGE UNIFICATION ORDINANCE.

THE SECRETARY SAID THE EXISTING SCOPE OF THE RELEVANT PROVISION IN THE ORDINANCE WAS NARROW.

AS A RESULT, MR CARTLAND SAID, IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER THE EXCHANGE HAS THE STATUTORY POWER TO PROMULGATE CERTAIN PROVISIONS WHICH MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE LISTING RULES.

ANOTHER ISSUE WITH THE EXISTING PROVISION IS THE UNCERTAINTY AS TO THE IMMUNITY ENJOYED BY THE EXCHANGE IN CARRYING OUT LISTING FUNCTIONS.

"IN ORDER TO REMOVE ANY DOUBT ON THESE QUESTIONS, IT HAS BECOME NECESSARY TO CLARIFY THE POWER FOR THE EXCHANGE TO MAKE EFFECTIVE LISTING RULES AND TO PROVIDE A CLEAR STATUTORY IMMUNITY TO THE EXCHANGE WITH REGARD TO LISTING MATTERS," HE SAID.

ON THE QUESTION OF IMMUNITY, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE EXCHANGE SHOULD BE ABLE TO ACT FIRMLY AND WITHOUT THE FEAR OF LIABILITY IN RELATION TO LISTING MATTERS, MR CARTLAND SAID.

"ANY UNCERTAINTY IN THIS REGARD WILL HINDER ITS ABILITY EFFECTIVELY TO PERFORM THESE FUNCTIONS," HE SAID.

IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THREATS OF LEGAL ACTION AGAINST THE EXCHANGE AND ITS LISTING COMMITTEE HAVE BEEN USED IN ATTEMPTS TO MANIPULATE THE LISTING PROCESS.

HE SAID THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE MATTER WAS REFLECTED BY INSTANCES OF COMPANIES THREATENING TO SUE THE EXCHANGE IF TRADING OF THEIR SHARES WERE TO BE SUSPENDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

MORE EFFECTIVE BANK SUPERVISION PROPOSED

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A BILL THAT SEEKS TO FURTHER ENHANCE BANKING SUPERVISORY STANDARDS IN HONG KONG AND TO CLARIFY CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE BANKING ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BANKING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993, THE SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, MR MICHAEL CARTLAND, SAID THE BILL ALSO AIMED TO FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITAL MARKETS.

LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS ARE INTRODUCED TO ENABLE THE HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY (HKMA) TO ESTABLISH A CENTRAL CUSTODY SYSTEM FOR DEBT INSTRUMENTS IN PAPERLESS FORM.

FOLLOWING THE COLLAPSE OF THE BCCI GROUP WORLDWIDE, THE BASLE COMMITTEE OF BANKING SUPERVISORS ESTABLISHED STANDARDS FOR THE SUPERVISION OF INTERNATIONAL BANKING GROUPS AND THEIR CROSS-BORDER ESTABLISHMENTS IN JULY 1991.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE NEW STANDARDS IS TO SEEK WORLDWIDE SUPERVISORY CO-OPERATION TO ENSURE THAT NO BANK CAN OPERATE INTERNATIONALLY WITHOUT BEING SUBJECT TO EFFECTIVE CONSOLIDATED SUPERVISION.

ALTHOUGH HONG KONG'S FRAMEWORK OF CONSOLIDATED SUPERVISION LARGELY CONFORMS WITH THE MINIMUM STANDARDS, THE EXISTING PROVISIONS GOVERNING PRIOR APPROVAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF OVERSEAS BANKING ENTITIES BY LOCALLY INCORPORATED AUTHORISED INSTITUTIONS FALL SHORT OF THE STANDARDS, MR CARTLAND SAID.

THE BILL PROPOSES THAT A LOCALLY INCORPORATED INSTITUTION, OR ITS LOCALLY INCORPORATED HOLDING COMPANY, BE REQUIRED TO SEEK THE HKMA'S PRIOR APPROVAL BEFORE ESTABLISHING A BANKING SUBSIDIARY OVERSEAS.

AS REGARDS THE PLAN FOR ESTABLISHING A CENTRAL CUSTODY SYSTEM TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF A CENTRAL CUSTODIAN AND CLEARING AGENT FOR DEBT INSTRUMENTS, THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS WILL GIVE RECOGNITION TO THE RIGHTS AND INTERESTS IN SPECIFIED DEBT INSTRUMENTS IN PAPERLESS FORM.

