



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 1993

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 1993

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PROPOSALS MUST HAVE SUPPORT OF HK PEOPLE

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WHAT HONG KONG WANTS AND MUST WORK FOR ARE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF ALL ITS PEOPLE, THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, SAID THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER VISITING THE TUEN MUN DISTRICT, THE GOVERNOR SAID THAT MUST BE AN OVERWHELMING OBJECTIVE FOR EVERYONE IF HONG KONG WAS TO SEE THE STABILITY AND PROSPERITY CONTINUE INTO THE INDEFINITE FUTURE.

"IF WE DO NOT HAVE TALKS, THEN WE PROCEED TO SEE OUR PROPOSALS MOVE THROUGH THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. THEY MAY BE AMENDED. THEY MAY NOT," HE SAID.

"IF WE DO HAVE TALKS, I WOULD HOPE THAT THEY WOULD LEAD TO AN ACCEPTABLE CONCLUSION FOR BRITAIN, CHINA AND HONG KONG."

WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE COMMENTS THAT LEGCO DECISION HAD TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH BRITISH INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS, THE GOVERNOR SAID:

"I REPEAT WHAT I SAID LAST WEEK THAT IF WE WERE TO HAVE TALKS WITH CHINA, WHICH I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE AND WHICH WE HAVE SAID WE WOULD HAVE WITHOUT ANY PRECONDITIONS, AND IF THOSE TALKS WERE TO PRODUCE A SATISFACTORY SETTLEMENT WHICH I COULD RECOMMEND TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, I DON'T IMAGINE THAT I WOULD BE IN A POSITION IN WHICH I WAS RECOMMENDING SOMETHING THAT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WOULD NOT FIND ACCEPTABLE."

IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT REPRESENTATION OF HONG KONG IN TALKS, THE GOVERNOR SAID THERE WERE OFFICIALS OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WHO WERE FULL-TIME MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH TEAM IN THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP AND HAD MADE A CONSIDERABLE CONTRIBUTION TO THE BRITISH TEAM.

"NO ONE COULD POSSIBLY WANT TO TRY TO CUT HONG KONG OUT OF ANY CONSIDERATIONS IN DISCUSSIONS WHICH WE ALL ACCEPT ARE BETWEEN SOVEREIGN POWERS, BETWEEN THE SOVEREIGN POWER OF BRITAIN AND THE SOVEREIGN POWER OF CHINA," HE SAID.

ON SOME OF THE PROBLEMS THAT ARE OF CONCERN TO THE TUEN MUN PEOPLE, MR PATTEN SAID: "PEOPLE ARE EXTREMELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT LINKS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES. THEY'RE WORRIED ABOUT THE IMPACT OF TRAFFIC CONGESTION ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

"THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY WAS ADDRESSING THAT PROBLEM IN SOME OF THE ANNOUNCEMENTS THAT HE MADE IN HIS BUDGET LAST WEEK, FOR EXAMPLE, ON ROUTE THREE AND ON THE TUEN MUN HIGHWAY.

"BUT, WE'VE OBVIOUSLY BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO THE COMMENTS BY THE DISTRICT BOARD AND BY THE COMMUNITY ON THE RAILWAY STRATEGY DOCUMENT WHEN IT IS PUBLISHED SHORTLY."

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ON THE PROPOSAL FOR A TEMPORARY CONTAINER TERMINAL IN AREA 16, THE GOVERNOR SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE LOOKING AT THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRAFFIC IMPACT OF THAT PROPOSAL, TAKING FULL ACCOUNT OF THE ARGUMENTS AND CONCERNS EXPRESSED BEFORE COMING TO ANY DECISION.

"THERE IS NO FINAL DECISION BUT WE'LL WANT TO HAVE A THOROUGH LOOK AT WHAT LOCAL RESIDENTS HAVE BEEN SAYING TO US," HE SAID.

COMMENTING ON THE RECENT SPATE OF SEXUAL CRIMES IN TUEN MUN, THE GOVERNOR SAID HONG KONG HAD A FAR LOWER LEVEL OF CRIMES AND VIOLENT CRIMES THAN THOSE OF OTHER COMMUNITIES IN THE WORLD.

"BUT, ANY LEVEL OF CRIME IS UNACCEPTABLE. I UNDERSTAND THE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY LOCAL WOMEN, BY LOCAL MOTHERS AND WILL BE TALKING TO THE POLICE ABOUT WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN TRY TO TACKLE THIS RASH OF SEXUAL CRIMES WHICH HAVE CAUSED SO MUCH WORRY LOCALLY," HE SAID.

"THE BEST WAY OF DEALING WITH CRIMES LIKE THESE IS BY CATCHING THOSE RESPONSIBLE AND THE BEST WAY OF CATCHING THOSE RESPONSIBLE IS BY SUPPORTING OUR EXCELLENT POLICE AND BY SEEING THAT THERE ARE MORE POLICE ACTUALLY ON THE STREET."

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GOVT RESPONSE TO CRITICISMS ON HANDLING
OF HKUST PROJECT

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IN RESPONSE TO PRESS ENQUIRIES, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WAS GRATEFUL TO THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (PAC) FOR THEIR REPORT ON THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (HKUST) PROJECT AND WOULD BE RESPONDING IN DETAIL IN THE GOVERNMENT MINUTE TO BE TABLED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

"THE ADMINISTRATION ACCEPTED THE PAC RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING TIGHTER FINANCIAL CONTROL ON JOINT FUNDING PROJECTS," THE SPOKESMAN SAID, "ALTHOUGH IT DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE INCREASE IN ESTIMATE IN THE CASE OF THE HKUST PROJECT COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED OR SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED, BEARING IN MIND THAT -

- * THE ORIGINAL ESTIMATE WAS NO MORE THAN A PRELIMINARY ROUGH ORDER OR COST, DRAWN UP IN THE ABSENCE OF A DETAILED DESIGN AND THE NECESSARY ACADEMIC INPUT; AND
- * COST ESCALATION WAS PARTICULARLY HIGH DURING THE CONSTRUCTION PERIOD."

WHEN ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE SELECTION OF DESIGN, THE SPOKESMAN SAID IT WAS A MATTER FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF HKUST.

"WE OUGHT TO BE FORWARD LOOKING," HE SAID.

"THE FACT THAT THERE ARE LESSONS TO BE LEARNT DOES NOT DETRACT FROM THE GOODWILL, DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT OF ALL THOSE INVOLVED WHICH MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR HONG KONG TO BUILD A MODERN, HIGH-TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY IN LESS THAN FIVE YEARS FROM THE TIME THE FIRST DECISION WAS TAKEN IN MARCH 1986 TO ESTABLISH A THIRD UNIVERSITY."

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION DID NOT ACCEPT ALL THE CRITICISMS BY THE PAC RELATING TO THE HANDLING OF THE HKUST PROJECT.

FOR EXAMPLE, ON THE POINTS RELATING TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S APPROACH TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND THE FINANCE COMMITTEE, THE SPOKESMAN SAID WHILE TWO OPTIONS WERE INITIALLY SUGGESTED FOLLOWING LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS, IT WAS AGREED BY ALL CONCERNED THAT THERE WAS ONLY ONE REALISTIC OPTION, THAT IS, ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB (RHKJC) TO FUND AND BUILD, IF THE PROJECT WAS TO BE COMPLETED IN TIME.

"THE PRESENTATION OF BOTH OPTIONS WOULD NOT HAVE ALTERED THE FINANCIAL INFORMATION INCLUDED IN THE RELEVANT EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMORANDUM," HE NOTED.

"THE VIEWS OF THE ADMINISTRATION ON MEASURES TO FACILITATE FINANCIAL MONITORING AND CONTROL (REFERRED TO IN THE REPORT AS 'CONDITIONS/DIRECTIVES OF EXCO') WERE KNOWN AND ACCEPTED BY ALL PARTIES BEFORE THE EXCO MEMORANDUM ON THE RHKJC DONATION WAS CONSIDERED BY THE COUNCIL IN JUNE 1987.

"AT NO STAGE DID THE ADMINISTRATION COMMIT EXPENDITURE ON THE PROJECT WITHOUT THE NECESSARY PRIOR AUTHORITY OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE."

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GOVERNOR VISITS TUEN MUN

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON TOURED THE SPASTICS ASSOCIATION OF HONG KONG'S SHELTERED WORKSHOP AT ON TING ESTATE DURING HIS VISIT TO TUEN MUN DISTRICT.

ABOUT 100 SPASTICS AND SOME MENTALLY RETARDED PERSONS ARE GIVEN TRAINING IN THE SPECIALLY EQUIPPED WORKSHOP.

THE ESTABLISHMENT WAS OPENED IN 1986. THE TRAINEES IN THE WORKSHOP HAVE INTEGRATED HARMONIOUSLY WITH THE SOME 20,000 RESIDENTS OF ON TING ESTATE.

MR PATTEN THEN WENT TO THE YAN OI TONG COMMUNITY CENTRE TO SEE SOME OF THE FACILITIES INCLUDING VARIOUS SPORTS HALLS AND A NURSERY.

FROM THE CENTRE, MR PATTEN WALKED TO KAI MAN PATH, ONE OF THE DISTRICT'S BUSIEST STREETS, TO HAVE A LOOK AT THE SHOPS.

BEFORE CONCLUDING HIS VISIT, MR PATTEN MET AND DISCUSSED LOCAL AFFAIRS WITH DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS AT A RECEPTION AT THE DRAGON BOAT RESTAURANT AT THE TUEN MUN TOWN HALL.

THE GOVERNOR WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR ALBERT LAM AND THE DISTRICT OFFICER OF TUEN MUN, MR PETER LEUNG.

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\$100 MILLION GRANT TO OLI PROPOSED

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THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT IT PROPOSED TO GRANT \$100 MILLION TO THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE (OLI) FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A GENERAL DEVELOPMENT FUND, SUBJECT TO THE PROVISION OF FUNDS BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

"THE GRANT WILL ENABLE THE INSTITUTE TO INVEST IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND UPDATING OF COURSES, AND (EXCEPTIONALLY) IN MAJOR EQUIPMENT," A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID.

"THE OLI IS CURRENTLY SPENDING ABOUT \$2-3 MILLION A YEAR IN COURSE DEVELOPMENT BUT NO PROVISION IS MADE FOR UPDATING EXISTING COURSES OR TRANSLATING COURSES INTO CHINESE," HE ADDED.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS APPROVED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ON DECEMBER 14, 1988, THE OLI SHOULD BECOME SELF-FINANCING AT LEAST ON ITS RECURRENT ACCOUNT BY 1993/94.