UNDER THE PROPOSED SYSTEM, A PRIVATE SECTOR ISSUER OF DEBT INSTRUMENTS SUCH AS CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSITS, COMMERCIAL PAPERS OR FLOATING RATE NOTES WILL ISSUE ONE GLOBAL INSTRUMENT WHICH WILL BE HELD AS BEARER BY THE HKMA.

THE HKMA WILL, ON BEHALF OF ACCEPTABLE DEALERS, RECORD ON A COMPUTER SYSTEM INTERESTS IN THOSE GLOBAL INSTRUMENTS AND FACILITATE THE TRANSFER OF SUCH INTERESTS. THIS WOULD HELP SPEED UP THE SETTLEMENT PROCESS AND REDUCE SETTLEMENT RISK.

THE BILL ALSO INTRODUCES A REQUIREMENT THAT LOCALLY INCORPORATED INSTITUTIONS PUBLISH THEIR AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS IN NEWSPAPERS WITHIN FOUR MONTHS OF THEIR FINANCIAL YEAR END, INSTEAD OF SIX MONTHS.

MR CARTLAND SAID A SHORTER TIME FRAME WOULD GIVE MORE TIMELY INFORMATION TO DEPOSITORS, THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND THE REGULATORS.

FURTHERMORE, IT WILL HELP THE AUDITORS TO CO-ORDINATE THEIR AUDIT WORK ON AUTHORISED INSTITUTIONS WITH THE REPORTS WHICH THEY SUBMIT TO THE HKMA UNDER THE ORDINANCE.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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PRELIMINARY INSPECTIONS ON COMPANIES

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A BILL AIMING AT FACILITATING THE INVOCATION OF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S POWER UNDER THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE TO CONDUCT PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS ON COMPANIES WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 4) BILL 1993, THE SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, MR MICHAEL CARTLAND, SAID PRELIMINARY INSPECTION REPRESENTED A DISCREET AND LESS COSTLY WAY TO ASSESS WHETHER A FULL-SCALE INVESTIGATION WAS WARRANTED.

"SUCH ENQUIRIES CAN AVOID THE POTENTIAL DISRUPTION TO A COMPANY THAT MIGHT BE CAUSED BY A FULL-SCALE INVESTIGATION," HE SAID.

AT PRESENT, IF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S ATTENTION IS DRAWN TO A SITUATION SUGGESTING FRAUD, MISFEASANCE OR OTHER MISCONDUCT IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE AFFAIRS OF A COMPANY, HE MAY INVOKE SECTION 152A OF THE ORDINANCE TO AUTHORISE A PUBLIC OFFICER TO REQUIRE THE COMPANY CONCERNED TO PRODUCE ITS BOOKS OR PAPERS AND TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THEM.

AN ALTERNATIVE OR SUBSEQUENT MEASURE WOULD BE TO INITIATE A FULL-SCALE INVESTIGATION UNDER SECTION 143 OF THE ORDINANCE.

MR CARTLAND POINTED OUT THAT SECTION 152A HAD NEVER BEEN INVOKED.

"ONE OF THE PROBLEMS WITH THE EXISTING PROVISION IS THAT THE ORDINANCE REQUIRES A PUBLIC OFFICER TO BE AUTHORISED FOR THIS PURPOSE, WHILE THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT HAVE STAFF WITH EITHER THE TIME OR THE RELEVANT SKILL FOR THIS TYPE OF WORK," HE SAID.

MOREOVER, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY CAN ONLY AUTHORISE A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION IF HE REACHES THE SAME STATE OF MIND AS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO INITIATE A FULL-SCALE INVESTIGATION.

AS A RESULT, THE PROVISION FOR PRELIMINARY INSPECTIONS HAS IN EFFECT BEEN RENDERED REDUNDANT.

THE BILL SEEKS TO LOWER THE THRESHOLD FOR INVOKING THE POWER TO AUTHORISE PRELIMINARY INSPECTIONS AND TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT THAT ONLY A PUBLIC OFFICER CAN BE APPOINTED AS AN INSPECTOR.

MR CARTLAND SAID THIS SHOULD NOT ONLY MAKE THIS USEFUL PROVISION OPERATIONAL BUT WILL ALSO BRING HONG KONG PRACTICE GENERALLY INTO LINE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SIMILAR LEGISLATION ELSEWHERE.

THE BILL ALSO PROPOSES TO ALLOW GREATER FLEXIBILITY FOR AN INSPECTOR APPOINTED FOR A FULL-SCALE INVESTIGATION TO DELEGATE HIS POWER.

"THIS SHOULD HELP TO SPEED UP THE PROGRESS OF INVESTIGATIONS AND TO CONTAIN COSTS," HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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SECURITIES LEVY TO BE ORDERLY SUSPENDED

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THE INTRODUCTION OF THE EXCHANGES (SPECIAL LEVY) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993 TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) REPRESENTS THE FINAL STEP TOWARDS CLEARING UP THE LAST OUTSTANDING ISSUE LEFT OVER FROM THE 1987 STOCK MARKET CRASH.

THE COMMENT WAS MADE BY THE SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, MR MICHAEL CARTLAND, WHEN HE MOVED THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL.

THE BILL AIMS AT AMENDING THE LAW FOR AN ORDERLY WINDING DOWN OF THE SPECIAL LEVY ON SECURITIES TRANSACTIONS AS WELL AS STOCK INDEX FUTURES AND OPTIONS CONTRACTS FOR REPAYING PART OF A LIFEBOAT LOAN.

THE LOAN WAS RAISED AFTER THE MARKET CRASH TO ENABLE THE HONG KONG FUTURES GUARANTEE CORPORATION TO MEET ITS OBLIGATIONS. ANOTHER SOURCE OF REPAYMENT IS RECOVERIES FROM DEFAULTERS.

WITH THE HIGH TURNOVER OF THE STOCK MARKET CONTINUING SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR, IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THE PORTION OF THE LOAN TO BE RECOVERED FROM THE SPECIAL LEVY COULD BE FULLY REPAID BY AS EARLY AS AUGUST THIS YEAR, AFTER PROVISIONS HAVE BEEN MADE TO MEET INTEREST AND OTHER COSTS.

"NOW IS THEREFORE THE APPROPRIATE TIME TO PROCEED TO SUSPEND THE SPECIAL LEVY, OTHERWISE A BIG SURPLUS IN THE ORDER OF \$100 MILLION TO \$200 MILLION COULD BE CREATED IN THE SPECIAL LEVY FUND BY THE END OF THE YEAR," MR CARTLAND SAID.

THE AMENDMENTS WILL ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT TO SUSPEND THE LEVY WHEN THE REMAINING BALANCE OF THE LIFEBOAT LOAN APPROXIMATES THE REMAINING OBLIGATION OF THE DEFAULTERS.

HE SAID UPON FINAL REPAYMENT OF THE LOAN BY DEFAULTERS, WHICH WAS EXPECTED TO BE EFFECTED BY 1996, THE SPECIAL LEVY WOULD BE FORMALLY ABOLISHED.

HOWEVER, IN THE MEANTIME, THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL MAY RE-INTRODUCE THE SPECIAL LEVY AFTER ITS SUSPENSION SHOULD CIRCUMSTANCES DEMAND IT, HE ADDED.

ON THE WAY TO HANDLE ANY CREDIT BALANCE IN THE SPECIAL LEVY FUND, THE BILL SEEKS TO EMPOWER THE SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES TO DIRECT THE TRANSFER OF ANY SUCH SURPLUS INTO THE COMPENSATION FUNDS ESTABLISHED UNDER THE SECURITIES ORDINANCE OR THE COMMODITIES TRADING ORDINANCE, OR FOR OTHER PURPOSES IN THE INTERESTS OF THE INVESTING PUBLIC.

"IMPROVEMENT TO INVESTOR PROTECTION IS CONSIDERED TO BE THE MOST PROPER USE OF ANY SUCH BALANCE," MR CARTLAND SAID.

THE LIFEBOAT LOAN ORIGINALLY AMOUNTED TO \$1.93 BILLION, OF WHICH \$1 BILLION WAS RAISED FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND THE REMAINING FROM SEVEN SHAREHOLDERS OF THE HONG KONG FUTURES GUARANTEE CORPORATION AND 15 BROKER LENDERS.

THE GOVERNMENT PORTION OF THE LOAN HAD BEEN FULLY REPAID BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER 1992. BY THE END OF JUNE THIS YEAR, THE OUTSTANDING AMOUNT OWED TO THE OTHER LENDERS WAS ABOUT \$256 MILLION.

MR CARTLAND SAID THE REFORM MEASURES INTRODUCED AFTER THE MARKET CRASH HAD PROVEN THEIR WORTH IN SUBSEQUENT FLUCTUATIONS OF THE STOCK AND FUTURES MARKETS WHEN TRADING HAD BEEN ORDERLY DESPITE EXCEPTIONAL MARKET VOLATILITY.