"THIS IS TO ENSURE THAT THE INSTITUTE WOULD RESPOND EFFECTIVELY TO THE NEEDS OF WORKING ADULTS," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"TO ASSIST THE OLI TO ACHIEVE ITS SELF-FINANCING GOAL, THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO MADE A ONE-OFF GRANT OF \$150 MILLION TO IT TO ESTABLISH ITS PERMANENT HEADQUARTERS AT HO MAN TIN," HE ADDED.

AT PRESENT, THE OLI HAS THREE SCHOOLS - ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION, AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY - OFFERING 20 DEGREE PROGRAMMES.

THE FIRST 17 OF THESE PROGRAMMES TO BE FULLY DEVELOPED HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY VALIDATED BY THE HONG KONG COUNCIL FOR ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION.

THE CURRENT STUDENT ENROLMENT STANDS AT ABOUT 15,000 AND THE FIRST BATCH OF 150 STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO GRADUATE IN AUTUMN THIS YEAR.

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ITDC MEETS

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THE INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (ITDC) HELD ITS FIRST MEETING IN 1993 TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE COUNCIL IS THE GOVERNMENT'S PRINCIPAL ADVISER ON INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT.

AFTER THE MEETING, DR RAYMOND CH'IEN, THE FIRST NON-OFFICIAL RECENTLY APPOINTED AS ITDC CHAIRMAN, SAID THE EXCHANGES AMONG ITDC MEMBERS WERE USEFUL AND STIMULATING.

DR CH'IEN SAID: "WE HAD A GOOD DISCUSSION ON THE FUTURE ROLE OF THE ITDC. THIS IS IN FACT A CONTINUATION OF WORK STARTED IN 1992.

"MEMBERS ALSO WELCOMED THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S LATEST PLAN TO INCREASE FUNDS FOR SUPPORTING INDUSTRY. WE SHALL ADVISE THE ADMINISTRATION ON THE WORKING OUT OF THE DETAILS.

"IT IS OUR SINCERE HOPE THAT, AS THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY HAS ENVISAGED, THERE WOULD BE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON THIS INITIATIVE IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS."

OTHER SUBJECTS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING INCLUDED THE SCIENCE PARK STUDY REPORT AND THE PLASTICS STUDY REPORT.

ITDC'S ADVICE WOULD PROVIDE A USEFUL BASIS FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO FURTHER EXAMINE THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THESE REPORTS WITH A VIEW TO DECIDING WHAT FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN AND WHEN.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE ITDC WILL BE HELD IN MAY.

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NEW MEMBERS TO EXCHANGE FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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THE GOVERNOR HAS APPOINTED THREE NEW MEMBERS TO THE EXCHANGE FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

THEY ARE SIR QUO-WEI LEE, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HANG SENG BANK LIMITED, MR ZHOU ZHENXING, GENERAL MANAGER OF THE BANK OF CHINA HONG KONG BRANCH AND MR ANTONY LEUNG KAM-CHUNG, COUNTRY CORPORATE OFFICER, HONG KONG OF CITIBANK N A.

THE APPOINTMENTS WILL RUN FOR TWO YEARS FROM MARCH 15 THIS YEAR.

A NOTICE ANNOUNCING THE APPOINTMENTS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE SHORTLY.

/IN WELCOMING

IN WELCOMING THE NEW APPOINTMENTS, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, MR HAMISH MACLEOD, SAID:

"THE EXPANSION IN MEMBERSHIP IS A REFLECTION OF THE INCREASED RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COMMITTEE WHICH WILL ARISE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY."

THE AUTHORITY WILL BE ACCOUNTABLE TO THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WHO WILL CONTINUE TO BE ADVISED BY THE EXCHANGE FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE CONTROL OF THE EXCHANGE FUND.

BUT REINFORCING A TREND OVER RECENT YEARS, THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE IN MONETARY AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT MATTERS WILL BECOME MUCH CLOSER AND THE COMMITTEE WILL FUNCTION VERY MUCH LIKE A MANAGEMENT BOARD, INCLUDING ADVISING THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY ON THE ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE MONETARY AUTHORITY.

"THE THREE NEW APPOINTEES, WHO ARE ALL DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE FINANCIAL SECTOR, WILL BRING A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE TO THE COMMITTEE'S DELIBERATIONS," MR MACLEOD SAID.

FOLLOWING THE EXPANSION IN MEMBERSHIP, THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE WILL BE:-

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (CHAIRMAN)

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (DESIGNATE), HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY

MR MARVIN CHEUNG KIN-TUNG

PROFESSOR C A E GOODHART

SIR QUO-WEI LEE

MR ANTONY LEUNG KAM-CHUNG

MR DAVID LI KWOK-PO

MR A W NICOLLE

SIR WILLIAM PURVES

MR ZHOU ZHENXING

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TWO SITES TO LET
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THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT IS INVITING TENDERS FOR THE SHORT-TERM TENANCY OF TWO PIECES OF GOVERNMENT LAND.

THE FIRST LOT, LOCATED AT THE JUNCTION OF CHEUNG WING ROAD AND YAU MA HOM ROAD, TSUEN WAN, NEW TERRITORIES, HAS AN AREA OF ABOUT 4,950 SQUARE METRES.

IT IS INTENDED FOR USE AS A FEE-PAYING PUBLIC CAR PARK FOR VEHICLES, INCLUDING GOODS VEHICLES AND CONTAINER TRACTORS AND TRAILERS.

THE TENANCY IS FOR THREE YEARS AND RENEWABLE QUARTERLY AFTERWARDS.

THE SECOND LOT, WITH AN AREA OF ABOUT 17,000 SQUARE METRES, IS OPPOSITE WAI YIP STREET, CHA KWO LING, KOWLOON.

IT IS INTENDED FOR OPEN STORAGE OF NON-DANGEROUS GOODS (EXCLUDING STORAGE OF CONTAINERS) AND/OR PARKING OF VEHICLES OWNED BY THE TENANT.

THE TENANCY IS FOR ONE YEAR AND RENEWABLE QUARTERLY AFTERWARDS.

CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF TENDERS IS NOON ON MARCH 26.

TENDER FORMS, TENDER NOTICE AND CONDITIONS AS WELL AS TENDER PLAN ARE AVAILABLE AT:

- * THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, 10TH FLOOR, TSUEN WAN STATION MULTI-STOREY CARPARK BUILDING, 174-208 CASTLE PEAK ROAD, TSUEN WAN, NEW TERRITORIES;
- * THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES IN KOWLOON, 10TH FLOOR, YAU MA TEI CAR PARK BUILDING, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, AND
- * THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG.

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37 SECONDARY SCHOOLS JOIN EXHIBITION

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THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS), MR HO CHE-LEUNG, WILL OPEN AN EXHIBITION ON "SCHOOL LIBRARY SUPPORT FOR CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN SCHOOLS" TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AT THE HONG KONG TEACHERS' CENTRE IN NORTH POINT.

THE THREE-DAY EXHIBITION IS AIMED AT PROMOTING THE USE OF LIBRARY RESOURCES, ENCOURAGING CO-OPERATION BETWEEN SUBJECT TEACHERS AND TEACHER LIBRARIANS AND INTRODUCING VARIOUS SUBJECT-RELATED LIBRARY ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE INTEREST IN LEARNING AMONG STUDENTS.

THIRTY-SEVEN SECONOFARY SCHOOLS WILL TAKE PART IN THE EXHIBITION WHICH IS ORGANISED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S LIBRARY SECTION, ADVISORY INSPECTORATE, AND THE HONG KONG TEACHER-LIBRARIANS' ASSOCIATION.

PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS ARE WELCOME TO VISIT THE EXHIBITION WHICH WILL BE OPEN FROM 11 AM TO 5 PM TOMORROW (THURSDAY), FROM 9 AM TO 5 PM ON FRIDAY AND FROM 9 AM TO NOON ON SATURDAY (MARCH 13).

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ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE EXHIBITION WHICH WILL BEGIN AT 10 AM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AT THE HONG KONG TEACHERS' CENTRE, 4 PAK FUK ROAD, NORTH POINT.

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SALT WATER CUTS IN KOWLOON EAST

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SALT WATER SUPPLY TO SOME PREMISES IN KOWLOON CITY WILL BE CUT FROM 9.30 AM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO 9.30 AM THE FOLLOWING DAY TO FACILITATE CONNECTION WORK ON WATER MAINS.

THE SUSPENSION WILL AFFECT ALL THE PREMISES BOUNDED BY PRINCE EDWARD ROAD WEST, ARGYLE STREET AND WATERLOO ROAD.

IN ADDITION, OWING TO PUMPING STATION MAINTENANCE WORK, SALT WATER SUPPLY TO MOST PREMISES IN KOWLOON EAST WILL GO OFF FROM 10 AM ON SATURDAY (MARCH 13) TO 8 AM THE FOLLOWING DAY.

THE AFFECTED AREAS INCLUDE HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, KOWLOON HOSPITAL AND ALL THE PREMISES IN HUNG HOM, TO KWA WAN, TUNG TAU, WONG TAI SIN, LOK FU, KOWLOON CITY, WANG TAU HOM, CHUK YUEN, KOWLOON TONG, MA TAU WEI AND MA TAU KOK.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION -----
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,720
REVERSAL OF LAF	+430
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	2,150
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	NIL
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	2,150

LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER TWI 114.1 *+0.1* 10.3.1993

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS			HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS			
TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.15 PCT	14 MONTHS	2405	5.50	102.45	3.41
1 MONTH	2.54 PCT	17 MONTHS	2408	5.50	101.31	3.46
3 MONTHS	2.84 PCT	20 MONTHS	2411	4.375	101.69	3.61
6 MONTHS	3.03 PCT	23 MONTHS	2502	4.625	101.77	3.83
12 MONTHS	3.30 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 21,752MN

CLOSED 10 MARCH 1993

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DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

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MOTION DEBATE ON OFFICIALS' POLITICAL APPOINTMENT

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THE FOLLOWING IS THE SPEECH BY THE SECRETARY FOR CIVIL SERVICE, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, WHEN WINDING UP THE MOTION DEBATE ON POLITICAL APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

MR. PRESIDENT,

WITH EVERY RESPECT TO MR. ANDREW WONG, HIS MOTION I'M AFRAID REMINDS ME OF ONE OF THOSE IRISH STORIES, WHICH HAS A FOREIGN TRAVELLER LOST IN THE IRISH COUNTRYSIDE. HE SEES AN IRISHMAN BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD AND ASKS HIM THE WAY TO A PARTICULAR VILLAGE. THE IRISHMAN THINKS FOR A WHILE, SCRATCHES HIS HEAD AND SAYS TO THE TRAVELLER "IF I WERE YOU I WOULDN'T START FROM HERE". MR. WONG SEEMS TO WANT US TO START FROM SOMEWHERE ELSE. HE IGNORES OUR PRESENT WHEREABOUTS.