"INVESTORS' CONFIDENCE IN OUR REGULATORY FRAMEWORK HAS RETURNED, AS CAN BE DEMONSTRATED BY THE STEADY GROWTH OF THE SECURITIES AND FUTURES MARKETS OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS," HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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#### RIGHT OF PNEUMOCONIOTICS ASSURED

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THE RIGHT OF A PNEUMOCONIOTIC TO CLAIM DAMAGES AT COMMON LAW AND HIS ELIGIBILITY TO RECEIVE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE UNDER THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM WERE ASSURED BY THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR MICHAEL LEUNG, TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS (COMPENSATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR LEUNG SAID THESE TWO ISSUES WERE OF PARTICULAR CONCERN BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL'S BILLS COMMITTEE.

HE AFFIRMED THAT PNEUMOCONIOTICS WHO WERE EITHER RECEIVING COMPENSATION UNDER THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS (COMPENSATION) ORDINANCE OR EX-GRATIA PAYMENT UNDER THE EX-GRATIA SCHEME WOULD CONTINUE TO RECEIVE DISABILITY ALLOWANCES UNDER THE SOCIAL SECURITY ALLOWANCE SCHEME IF THEY WERE SO ENTITLED.

ALSO, THEIR ELIGIBILITY TO RECEIVE COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED IF, AS UNDER THE EXISTING CONDITION, THEIR SAVINGS DID NOT EXCEED THE PERMISSIBLE LEVEL.

/AS REGARDS .....

AS REGARDS A PNEUMOCONIOTIC'S RIGHT TO CLAIM DAMAGES AT COMMON LAW, MR LEUNG SAID THIS WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE NORMAL COURT PROCEDURES AND THE PROVISIONS OF THE LIMITATION ORDINANCE.

THE AMENDMENT BILL AIMS TO INTRODUCE A NUMBER OF IMPROVEMENTS TO THE COMPENSATION SCHEME FOR PNEUMOCONIOSIS SUFFERERS DIAGNOSED ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 1981.

ON THE SUGGESTION OF THE BILLS COMMITTEE, MR LEUNG MOVED A NUMBER OF COMMITTEE STAGE AMENDMENTS. THESE INCLUDE:

- \* THE BILL WILL COME INTO IMMEDIATE EFFECT UPON ENACTMENT BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL;
- \* THE NEW RATE OF LEVY, DUE TO BE INCREASED FROM 0.02 PER CENT TO 0.3 PER CENT LATER THIS YEAR, WILL NOT APPLY TO THOSE CONSTRUCTION WORKS THE TENDER FOR WHICH HAS BEEN SUBMITTED BEFORE THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE NEW RATE; AND
- \* REPLACE "MECHANICAL WHEELCHAIR" IN THE AMENDMENT BILL BY "WHEELCHAIR" TO GIVE MORE FLEXIBILITY TO THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS MEDICAL BOARD IN DETERMINING THE TYPE OF WHEELCHAIR THAT SUITS THE USER;

AS FOR THE PROPOSAL TO GIVE FUNERAL EXPENSES TO PNEUMOCONIOTICS IRRESPECTIVE OF THE REASON OF DEATH, MR LEUNG SAID HE COULD NOT ACCEPT THIS AS IT WAS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT PRINCIPLE OF PROVIDING COMPENSATION TO WORKERS WHO DIED OR WERE INJURED AS A RESULT OF AN INCIDENT OR AN OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE RELATING TO THEIR EMPLOYMENT.

"THIS PRINCIPLE IS APPLIED UNDER THE EXISTING COMPENSATION ORDINANCE AS WELL AS THE EMPLOYEES COMPENSATION ORDINANCE," HE EXPLAINED.

"HOWEVER, THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS MEDICAL BOARD HAS A TRACK RECORD OF MAINTAINING A SYMPATHETIC AND FLEXIBLE APPROACH AND THERE HAS BEEN NO COMPLAINTS SO FAR FROM FUNERAL EXPENSES ON THESE CASES."

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LAND DRAINAGE BILL INTRODUCED INTO LEGCO

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A BILL THAT PROPOSES IMPROVEMENT IN THE GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO UNDERTAKE DRAINAGE MAINTENANCE WORK TO HELP PREVENT FLOODING WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE LAND DRAINAGE BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, SAID THE BILL WOULD EMPOWER THE GOVERNMENT TO GAIN ACCESS TO PRIVATE LAND TO CARRY OUT NECESSARY DRAINAGE WORK AND TO REQUIRE THE REMOVAL OF OBSTRUCTIONS OR STRUCTURES FROM MAIN WATERCOURSES.