I NOTED THAT A NUMBER OF MEMBERS REJECTING HIS PROPOSALS DID SO AT LEAST IN PART ON THE GROUNDS THAT THERE'S NOTHING VERY MUCH WRONG WITH OUR PRESENT SYSTEM. THEY MIGHT HAVE QUOTED THE CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PHILOSOPHER "IF IT AIN'T BROKE, DON'T FIX IT!"

WHAT SORT OF SYSTEM DO WE HAVE THEN? WE HAVE IN HONG KONG EXECUTIVE-LED GOVERNMENT, ESTABLISHED THROUGH CONSTITUTION AND PRACTICE, WITH OUR MOST SENIOR OFFICIALS COMING FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE, ALMOST INVARIABLY HAVING BEEN PROMOTED THROUGH THE RANKS, WITH ALL THE ACCUMULATED KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE THAT IMPLIES. AT THE TOP WE HAVE POLICY SECRETARIES, RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FORMULATION OF POLICY PROPOSALS. THESE PROPOSALS ARE THEN SUBMITTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR FORMAL POLICY CONSIDERATION. IF ADOPTED, AND IF THEY INVOLVE REQUESTS FOR FUNDS OR LEGISLATION, THE PROPOSALS THEN COME TO THIS COUNCIL.

POLICY SECRETARIES ALSO APPEAR BEFORE THIS COUNCIL TO ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS, AND APPEAR BEFORE THE COUNCIL'S MANY PANELS AND COMMITTEES TO EXPLAIN AND DEFEND GOVERNMENT POLICIES. TOGETHER, THIS ADDS UP TO A SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY, WHICH ENSURES THAT THERE IS VERY LITTLE THAT THE EXECUTIVE DOES WHICH IS NOT SUBJECT TO THE CAREFUL SCRUTINY OF THE LEGISLATURE - AS IT SHOULD BE. THIS IS A WELL-ESTABLISHED, TRIED AND PROVEN SYSTEM AND ALTHOUGH I NOTED MISS EMILY LAU REFERRING TO AS AN ODD SYSTEM WHICH IS NOT FOUND ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD. IT IS A SYSTEM WHICH WORKS, AND WHICH WILL, AS A RESULT, BE LARGELY PRESERVED IN THE BASIC LAW. MUCH OF THE THRUST OF THE JOINT DECLARATION AND THE BASIC LAW IS AN ATTEMPT TO MAINTAIN THOSE SYSTEMS WHICH HAVE SERVED HONG KONG SO WELL. AND I FOR ONE SEE COMFORT IN THIS PROMISED CONTINUITY.

I HAVE EXPRESSED THE VIEW PREVIOUSLY IN THIS COUNCIL, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT AT A TIME WHEN ALL IS CHANGE, AND I MAY SAY, PERHAPS ESPECIALLY GIVEN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARTY POLITICS REFERRED TO AGAIN BY MISS EMILY LAU WHEN ALL IS CHANGED, THE COMMUNITY IS ENTITLED TO LOOK TO THE CIVIL SERVICE FOR CONTINUITY AND STABILITY. AND SO IN THE BASIC LAW, THE SECTION DEALING WITH THE PUBLIC SERVICE CLEARLY PROVIDES THAT HONG KONG'S EXISTING SYSTEM WILL REMAIN BASICALLY UNCHANGED. ARTICLE LOL ENVISAGES THE PRINCIPAL OFFICIAL POSTS FORMING THE MAINSTAY OF AN EXECUTIVE-LED GOVERNMENT, ACCOUNTABLE TO THE LEGISLATURE (ARTICLE 64) - VERY MUCH THE SYSTEM WE ENJOY AT PRESENT.

UNDER OUR PRESENT SYSTEM - AND I SEE NO REASON WHY WE SHOULD LOOK FOR CHANGE - THE CHIEF SECRETARY, FINANCIAL SECRETARY AND ATTORNEY GENERAL POSTS ARE THE PINNACLE OF BOTH THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE CIVIL SERVICE. APPOINTMENT TO THESE POSTS HAS NORMALLY BEEN BY WAY OF PROMOTION FROM THE LEVEL BELOW, ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE OCCASIONALLY BEEN DIRECT APPOINTMENTS FROM OUTSIDE THE CIVIL SERVICE OR TRANSFERS PREVIOUSLY FROM OTHER BRITISH TERRITORIES. WHATEVER THE METHOD OF APPOINTMENT, THESE POSTS ARE QUITE CLEARLY PART OF THE CIVIL SERVICE AND ARE NOT "POLITICAL" APPOINTMENTS. BRANCH SECRETARIES ARE NORMALLY PROMOTION POSTS FROM WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE, ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN APPOINTMENTS FROM OTHER GRADES AND, VERY EXCEPTIONALLY, FROM OUTSIDE THE CIVIL SERVICE.

THE VAST MAJORITY OF THESE SENIOR OFFICIALS ARE THEREFORE CAREER OFFICERS WHO HAVE RISEN TO THEIR PRESENT POSITIONS BY DINT OF MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND PROVEN COMPETENCE AS ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS AND POLICY INITIATORS. IN THE CASE OF THOSE WHO HAVE RISEN THROUGH THE RANKS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE, THEY WILL HAVE EXPERIENCED A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF POSTINGS IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY, AND EARLY EXPOSURE TO PUBLIC ISSUES. THIS IS SURELY ONE OF THE STRENGTHS OF OUR PRESENT SYSTEM - AND LONG MAY IT CONTINUE. I AM GRATEFUL TO MR MCGREGOR AND OTHER MEMBERS FOR THEIR RECOGNITION OF THE CALIBRE, THE STANDARDS, THE LOYALTY AND THE IMPARTIALITY OF CIVIL SERVANTS.

I AGREE WITH MR. WONG THAT THESE POLICY SECRETARIES CANNOT BE, AS HE PUTS IT, "ANONYMOUS AND FACELESS". BUT I SEE NOTHING WRONG WITH THAT. AT THE VERY LEAST THEY HELP TO PUT A HUMAN FACE ON THE BUREAUCRACY. THE PUBLIC HAS COME TO EXPECT THEIR SENIOR OFFICIALS TO BE ABLE TO STAND UP, IN PUBLIC AND IN THIS COUNCIL, TO EXPLAIN AND DEFEND GOVERNMENT POLICIES, ONCE THEY HAVE BEEN ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE; AND THEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO SO WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR, WITHOUT WONDERING WHETHER THEIR ADVOCACY OF A PARTICULAR POLICY WILL AFFECT THEIR CAREER. THIS IS WHAT IS MEANT BY A NEUTRAL, APOLITICAL CIVIL SERVICE. AND I CERTAINLY AGREE WITH MR FRED LI AND OTHER MEMBERS WHO HAVE EMPHASISED THIS POINT THAT CIVIL SERVANTS SHOULD REMAIN NEUTRAL. OF COURSE, "APOLITICAL" DOES NOT MEAN THAT SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS ARE NOT INVOLVED IN AREAS OF POLITICAL CONTROVERSY. MANY OF THE ISSUES WITH WHICH THEY DEAL ARE INDEED POLITICALLY CONTROVERSIAL. BUT "APOLITICAL" MEANS THAT THEY DO NOT ALLOW PERSONAL OR PARTY POLITICAL BELIEFS OR ALLEGIANCES TO INTRUDE INTO THEIR PROPER ROLE AND FUNCTION, WHICH IS, IN AS OBJECTIVE A WAY AS POSSIBLE, TO PUT THE PUBLIC WELFARE ABOVE INDIVIDUAL INCLINATIONS. THERE MAY INDEED BE FUNDAMENTAL MISUNDERSTANDING HERE THAT PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS DEALING WITH POLICY AND POLITICAL ISSUES MEAN THAT THE PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS THEMSELVES ARE ACTING IN A POLITICAL ROLE. THAT IS NOT THE CASE. IT IS THE GOVERNMENT AS A WHOLE THAT TAKES FULL RESPONSIBILITY.

MR ALLEN LEE RAISED SOME VALID QUESTIONS IN AN ATTEMPT TO CLARIFY MR WONG'S IDEAS. ONE MIGHT INDEED ASK WHERE, IN MR. WONG'S STRUCTURE, IS THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY OF HIS PROPOSED POLITICAL APPOINTEES? WHAT WOULD BE THEIR LEGITIMACY? WHAT WOULD BE THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EXECUTIVE AUTHORITIES - THAT IS BOTH THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL AND SENIOR MEMBERS OF WHAT WE CONFUSINGLY CALL THE ADMINISTRATION? WHAT ADVANTAGE WOULD THEY ENJOY OVER THE SENIOR OFFICIALS THEY WOULD BE REPLACING IN TERMS OF GETTING LEGISLATIVE AND FINANCIAL PROPOSALS THROUGH THIS COUNCIL? WITH OUR EXECUTIVE-LED SYSTEM WE DO NOT HAVE, AND ARE NOT LIKELY TO HAVE, THE SORT OF CONVENTIONAL ARRANGEMENT WE SEE ELSEWHERE, WHICH PRODUCES POLITICIANS BACKED BY MAJORITY PARTY SUPPORT TO TAKE UP EXECUTIVE PORTFOLIOS.

MR. PRESIDENT, THE TRANSITION TO 1997 IS ALREADY UPON US. THE ROUTE IS CLEARLY MAPPED OUT IN THE BASIC LAW. THE PRESENT SYSTEM PROVIDES FOR AN EXECUTIVE-LED GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABLE TO THE LEGISLATURE. THE SYSTEM WORKS WELL. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT TURNING SENIOR CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS INTO POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS WOULD IMPROVE THE EXISTING SYSTEM, MAKE IT WORK BETTER, OR IN ANY WAY HELP MAINTAIN STABILITY AND CONTINUITY IN THE MOST SENIOR RANKS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE. INDEED, MEMBERS WILL WISH TO CONSIDER MOST CAREFULLY THE LONGER-TERM IMPLICATIONS OF POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS OF PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS. CONTINUITY IS INDEED AN IMPORTANT THEME. AND MR TAM YIU-CHUNG ASKED THE QUESTION WHETHER WE THE ADMINISTRATION, SENIOR OFFICIALS ARE READY FOR THE TRANSITION. WE ARE, OF COURSE, FULLY AWARE OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE JOINT DECLARATION AND THE BASIC LAW RELATING TO PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS. WE ARE, AS THE GOVERNOR STATED IN HIS ADDRESS LAST OCTOBER, DEVELOPING THE MOMENTUM OF LOCALISATION TO ENSURE THAT A RESERVOIR OF TALENT IS CREATED UPON WHICH WE CAN DRAW TO SELECT QUALIFIED AND SUITABLE LOCAL OFFICERS TO FILL ALL THESE POSTS BEFORE 1997. THIS EXERCISE IS VERY IMPORTANT TO THE STABILITY AND CONTINUITY OF HONG KONG AND WE MUST SEEK TO MAINTAIN MAXIMUM CONTINUITY TO 1997 AND BEYOND.

MR K K FUNG MADE REFERENCES WORRIES ON THE PART OF CIVIL SERVICE. OF COURSE, CIVIL SERVANTS AND INDEED HONG KONG PEOPLE AS A WHOLE HAVE EXPRESSED VARIOUS CONCERNS ABOUT 1997. BUT IT WOULD, I THINK, BE QUITE ERRONEOUS TO ASSUME THAT WE IN THE CIVIL SERVICE AS A RESULT OF THOSE CONCERNS FACE A MASS EXODUS OF SENIOR AND MIDDLE RANKING LOCAL OFFICIALS SIMPLY BECAUSE OF 1997. THE JOINT DECLARATION AND THE BASIC LAW BOTH PROVIDE SPECIFIC GUARANTEES FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ON TERMS NO LESS FAVOURABLE THAN BEFORE AND THESE COVER, INTER ALIA, TERMS OF SERVICE, SALARIES, PENSIONS AND PROMOTION ARRANGEMENTS. IN ADDITION, THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT HAS REPEATEDLY REASSURED CIVIL SERVANTS THAT THEY SHOULD NOT FEAR THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY IN 1997 AND THAT THEY WILL NOT BE PENALISED AFTER THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY.

WHILST I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE MOTION IS INTENDED AS A GENUINE ATTEMPT TO PROTECT THE CIVIL SERVICE FROM POLITICAL WORRIES, I CANNOT HELP FEELING THAT, IF ADOPTED, IT WOULD HAVE THE OPPOSITE EFFECT. THE EXISTING SYSTEM WORKS WELL, AND THE SORT OF FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IMPLICIT IN THE MOTION SEEMS COMPLETELY UNCALLED FOR. FAR FROM REASSURING CIVIL SERVANTS, I SUGGEST THAT THE INTRODUCTION OF POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS AT THE TOP WOULD HAVE A DESTABILISING EFFECT ON THE CIVIL SERVICE AND WOULD MILITATE AGAINST CONTINUITY AT THE SENIOR LEVELS. OUR EXISTING SYSTEM IS WELL TRIED AND TESTED. LET US BUILD ON IT AS PROVIDED IN THE BASIC LAW, NOT IMAGINE THAT WE CAN START OUR JOURNEY FROM SOMEWHERE ELSE.

MOTION DEBATE ON NATIONALITY OF ETHNIC MINORITIES

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THE FOLLOWING IS THE SPEECH BY THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, WHEN WINDING UP THE MOTION DEBATE ON THE REPORT OF THE NATIONALITY SUB-COMMITTEE TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

MR PRESIDENT,

THE ADMINISTRATION IS GRATEFUL TO MISS EMILY LAU AND THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON NATIONALITY FOR THEIR REPORT, AND APPRECIATES THEIR EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF THE ETHNIC MINORITIES. THIS SUBJECT WAS DEBATED IN THIS COUNCIL LAST NOVEMBER. BUT THE SUB-COMMITTEE HAS SUCCEEDED IN CLARIFYING AND FOCUSING THE ISSUE. IT CONCENTRATES, RIGHTLY IN MY VIEW, ON THE ESTIMATED 7,000 HONG KONG PERMANENT RESIDENTS WHO ARE NOT CHINESE, BUT WHO HAVE RIGHT OF ABODE ONLY IN HONG KONG. THE GREAT MAJORITY OF THESE PEOPLE ARE OF INDIAN ORIGIN, HOLDING BDTC OR BN(O) PASSPORTS.

I AGREE WITH THE POINT MADE IN THE REPORT THAT THE BRITISH NATIONALITY SCHEME DOES NOT PROVIDE A SOLUTION WHICH WOULD MEET THE CONCERNS OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE ETHNIC MINORITIES. THEIR POSITION WAS CONSIDERED WHEN THE BRITISH NATIONALITY SCHEME WAS INTRODUCED. AS THE REPORT ACKNOWLEDGES, THE BRITISH NATIONALITY SCHEME IS INTENDED FOR A DIFFERENT PURPOSE AND NOT FOR A SPECIFIC MINORITY GROUP. IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO ACCOMMODATE THE 7,000 MEMBERS OF THE ETHNIC MINORITIES, COMPRISING PERHAPS 2,000 TO 2,500 FAMILIES, WITHIN THE SECOND TRANCHE OF THE BRITISH NATIONALITY SCHEME, WITHOUT GREATLY DISTORTING THE ALLOCATION AND CHANGING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME.

THE ADMINISTRATION HAS PASSED TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT THE VIEWS THEY EXPRESSED ON THIS ISSUE LAST NOVEMBER. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN REPORTING THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE NATIONALITY SUB-COMMITTEE. AND I AM AWARE THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE AND OTHER MEMBERS DISCUSSED THE SUBJECT WITH THE HOME OFFICE MINISTER, MR WARDLE, AT THE HOME OFFICE IN JANUARY THIS YEAR.

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS AGAIN CONSIDERED THE QUESTION OF THE ETHNIC MINORITIES IN HONG KONG, AND HAS ASKED ME TO USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PASS ON MORE FORMALLY THEIR RESPONSE TO THE NOVEMBER DEBATE. FIRST, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS ASKED ME TO STRESS AGAIN THAT THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION OF INCREASING THE SCALE OF THE BRITISH NATIONALITY SCHEME BEYOND THE AGREED TOTAL OF 50,000 PRINCIPAL BENEFICIARIES, IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE THE ETHNIC MINORITIES.

/SECONDLY, THE

SECONDLY, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS CONFIRMED THAT IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO GRANT BRITISH CITIZENSHIP TO THE ETHNIC MINORITIES IN HONG KONG UNDER THE BRITISH NATIONALITY ACT 1981. NEW PRIMARY LEGISLATION WOULD BE NECESSARY IF SPECIAL TREATMENT WERE TO BE ACCORDED TO THIS GROUP. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, IS NOT PERSUADED OF THE CASE FOR FRESH LEGISLATION TO GIVE BRITISH CITIZENSHIP TO THE ETHNIC MINORITIES; IT BELIEVES THAT THIS COMMUNITY'S POSITION IN HONG KONG IS SECURE: NEITHER THEIR CHILDREN OR GRANDCHILDREN WILL BE STATELESS; THEY ARE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR CITIZENSHIP UNDER THE BRITISH NATIONALITY SCHEME, AND SOME HAVE APPLIED AND BEEN SUCCESSFUL; AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT STANDS BY ITS UNDERTAKING TO CONSIDER THEIR CASE FOR ADMISSION TO THE UNITED KINGDOM WITH PARTICULAR SYMPATHY IF, CONTRARY TO EXPECTATIONS, THEY WERE IN FUTURE TO COME UNDER SEVERE PRESSURE TO LEAVE HONG KONG.

THIS IS NOT NEW, BUT I RECOGNISE THAT IT WILL COME AS A DISAPPOINTMENT TO MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL AND TO THE ETHNIC MINORITIES. I WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, WISH TO RAISE EXPECTATIONS OF A MORE FAVOURABLE RESPONSE IN FUTURE.

AS REGARDS THE POSITION OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT ON THIS ISSUE, I SHOULD LIKE TO SPELL THIS OUT WITH REFERENCE TO THE POINTS IN THE REPORT ITSELF.

THE REPORT REFERS TO THE FACT THAT THE ETHNIC MINORITIES ARE DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE HONG KONG COMMUNITY. I ACKNOWLEDGE THIS, AND THEIR WISH TO REMAIN IN HONG KONG WHERE THEY HAVE PROSPERED AND MADE THEIR HOMES. I AM SURE THAT HONG KONG PEOPLE, AS WELL AS THE BRITISH, CHINESE AND HONG KONG GOVERNMENTS, WISH THEM TO STAY IN HONG KONG. THAT IS WHY WE SOUGHT AND OBTAINED THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG FOR THIS MINORITY IN THE JOINT DECLARATION. THIS IS REFLECTED IN THE BASIC LAW.

IT IS NOT CORRECT TO CALL THESE PEOPLE STATELESS. THE CHANGE OF SOVEREIGNTY IN 1997 WILL NOT MAKE THEM STATELESS. ALL THOSE WHO ARE NOW BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORY CITIZENS (BDTCS) WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE BRITISH NATIONALITY EITHER BY REGISTERING AS BRITISH NATIONALS (OVERSEAS) (BNOS) OR AUTOMATICALLY AS BRITISH OVERSEAS CITIZENS (BOCS). IN EITHER CASE, THEY CAN CONTINUE TO HOLD BRITISH PASSPORTS. THEY WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR BRITISH CONSULAR PROTECTION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, INCLUDING IN THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION. THEIR STATUS AS BRITISH NATIONALS WILL BE TRANSMISSABLE TO THEIR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN. TRANSMISSION BY DESCENT WILL NOT GO BEYOND THE SECOND GENERATION. BUT NOR DOES IT FOR ANY EXPATRIATE BRITISH CITIZENS LIVING OUTSIDE THE UNITED KINGDOM.

I AGREE, HOWEVER, WITH MEMBERS THAT ETHNIC MINORITIES ARE IN A SPECIAL POSITION AND I ACKNOWLEDGE THE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION WHICH THE ETHNIC MINORITIES HAVE MADE TO HONG KONG. I ACCEPT THAT MOST MEMBERS OF THE GROUP HAVE EVERY INTENTION OF STAYING IN HONG KONG, AND ARE SIMPLY SEEKING A REASSURANCE WHICH WILL ENABLE THEM TO FACE THEIR FUTURE IN HONG KONG WITH CONFIDENCE.

I RECOGNISE THE STRENGTH OF FEELING OF MANY MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL THAT THE EXISTING ASSURANCES ARE NOT ADEQUATE FOR THIS PURPOSE AND THAT FULL BRITISH CITIZENSHIP SHOULD BE GRANTED. IF THE MOTION TODAY IS PASSED, WE WILL CERTAINLY PUT THE CASE ONCE MORE FORCEFULLY TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON WIFE ABUSE

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THE FOLLOWING IN THE SPEECH BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, WHEN WINDING UP THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON WIFE ABUSE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MADAM DEPUTY,

INTRODUCTION

I AM MOST GRATEFUL FOR THIS ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON WIFE ABUSE, PARTICULARLY IN THIS WEEK WHEN WE CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WOMAN'S DAY AND MORE PARTICULARLY WHEN THE DEBATE IS MOVED BY MAN, THE HONOURABLE MOSES CHENG. I AM EQUALLY GRATEFUL TO HEAR THAT WE ARE IN FACT AGAINST CHILD ABUSE AND WE WILL CERTAINLY CONSIDER SOME OF THE CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS. I NEED NOT REPEAT THE ARGUMENTS BUT I DO WISH TO MAKE A FEW POINTS AS TO FACTS AND TO SHARE WITH HONOURABLE MEMBERS SOME RELEVANT STATISTICS. ABUSE OF ANY KIND IS A SERIOUS MATTER IN THAT IT ENDANGERS OR IMPAIRS ONE'S PHYSICAL OR MENTAL WELL-BEING. ANY ABUSE CAUSES TREMENDOUS PAIN AND SUFFERING NOT ONLY TO THOSE ABUSED, BUT ALSO TO OTHERS AROUND THEM.