/THE BILL .....

THE BILL PROVIDES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW DRAINAGE AUTHORITY, WHICH WILL BE THE DIRECTOR OF DRAINAGE SERVICES, AND A DRAINAGE APPEAL BOARD (DAB).

THE AUTHORITY MAY PREPARE DRAFT DRAINAGE PLANS FOR THE DESIGNATION OF MAIN WATERCOURSES ON WHICH DRAINAGE WORK MAY BE CARRIED OUT.

IT IS INTENDED THAT FIVE DRAINAGE PLANS, COVERING ALMOST ALL THE FLOOD-PRONE REGIONS OF THE NORTH AND NORTH-WESTERN NEW TERRITORIES, WILL BE PREPARED OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

THE MAIN FUNCTIONS OF THE DAB, WHICH WILL COMPRISE NON-GOVERNMENT MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR, WILL BE TO REVIEW THE AUTHORITY'S DECISIONS ON OBJECTIONS TO DRAFT PLANS AND TO HEAR APPEALS UNDER THE BILL.

APART FROM PROVIDING APPEAL PROCEDURES, PROVISION HAS ALSO BEEN MADE UNDER THE BILL FOR PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION IF DAMAGE IS CAUSED BY THE AUTHORITY WHEN EXECUTING THE WORKS.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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RESOLUTIONS ON CMB AND CITYBUS FRANCHISE PASSED

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) PASSED TWO RESOLUTIONS THAT SOUGHT TO DISAPPLY TO THE NEW FRANCHISE FOR CHINA MOTOR BUS COMPANY (CMB) AND CITYBUS LIMITED THOSE SECTIONS OF THE PUBLIC BUS SERVICES ORDINANCE GOVERNING THE PERMITTED RETURN UNDER THE PROFIT CONTROL SCHEME.

MOVING THE RESOLUTIONS, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR K Y YEUNG, SAID THOSE SECTIONS OF THE ORDINANCE WHICH ENABLED THE GOVERNMENT TO SPECIFY DEPRECIATION RATES IN RESPECT OF FRANCHISE-RELATED ASSETS AND TO REQUIRE THE COMPANIES TO PRODUCE ACCOUNTS AND OTHER INFORMATION NEEDED FOR THE MONITORING OF THEIR PERFORMANCE WERE RETAINED.

IN ADDITION, IN THE CASE OF CMB, THOSE SECTIONS WHICH ENABLED THE GOVERNMENT TO PRESCRIBE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DISPOSAL OF ANY BALANCE THAT MAY REMAIN IN CMB'S DEVELOPMENT FUND ACCOUNT ON AUGUST 31 THIS YEAR WERE ALSO RETAINED.

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 1993

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LEGCO PASSES MOTION ON SERVICE INDUSTRY

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TONIGHT (WEDNESDAY) PASSED A MOTION PROPOSED BY DR THE HON HUANG CHEN-YA ON THE POLICY ON SERVICE INDUSTRY AFTER A DEBATE THAT LASTED ONE AND A HALF HOURS.

TWELVE MEMBERS SPOKE IN THE DEBATE. THE SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, MR MICHAEL CARTLAND, REPLIED FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

ANOTHER MOTION MOVED BY THE HON LAU WAH-SUM ON RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STUDY WAS ALSO PASSED AFTER A TWO-HOUR DEBATE.

A TOTAL OF 17 MEMBERS SPOKE IN THE DEBATE. THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR K Y YEUNG, SPOKE ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT.

ALSO PASSED WERE TWO RESOLUTIONS MADE UNDER THE PUBLIC BUS SERVICES ORDINANCE AS WELL AS SEVEN MOTIONS UNDER THE INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES ORDINANCE.

THE COUNCIL PASSED SIX BILLS. OF THEM, BANK NOTES ISSUE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993 AND EXCHANGE FUND (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993 WERE PASSED WITHOUT AMENDMENTS.

THE OTHER FOUR BILLS - PNEUMOCONIOSIS (COMPENSATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993, MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIMITATION OF SHIPOWNERS LIABILITY) BILL, INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 5) BILL 1992 AND INSURANCE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 1992 - WERE PASSED WITH AMENDMENTS.

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