STATISTICS

THERE HAS IN FACT IN RECENT YEARS BEEN A STEADY DECLINE IN THE NUMBER OF "BATTERED WIFE" CASES. THE FIGURES KNOWN TO THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT HAVE FALLEN FROM 455 IN 1988/89, TO 272 IN 1989/90, 236 IN 1990/91 AND 209 IN 1991/92. THIS DECLINE HAS ALSO BEEN BORNE OUT BY POLICE STATISTICS ON FEMALE VICTIMS WOUNDED OR ASSAULTED BY THEIR RESPECTIVE SPOUSES. THE FIGURE HAS COME DOWN FROM 173 IN 1991 TO 160 IN 1992. I HOPE THIS DOWNWARD TREND CONTINUES.

I NOTE THAT HONOURABLE MEMBERS HAVE FOCUSSED ONLY ON "WIFE" ABUSE. BUT IT IS NOT ONLY WIVES WHO ARE ABUSED OR BATTERED. THERE ARE CERTAIN TRAGIC CHILD ABUSE CASES THE SUBJECT OF WHICH WAS DEBATED IN THIS COUNCIL NOT SO LONG AGO. POLICE STATISTICS OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS INDICATE THAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CAN ALSO HAPPEN TO MEN ASSAULTED BY THEIR WIVES, ALTHOUGH THE FIGURE IN THIS RESPECT IS LOWER. THE RATIO OF BATTERED HUSBANDS TO BATTERED WIVES IS 1:5. COULD IT BE THAT MEN AS A GROUP ARE MORE VIOLENT THAN WOMEN? OR COULD IT BE THAT BATTERED MEN ARE TOO ASHAMED TO COME FORWARD?

BE THAT AS IT MAY, IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TENDS TO BE A MUCH UNDER-REPORTED CRIME; AND THAT IT CAN HAPPEN TO CHILDREN, TO MEN, AS WELL AS WOMEN.

SERVICES PROVIDED

NOW, I WOULD LIKE TO INFORM MEMBERS OF SERVICES AVAILABLE TO VICTIMS OF SPOUSE ABUSE. AS REGARDS MEDICAL SERVICES, PROMPT MEDICAL TREATMENT AT ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS IS GIVEN TO VICTIMS OF ABUSE. WITH THE CONSENT OF THE PATIENTS CONCERNED, THEIR CASES ARE REFERRED TO THE MEDICAL SOCIAL WORKER FOR INVESTIGATION, COUNSELLING AND OTHER APPROPRIATE ACTION. THE PATIENTS ARE ALSO ADVISED TO FILE A REPORT WITH THE POLICE. OTHER NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ALSO PROVIDE SUPPORTING SERVICES FOR THESE VICTIMS.

PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW AS WAS MENTIONED HERE IS GIVEN UNDER THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ORDINANCE (CAP 189). THE ORDINANCE LAYS DOWN PROCEDURES FOR THE GRANTING OF INJUNCTION AND ARREST OF PERSONS IN BREACH OF THE INJUNCTION ORDER. WHERE CASES ARE REPORTED TO THE POLICE, THEY ARE INVESTIGATED IN THE SAME WAY AS IN ANY OTHER REPORTED CRIME. IT IS A COMMON FALLACY TO ASSUME THAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS TREATED LIGHTLY BY THE POLICE AS A FAMILY DISPUTE OR PRIVATE AFFAIR. IT IS NOT SO. SINCE STUDYING THE PROBLEM VIA A WORKING GROUP SET UP BY THE POLICE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE, THE POLICE HAVE INSTITUTED MEASURES TO GIVE ADVICE AND TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE ROLE AND POWER OF THE POLICE, AVENUES OF LEGAL REDRESS AVAILABLE AND DETAILS OF SERVICES PROVIDED. HOWEVER, THE ABILITY TO PROSECUTE THE ABUSER IS OFTEN HINDERED BY THE RELUCTANCE OF THE VICTIM TO MAKE A STATEMENT INCRIMINATING THE SPOUSE.

COUNSELLING

COUNSELLING IS PROVIDED TO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. THEY CAN APPROACH FAMILY SERVICE CENTRES OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT OR NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR HELP. THE FAMILY SERVICE CENTRES OFFER COUNSELLING, ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING TEMPORARY SHELTER, CHILD CARE SERVICE AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. IF NECESSARY, A BATTERED WIFE IS REFERRED TO THE LEGAL AID DEPARTMENT FOR HELP. A VICTIM CAN THEN SEEK AN INJUNCTION FROM THE COURTS AGAINST THE SPOUSE UNDER THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ORDINANCE. THE FAMILY SECTION OF LEGAL AID DEPARTMENT IS INTRODUCING A MORNING CLINIC WHERE ANY CLIENT MAY ATTEND WITHOUT APPOINTMENT TO DEAL WITH URGENT CONCERNS. IT ALSO HAS A HOTLINE TELEPHONE REFERRAL TO THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND MAKES DIRECT REFERRALS TO THE POLICE. IN URGENT CASES, AN INJUNCTION CAN BE OBTAINED WITHIN HOURS. THE EXCELLENT LIAISON AND CO-OPERATION WHICH EXIST BETWEEN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS WILL BE FURTHER FORMALISED THROUGH THE FORMATION OF A FAMILY CONCERN CLINIC IN THE FAMILY SECTION OF THE LEGAL AID DEPARTMENT.

/TEMPORARY SHELTERS

TEMPORARY SHELTERS FOR BATTERED WOMEN

WE ALL KNOW THAT TWO SHELTERS FOR WOMEN OPERATE ROUND-THE-CLOCK TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FOR BATTERED WIVES AND THEIR CHILDREN. WAI ON HOME FOR WOMEN IS OPERATED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND HARMONY HOUSE IS RUN BY A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION. BOTH SHELTERS RECEIVE DIRECT APPLICATIONS AND REFERRALS FROM THE POLICE, HOSPITAL STAFF AND SOCIAL WORKERS.

ASSISTANCE TOWARDS HOUSING

IN ORDER TO MEET THE URGENT NEED FOR SEPARATE HOUSING FOR SEPARATED OR DIVORCED COUPLES, THE GRANT OF A CONDITIONAL TENANCY IN A PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATE IS AVAILABLE TO THE AGGRIEVED PARTY WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN UNDER THE COMPASSIONATE REHOUSING CATEGORY, WHILE HE OR SHE AWAITS THE AWARD OF A DIVORCE DECREE AND CUSTODY OF CHILDREN. THIS SCHEME IS MEANT TO ENABLE SEPARATED PERSONS TO MOVE AWAY FROM HIS OR HER SPOUSE WHILE AWAITING A DIVORCE.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

FAMILY IS THE HEART OF SOCIETY. IT SHOULD BE A PLACE OF LOVE AND SECURITY. REGRETTABLY, IT IS SOMETIMES NOT SO. PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS ALWAYS BETTER THAN CURE. OUR FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION SERVICE WILL CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A HARMONIOUS FAMILY LIFE AND HOW IT CAN BE SUSTAINED. FAMILY CASEWORK AND COUNSELLING WILL REMAIN THE PRINCIPAL MEANS WHEREBY FAMILIES ARE ASSISTED TO UNDERSTAND AND DEAL WITH PROBLEMS OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK TO PRESERVE AND STRENGTHEN THE FAMILY AS A UNIT AND TO HELP DEVELOP CARING INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AMONG FAMILY MEMBERS.

CONCLUSION

SPOUSE ABUSE IS A COMPLEX PROBLEM REQUIRING A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH INVOLVING PROFESSIONALS SUCH AS DOCTORS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS. MORE IMPORTANTLY, IT IS AN ISSUE THAT INVOLVES THE WHOLE FAMILY. THERE ARE STUDIES TO SUPPORT THE THEORY THAT AN ABUSIVE SPOUSE TENDS TO COME FROM A HOME WHERE ABUSE WAS PRACTISED AND THAT THE PATTERN IS REPEATED IN THE NEXT GENERATION. AS A COMMUNITY, WE SHOULD ENDEAVOUR TO BREAK THIS VICIOUS CIRCLE BY PROMOTING THE IMPORTANCE OF A HARMONIOUS FAMILY LIFE AND, ONLY IN UNFORTUNATE CASES, BY HELPING THOSE AT RISK.

MADAM DEPUTY, SPOUSE ABUSE IS NOT ONLY RESTRICTED TO WOMEN. IT IS NOT A GENDER ISSUE. IT IS A SOCIAL ISSUE. WHILST MUCH MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE, THE PROBLEM IS NEVERTHELESS RECOGNISED. PERHAPS WHAT WE NEED, IS NOT SO MUCH SPORADIC CLARION CALLS TO ACTION. WHAT WE NEED, MADAM, IS HEIGHTENED AWARENESS AND PERPETUAL VIGILANCE AND SUSTAINED ACTION AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE IN THE FAMILY. THAT IS WHAT WE HAVE DONE. AND THAT IS WHAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO. THANK YOU MADAM DEPUTY.

MOTION ON PUBLIC FUNDS PASSED

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) PASSED A MOTION PROVIDING FUNDS ON ACCOUNT TO ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT TO CARRY ON EXISTING SERVICES BETWEEN THE START OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR ON APRIL 1 AND THE ENACTMENT OF THE APPROPRIATION BILL.

THE FUNDS AMOUNT TO ABOUT \$50.6 BILLION.

THE MOTION WAS MOVED BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY, MR K Y YEUNG UNDER THE PUBLIC FINANCE ORDINANCE.

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PARENT AND CHILD BILL PASSED

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THE PARENT AND CHILD BILL, WHICH AIMED AT ENSURING THAT AN ILLEGITIMATE CHILD WOULD, SO FAR AS PRACTICABLE, BE TREATED BY THE LAW IN THE SAME WAY AS A LEGITIMATE CHILD, WAS PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE OF THE BILL, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, SAID THE SAME RANGE OF MAINTENANCE ORDERS WAS MADE AVAILABLE IN RESPECT OF BOTH LEGITIMATE AND ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN BY AMENDING THE GUARDIANSHIP OF MINORS ORDINANCE.

ORIGINALLY THE BILL SOUGHT TO ACHIEVE THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING THE MAINTENANCE ORDERS BY AMENDMENTS TO THE AFFILIATION PROCEEDINGS ORDINANCE.

HOWEVER, WHEN THE BILL WAS BEING STUDIED, IT BECAME APPARENT THAT THE AFFILIATION PROCEEDINGS ORDINANCE MIGHT CONTAIN PROVISIONS THAT WERE INCONSISTENT WITH THE BILL OF RIGHTS, MR MATHEWS SAID.

HE SAID THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE HAD THEREFORE DECIDED TO CARRY OUT AN OVERALL REVIEW OF THE AFFILIATION PROCEEDINGS ORDINANCE AS A MATTER OF PRIORITY WHILE THIS ORDINANCE WOULD REMAIN UNAMENDED.

INSTEAD THE GUARDIANSHIP OF MINORS ORDINANCE WAS AMENDED TO ACHIEVE THE INTENTION OF MAKING AVAILABLE THE SAME RANGE OF MAINTENANCE ORDERS TO LEGITIMATE AND ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN.

MR MATHEWS ALSO NOTED THAT SOME MEMBERS OF THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP STUDYING THE BILL HAD EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ON CLAUSES 9 TO 12 OF THE BILL, WHICH REFERRED TO SURROGACY AND BIRTHS BROUGHT ABOUT THROUGH ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION OR OTHER SCIENTIFIC MEANS AS THIS WAS AN AREA OF THE LAW WHICH RAISED SENSITIVE ISSUES OF ETHICS AND MORALITY.

/HE REITERATED

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HE REITERATED THAT THE BILL WAS NOT CONCERNED WITH WHETHER OR NOT SURROGACY AND SCIENTIFICALLY ASSISTED BIRTH WAS DESIRABLE, NOR WITH CONSIDERING THE CONTROLS, IF ANY, WHICH SHOULD BE APPLIED.

"THIS BILL DEALS ONLY WITH MAKING PROVISION TO IDENTIFY THE LEGAL PARENTS WHERE SUCH BIRTHS TAKE PLACE, AND TO PROVIDE A LEGAL MECHANISM FOR PARTIES TO A SURROGACY TO APPLY TO THE COURT FOR AN ORDER AS TO THE CHILD'S PARENTAGE WHICH REFLECTS THE REALITY OF THE SURROGACY ARRANGEMENT," MR MATHEWS SAID.

HE SAID THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BE ALLOWED, OR HOW THEY SHOULD BE REGULATED, WERE QUESTIONS WHICH FELL OUTSIDE THE AMBIT OF THE BILL.

IN VIEW OF THE COMPLEX ISSUES INVOLVED IN THIS AREA, HE SAID, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE INTENDED TO ISSUE A CONSULTATION PAPER IN THE NEAR FUTURE ON THE SUBJECT OF SCIENTIFICALLY ASSISTED HUMAN REPRODUCTION.

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POSITION FOR CENTRAL AND WANCHAI RECLAMATION

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EVALUATION OF THE CURRENT TENDER PROPOSALS INDICATED THAT IT WOULD STILL BE POSSIBLE TO COMPLETE THE CENTRAL AND WANCHAI RECLAMATION PHASE 1 PROJECT BY ITS TARGET DATE OF MID-1997.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR WORKS, MR JAMES BLAKE, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HOWARD YOUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE TWO LOWEST TENDERERS FOR THE CONTRACT HAD AGREED TO EXTEND THE VALIDITY OF THEIR TENDERS FOR A FURTHER MONTH FROM MARCH 8 TO APRIL 6.

MR BLAKE EXPLAINED THAT PHASE 1 OF THE RECLAMATION WOULD PROVIDE LAND FOR A NUMBER OF PURPOSES WHICH WOULD BE OF VALUE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG.

"IT IS PARTLY TO ACCOMMODATE THE AIRPORT RAILWAY'S HONG KONG STATION, AND IS THEREFORE INCLUDED AS ONE OF THE 10 CORE PROJECTS INCLUDED IN THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.

"IN THE MAIN HOWEVER, IT IS THE FIRST STAGE OF PROVIDING NEW LAND FOR EXPANSION OF THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AND LONG-TERM HIGHWAY DEVELOPMENT ALONG WITH THE NORTH SHORE OF THE ISLAND, UNDER THE CENTRAL AND WANCHAI RECLAMATION LAND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY," HE SAID.

/MR BLAKE

MR BLAKE EXPLAINED THAT THE PRESENT EXTENSION HAD NO DIRECT IMPACT ON THE AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME AS A WHOLE, EXCEPT THAT ONE PURPOSE OF THE RECLAMATION WAS TO PROVIDE LAND FOR THE AIRPORT RAILWAY'S HONG KONG STATION.

"WHILST DESIGN WORK ON THE AIRPORT RAILWAY INCLUDING THE HONG KONG STATION IS WELL UNDERWAY, PROGRESS ON THE AIRPORT RAILWAY DEPENDS NOT ONLY ON THIS PHASE 1 RECLAMATION BUT ALSO REACHING AGREEMENT WITH THE CHINESE SIDE ON FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE AIRPORT RAILWAY," HE SAID.

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NO NEED TO MONITOR DEBT COLLECTION ACTIVITIES

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DEBT COLLECTION IS A LEGITIMATE ACTIVITY AND THE ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT CONSIDER THAT THERE IS ANY PRUDENTIAL NEED FOR MONITORING OR REGULATION, THE SECRETARY FOR MONETARY AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL CARTLAND, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON FREDERICK FUNG KIN-KEE, MR CARTLAND SAID HOWEVER, IF INDIVIDUAL DEBT COLLECTORS WERE TO RESORT TO ILLEGAL MEANS TO PURSUE THEIR BUSINESS, SUCH AS CRIMINAL DAMAGE, INTIMIDATION OR VIOLENCE, THIS WOULD BE A LAW AND ORDER MATTER THAT WOULD BE DEALT WITH BY THE POLICE.

"THERE IS NO SUPERVISION OF THE OPERATION OF DEBT COLLECTING COMPANIES," HE SAID.

HONG KONG'S BANKING LEGISLATION DOES NOT CONTAIN PROVISIONS DEALING WITH THE HIRING OF THIRD PARTIES BY AUTHORISED INSTITUTIONS TO HELP IN THE RECOVERY OF OUTSTANDING LOANS.

"THE SYSTEM OF BANKING SUPERVISION IS NOT GEARED TOWARDS THE REGULATION OF THE DAY-TO-DAY OPERATION OF INSTITUTIONS, SUCH AS THE WAY IN WHICH OUTSTANDING LOANS ARE RECOVERED," MR CARTLAND SAID.

WHETHER OR NOT AN INSTITUTION CAN BE IMPLICATED IN CRIMINAL ACTS COMMITTED BY ITS AGENTS WILL DEPEND ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CASE, HE SAID.

LEGAL ADVICE SUGGESTS THAT A PERSON IN HIS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY OR A PERSON ACTING ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANISATION WILL NOT NORMALLY BE HELD LIABLE FOR THE ACTIONS OF THE DEBT COLLECTING AGENTS COMMISSIONED BY HIM TO COLLECT DEBTS FOR HIM OR HIS ORGANISATION.

THE PERSON MAY, HOWEVER, BECOME CRIMINALLY LIABLE IF HE COUNSELS, PROCURES, AIDS OR ABETS THE AGENT TO COMMIT A CRIMINAL OFFENCE.

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PUBLIC RELUCTANT TO REPORT LOANSHARKING ACTIVITIES

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THE MAIN PROBLEM WHICH THE POLICE FACE IN COMBATTING LOANSHARKING IS THE RELUCTANCE OF THE PUBLIC TO REPORT CASES TO THEM, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON TANG SIU-TONG, MR ASPREY SAID THE ORGANISED AND SERIOUS CRIMES BILL, WHEN ENACTED, SHOULD PROVIDE MORE EFFECTIVE POWERS TO THE POLICE TO TACKLE LOANSHARKING, AND HEAVIER PENALTIES FOR THOSE CONVICTED OF LOANSHARKING OFFENCES, INCLUDING CONFISCATION OF THE PROCEEDS OF SUCH CRIMES.

AT PRESENT, THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR THE OFFENCE OF LENDING MONEY AT AN EXCESSIVE INTEREST RATE IS A FINE OF \$100,000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR TWO YEARS.

THE SECRETARY SAID THE POLICE AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT STAFF HAD TAKEN A NUMBER OF MEASURES TO PREVENT LOANSHARKING ACTIVITIES IN NEWLY COMPLETED PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES.

THE POLICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICERS LIAISE CLOSELY WITH COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO WARN OF THE DANGERS OF BORROWING FROM LOANSHARKS, AND TO ENCOURAGE RESIDENTS TO REPORT LOANSHARKING CASES TO THE POLICE.

AT BRIEFINGS FOR NEW TENANTS OF HOUSING ESTATES, THE DANGER POSED BY LOANSHARKS IS HIGHLIGHTED.

ESTATE STAFF ALSO PROVIDE HELP TO THE POLICE IN OPERATIONS AGAINST LOANSHARKS, HE SAID.

MR ASPREY SAID INTELLIGENCE COLLECTED BY THE POLICE ABOUT LOANSHARKING SYNDICATES IN TUEN MUN AND YUEN LONG HAD INDICATED THAT THE PROBLEM IN THESE AREAS WAS NOT DETERIORATING, ALTHOUGH IT WOULD NOT BE DESCRIBED AS BEING UNDER CONTROL.

IN THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE POLICE HAVE RECEIVED 12 REPORTS OF LOANSHARKING IN TUEN MUN AND FIVE IN YUEN LONG. TWO CASES IN TUEN MUN WERE PROSECUTED.

HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF EVIDENCE, THE THREE DEFENDANTS IN THESE TWO CASES WERE ACQUITTED. ALL OF THE REPORTS IN YUEN LONG WERE ANONYMOUS AND COULD NOT BE PURSUED.

APART FROM INVESTIGATING ALL REPORTS RECEIVED, THE POLICE ALSO TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO MOUNT SPECIAL UNDERCOVER OPERATIONS AGAINST LOANSHARKS, MR ASPREY SAID.

BUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THESE OPERATIONS WAS AGAIN HAMPERED BY THE RELUCTANCE OF THE PUBLIC TO GIVE EVIDENCE FOR INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION.

RELOCATION OF COMPANIES DOES NOT AFFECT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT THE RELOCATION OUTSIDE HONG KONG OF THE NON-PRODUCTION DEPARTMENTS OF HONG KONG COMPANIES OR FACTORIES WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR T H CHAU, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LAU CHIN-SHEK, MR CHAU SAID THE RELOCATION OF SOME LABOUR-INTENSIVE NON-PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES MIGHT HELP TO MAINTAIN HONG KONG'S COMPETITIVENESS.

THROUGH A LIMITED EASING OF THE CONSTRAINT ENGENDERED BY THE SHORT SUPPLY OF LOCAL LABOUR, IT MIGHT ALSO HELP HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, MR CHAU SAID.

THE SECRETARY SAID THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT CONSIDER THAT THE LOCAL LABOUR MARKET WOULD BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY SUCH RELOCATION. HONG KONG'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE REMAINS VERY LOW BY WORLD STANDARDS.

"THERE IS STEADY GROWTH IN EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SERVICES SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY AND THERE ARE CONSIDERABLE VACANCIES IN MANY SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY," HE SAID.

THUS, THE GOVERNMENT, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR, IS CONTINUING TO IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF HONG KONG LABOUR FORCE THROUGH EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES SO AS TO SOLVE - AT LEAST PARTIALLY - THE PROBLEM OF SHORTAGE OF LABOUR, HE ADDED.

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RAIL COMPANIES COMMITTED TO LOCALISATION POLICY

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MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION AND KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION ARE COMMITTED IN PRINCIPLE TO A POLICY OF LOCALISATION, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID FORD, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

EXPATRIATE EMPLOYEES ARE NOT FORCED TO MAKE WAY FOR LOCAL SUCCESSORS, BUT WHEN THEY LEAVE THE CORPORATIONS, EFFORTS ARE MADE TO REPLACE THEM WITH LOCAL EMPLOYEES, SUBJECT TO THE LATTER HAVING THE NECESSARY SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE, HE SAID.

INTERNAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES ARE IN PLACE IN BOTH CORPORATIONS TO INCREASE THE PACE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL EMPLOYEES AS PART OF THEIR CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING, SIR DAVID ADDED.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON SAMUEL WONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE CHIEF SECRETARY EXPLAINED THAT STATUTORY BODIES ESTABLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO CARRY OUT SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS WERE EMPOWERED TO APPOINT THEIR OWN STAFF AND DETERMINE THEIR OWN EMPLOYMENT POLICY.

SIR DAVID SAID THE OBJECTIVE MUST BE TO APPOINT THE BEST CANDIDATE AVAILABLE FOR THE RELEVANT JOB.

"THAT SAID, THE GOVERNMENT CERTAINLY LIKES TO SEE THESE BODIES GIVING PRIORITY TO SUITABLE QUALIFIED LOCAL CANDIDATES WHERE AVAILABLE," HE SAID.

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GOVT TO SEEK FUNDS FOR HAEMOPHILIACS

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THE GOVERNMENT IS TO SEEK FUNDS TO HELP THOSE HAEMOPHILIACS WHO CONTRACTED HIV THROUGH TRANSFUSION OF BLOOD AND BLOOD PRODUCTS BEFORE 1985, IRRESPECTIVE OF WHETHER THEY WERE INFECTED THROUGH TRANSFUSION IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON DAVID LI IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, EXPRESSED GREAT SYMPATHY FOR THESE PATIENTS.

SHE NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD PROPOSED TO SET UP A SPECIAL FUND WITH \$350 MILLION FOR PROVIDING, AMONG OTHER THINGS EX-GRATIA PAYMENTS FOR THEM.

"THE FUND WILL BE ADMINISTERED UNDER TRUST BY A SPECIAL COUNCIL TO BE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR," MRS WONG SAID.

"A SUBMISSION FOR ALLOCATION OF FUNDS WILL BE PUT TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THIS COUNCIL AT ITS NEXT REGULAR MEETING," SHE ADDED.

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CMB SERVICE CLOSELY MONITORED

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT IS CLOSELY MONITORING THE SERVICES OF CHINA MOTOR BUS COMPANY LIMITED.

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

MR LEUNG SAID CMB WAS REQUIRED UNDER THE PUBLIC BUS SERVICES ORDINANCE TO MAINTAIN A PROPER AND EFFICIENT PUBLIC BUS SERVICE TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT DURING THE TERM OF ITS CURRENT FRANCHISE.

"THIS COMMITMENT IS REINFORCED BY CMB'S NEW FRANCHISE EFFECTIVE FROM SEPTEMBER 1993 REQUIRING CMB TO CONTINUE TO COMPLY WITH SUCH OBLIGATIONS RELATING TO ALL ITS SERVICES, INCLUDING AND UP TO THE DATE OF TRANSFER OF THE 26 ROUTES TO CITYBUS LIMITED.

"FAILURE TO DO SO RENDERS THE COMPANY LIABLE TO FINANCIAL PENALTY UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE ORDINANCE," HE SAID.

MR LEUNG SAID CENTRAL TO THE MONITORING PROCESS OF CMB WERE REGULAR SURVEYS CONDUCTED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO MONITOR THE BUS TURNOUT, OCCUPANCY, AND FREQUENCY ON ALL THE ROUTES.

"RESULTS SO FAR INDICATE THAT WHILST THERE HAS BEEN SOME SHORTAGE OF BUSES ON OTHER ROUTES WHERE CMB HAS BEEN ASKED TO RECTIFY, THERE HAS BEEN NO DELIBERATE WITHDRAWAL OF BUSES FROM ANY ONE OF THE 26 ROUTES."

"THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO CONDUCT SURVEYS, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE 26 ROUTES OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS AT MORE FREQUENT INTERVALS UNTIL THEY ARE TAKEN OVER BY CITYBUS IN SEPTEMBER.

"ANY SERVICE DEFICIENCY IDENTIFIED DURING THESE SURVEYS OR OBSERVED BY DISTRICT BOARDS AND THE COMMUTING PUBLIC WILL CONTINUE TO BE PROMPTLY DEALT WITH AND RECTIFIED," HE SAID.

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CHINESE POLITICAL SYSTEM COVERED
IN SCHOOL CURRICULUM

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THE CHINESE POLITICAL SYSTEM IS NOT TAUGHT AS AN INDEPENDENT SUBJECT IN SCHOOLS BUT ELEMENTS OF THE SYSTEM ARE INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM AT BOTH PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SAID PUPILS' CONCEPTS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHINESE POLITICAL SYSTEM WERE STRENGTHENED PROGRESSIVELY FROM A BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHINESE NATION TO A MORE IN-DEPTH STUDY OF THE EXISTING POLITICAL STRUCTURE AND SYSTEM IN CHINA AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHINA AND THE FUTURE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION (SAR).

MR CHAN SAID TOPICS RELATING TO THE CHINESE POLITICAL SYSTEM WERE ALREADY INCLUDED IN THE FORMAL CURRICULUM OF THE SUBJECT SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE PRIMARY 5 LEVEL, AND IN CHINESE HISTORY, HISTORY, SOCIAL STUDIES, ECONOMIC AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, AND LIBERAL STUDIES IN VARIOUS LEVELS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON STEVEN POON IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), HE SAID A NEW SUBJECT "GENERAL STUDIES" WAS BEING DEVELOPED FOR THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM.

"IT WILL EMBODY BASIC KNOWLEDGE OF THE CHINESE POLITICAL SYSTEM AS WELL AS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHINA AND THE FUTURE HONG KONG SAR."

APART FROM THE TOPICS INCLUDED IN THE FORMAL SCHOOL CURRICULUM, MR CHAN SAID PUPILS MIGHT ACQUIRE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHINESE POLITICAL SYSTEM THROUGH SUCH CROSS-CURRICULAR CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AS "THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE NATION", AND "THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY" AS DESCRIBED IN THE "GUIDANCES ON CIVIC EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS" PRODUCED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WILL ALSO CONTINUE TO REVIEW THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM TO KEEP PACE WITH THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY AND TO REINFORCE PUPILS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEMS IN CHINA AND HONG KONG.

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FIRECRACKERS BAN TO STAY

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED THAT THE CURRENT RESTRICTIONS ON FIRECRACKERS SHOULD BE MAINTAINED IN THE INTERESTS OF PUBLIC SAFETY, THE SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR JAMES SO, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON GILBERT LEUNG KAM-HO, MR SO SAID THE DANGERS OF ALLOWING EASY INDIVIDUAL ACCESS TO FIRECRACKERS HAD BECOME A MATTER OF INCREASING CONCERN WORLDWIDE.

"EVERY YEAR, MANY PEOPLE - PARTICULARLY CHILDREN - SUFFER SERIOUS BURNS AND OTHER INJURIES THROUGH MISHANDLING OF FIREWORKS AND FIRECRACKERS," HE POINTED OUT.

THE EXISTING CONTROLS ON THE DISCHARGE OF FIRECRACKERS AND DISPLAY OF FIREWORKS WERE IMPOSED IN 1967.

THE BAN ON THE PUBLIC DISPLAY OF FIREWORKS WAS FIRST RELAXED IN 1975 FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE ROYAL VISIT.

THIS POLICY WAS FURTHER REVISED IN 1982, WHEN THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL DECIDED THAT DISPLAYS OF FIREWORKS COULD BE HELD ON APPROPRIATE CHINESE FESTIVAL DAYS AS WELL AS ON OCCASIONS OF IMPORTANCE TO HONG KONG.

MORE RECENTLY, THE BAN HAS BEEN FURTHER RELAXED TO ALLOW THE USE OF PYROTECHNICS FOR FILM AND TELEVISION PROGRAMME PRODUCTIONS AS WELL AS FOR THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES, SUBJECT TO PERMIT.

"OUR EXISTING REGULATIONS HAVE THUS SERVED US WELL IN PREVENTING HAZARDS FOR OVER 25 YEARS," MR SO SAID.

"DOING AWAY WITH THESE REGULATIONS, EVEN FOR DESIGNATED LOCATIONS, WOULD BE A RETROGRESSIVE STEP.

"WE HAVE, THEREFORE, CONCLUDED THAT, WHILE THE SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS MAY NO LONGER APPLY, IT REMAINS IN THE INTERESTS OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO MAINTAIN THE CURRENT RESTRICTIONS," HE STRESSED.

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PROMOTING HOME OWNERSHIP IS GOVT OBJECTIVE

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IT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S OBJECTIVE TO PROMOTE HOME OWNERSHIP FOR THOSE ELIGIBLE FOR PUBLIC HOUSING, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR TONY EASON, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON CONRAD LAM, MR EASON EXPLAINED THAT UNDER THIS POLICY, THE MAIN CRITERIA USED TO DESIGNATE CERTAIN RENTAL BLOCKS FOR SALE WERE HOUSING MIX AND PROGRAMME BALANCE.

WHILE THE DEMAND FOR HOME OWNERSHIP (HOS) FLATS WAS LARGELY MET BY PLANNED PRODUCTION, HE SAID IT WAS SOMETIMES NECESSARY TO TRANSFER ONE OR TWO BLOCKS IN A RENTAL ESTATE FOR SALE TO ACHIEVE A BETTER MIX.

"THUS, SITTING AND PROSPECTIVE TENANTS, INCLUDING THOSE AFFECTED BY REDEVELOPMENT, CAN CHOOSE TO BUY IN THE SAME DISTRICT WHEN THEY CAN AFFORD TO DO SO," HE SAID.

THERE WERE ALSO OCCASIONS WHERE PROGRAMME ADJUSTMENT IN THE PRODUCTION OF SALE FLATS REQUIRED THE TRANSFER OF SOME RENTAL TYPE BLOCKS FOR SALE IN A PARTICULAR YEAR BUT THIS WAS DONE ONLY WHEN THE COMMITTED RENTAL DEMAND IN THE DISTRICT WAS SATISFIED, HE ADDED.

MR EASON SAID THE DESIGNATION OF RENTAL BLOCKS FOR SALE SHOULD NOT REDUCE THE OVERALL SUPPLY OF RENTAL UNITS ON A YEAR-ON-YEAR BASIS AS THE DESIGNATION WAS NOT NECESSARILY FOLLOWED BY A CORRESPONDING REDUCTION IN THE SUPPLY OF RENTAL FLATS IN PARTICULAR.

"AS SITTING TENANTS MOVE OUT AFTER BUYING HOS FLATS, THE RECOVERED UNITS ARE REFURBISHED AND ALLOCATED TO OTHER REHOUSING CATEGORIES, INCLUDING THE WAITING LIST," HE SAID.

IT SHOULD ALSO HAVE LITTLE EFFECT ON WAITING LIST APPLICANTS WITH AN EXPRESSED PREFERENCE FOR URBAN FLATS BECAUSE THE MAJORITY OF THE TRANSFER FLATS WERE OUTSIDE THE URBAN AREA.

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CAPACITY OF HK COLISEUM

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THE HONG KONG COLISEUM CAN STILL COPE WITH THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE AS ORIGINALLY PLANNED IN RELATION TO THE PRESENT-DAY SAFETY REQUIREMENTS, THE SECRETARY FOR WORKS, MR JAMES BLAKE, SAID.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON EDWARD HO IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR BLAKE SAID THE DESIGNED SEATING CAPACITY OF THE COLISEUM RANGED FROM 10,545 TO 12,455 DEPENDING ON THE TYPE OF STAGE CONFIGURATION USED.

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IT HAD NEVER BEEN FILLED BEYOND THE DESIGNED CAPACITY SINCE ITS OPENING IN APRIL 1983.

HE SAID THE FIRE SERVICES INSTALLATIONS WERE APPROVED BY THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT (FSD) IN 1983 AND THEY WERE CONSIDERED ADEQUATE UNDER THE DEPARTMENT'S PRESENT-DAY REQUIREMENTS FOR NORMAL SPORTS EVENTS.

WHEN THE COLISEUM WAS USED FOR OTHER PERFORMANCES, THE OPERATORS WOULD HAVE TO APPLY FOR A LICENCE UNDER THE PLACES OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT ORDINANCE.

UPON THE RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS, THE AUTHORITY WOULD REFER THEM TO FSD FOR INSPECTIONS AND ADVICE ON FIRE SAFETY MATTERS, MR BLAKE SAID, ADDING THAT THE APPLICANT WOULD HAVE TO COMPLY WITH NECESSARY SAFETY REQUIREMENTS BEFORE A LICENCE WAS GRANTED.

"THIS ENSURES ALL PERFORMANCES AT THE COLISEUM WILL COMPLY WITH UP-TO-DATE FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS," HE SAID.

THE COLISEUM WAS DESIGNED IN CONSULTATION WITH THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE TO ENSURE THAT IT ALSO COMPLIED WITH THE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS LAID DOWN IN THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE.

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ALL SECRETARY POSTS TO BE FILLED BY LOCAL OFFICERS BEFORE 1997

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THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) REASSURED LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS THAT ALL POLICY SECRETARY OR FUTURE PRINCIPAL OFFICIAL POSTS WOULD BE FILLED BY SUITABLE LOCAL OFFICERS, WHO COULD MEET THE JOINT DECLARATION AND BASIC LAW PROVISIONS, BEFORE 1997.

HE SAID THIS MIGHT REQUIRE A DEPARTURE FROM CURRENT POLICY AT SOME POINT IN ORDER TO GIVE PREFERENCE TO QUALIFIED LOCAL OFFICERS.

"IF THIS HAPPENS, ANY OVERSEAS OFFICER ADVERSELY AFFECTED WILL NEED TO BE COMPENSATED, THOUGH I EXPECT THE NUMBERS TO BE SMALL," HE ADDED.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHIM PUI-CHUNG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR WIGGHAM SAID OUT OF THE 15 POLICY SECRETARY POSTS, SEVEN WERE CURRENTLY FILLED BY OVERSEAS OFFICERS.

OF THEM, FOUR ARE LIKELY TO RETIRE BEFORE THE END OF 1995, ONE WILL COMPLETE HIS CONTRACT WITHIN THE SAME TIME SPAN, ONE IS LIKELY TO BE REQUIRED TO RETIRE BEFORE 1997 UNDER THE LIMITED COMPENSATION SCHEME, AND THE OTHER IS PRESENTLY FILLING A SECRETARY POST ON AN ACTING BASIS.

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ON THE QUESTION WHY A RECENTLY VACATED POLICY SECRETARY POST WAS NOT FILLED BY A LOCAL OFFICER, MR WIGGHAM EXPLAINED THAT THE APPOINTMENT WAS MADE ON THE BASIS OF THE BEST OFFICER AVAILABLE FOR THE POST.

UNDER THE CURRENT POLICY, HE SAID, LOCAL AND OVERSEAS OFFICERS WERE BEING CONSIDERED ON EQUAL TERMS FOR ANY VACANCIES, CITING AS EXAMPLE TWO LOCAL OFFICERS WHO WOULD ASSUME POLICY SECRETARY DUTIES FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

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ENOUGH TEACHERS TO MEET DEMAND

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THERE SHOULD BE ENOUGH TEACHERS IN THE 1993/94 ACADEMIC YEAR TO MEET DEMAND ARISING FROM IMPROVEMENT MEASURES ANNOUNCED IN THE GOVERNOR'S POLICY ADDRESS AND RECOMMENDED IN EDUCATION REPORT NO. 5.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TIK CHI-YUEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, ESTIMATED THAT 24,651 NON-GRADUATE AND 12,976 GRADUATE TEACHERS WOULD BE REQUIRED IN PUBLIC SECTOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR.

THESE FIGURES HAVE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THE ADDITIONAL 785 NON-GRADUATE TEACHERS REQUIRED FOR THE IMPROVEMENT MEASURES AS WELL AS THE REDUCTION OF 324 TEACHERS DUE TO POPULATION CHANGE.

MEANWHILE, THE SUPPLY OF NON-GRADUATE AND GRADUATE TEACHERS IN PUBLIC SECTOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN 1993/94 IS EXPECTED TO BE 24,535 AND 12,657 RESPECTIVELY.

"THERE WOULD THEREFORE BE A THEORETICAL SHORTFALL OF 116 NON-GRADUATE AND 319 GRADUATE TEACHERS, REPRESENTING 0.5 AND 2.5 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY OF THE DEMAND," MR CHAN SAID.

"GIVEN THE SIZE OF THE TEACHING FORCE AND IN THE LIGHT OF EXPERIENCE IN THE PAST THREE YEARS WHEN VACANCIES AVERAGE ONE AND 3.5 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY, THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ESTIMATES THAT THERE SHOULD BE ENOUGH TEACHERS TO MEET DEMAND IN THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR," HE ADDED.

MR CHAN ALSO NOTED THAT PRIVATE SCHOOLS WERE UNAFFECTED BY THE IMPROVEMENTS INVOLVING ADDITIONAL TEACHERS.

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FINAL REPORT ON CHINESE MEDICINE READY THIS YEAR

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THE WORKING PARTY ON CHINESE MEDICINE IS EXPECTED TO SUBMIT ITS FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT THIS YEAR, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN HER WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON PHILIP WONG, MRS WONG SAID SINCE THE PUBLICATION OF ITS INTERIM REPORT LAST YEAR, THE WORKING PARTY HAD RECEIVED MORE THAN 200 REPRESENTATIONS FROM PROFESSIONALS, PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

"IT HAS STUDIED THE VIEWS RECEIVED AND IS NOW FINALISING ITS RECOMMENDATIONS," MRS WONG SAID.

"IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE FINAL REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE ADMINISTRATION WITHIN THIS YEAR," SHE ADDED.

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TALKS ON RELOCATION OF CEMENT PLANT UNDER WAY

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PROGRESS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OWNER OF THE HONG KONG CEMENT PLANT ON TSING YI FOR ITS RELOCATION TO A NEW SITE ON THE NORTH COAST HAS BEEN ENCOURAGING AND THE GOVERNMENT HOPES TO FINALISE AN AGREEMENT IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

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

HE SAID SUBJECT TO THE AGREEMENT BEING REACHED, THE EXISTING PLANT WOULD BE DECOMMISSIONED IN 1996.

MR EASON NOTED THAT THE PROCESS OF RELOCATING SUCH PLANTS INVOLVED WIDE-RANGING PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND RESOLUTION SUCH AS IDENTIFYING A SUITABLE NEW SITE AND NEGOTIATING THE DETAILS OF A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE AGREEMENT WITH THE OWNER.

HE ASSURED THE COUNCILLORS THAT THE KWAI TSING DISTRICT BOARD AND ITS ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE HAD BEEN AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE KEPT INFORMED OF THE RELOCATION PROPOSAL.

"UNTIL THE PLANT IS REMOVED, THE ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE STRICT ENFORCEMENT ACTION TO MINIMISE AS FAR AS PRACTICABLE THE DUST AND NOISE NUISANCES," HE SAID, ADDING THAT FURTHER ENFORCEMENT ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN WHENEVER NECESSARY.

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SUPPORT FOR LIFTING EMBARGO AGAINST VIETNAM

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THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR ALISTAIR ASPREY, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD PUBLICLY EXPRESSED ITS SUPPORT FOR A LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO AGAINST THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND AND WORLD BANK PROVIDING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR VIETNAM.

IT HAS ALSO SHOWN SUPPORT FOR NORMALISATION OF VIETNAM'S RELATIONS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, HE SAID.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MARTIN BARROW IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR ASPREY SAID THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR THIS.

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GOVT ENCOURAGES STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

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THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ACTIVELY ENCOURAGES SCHOOLS TO SET UP STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS AS A MEANS OF DEVELOPING THE STUDENTS' SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, SAID.

THIS ALSO ENHANCES THEIR SOCIAL AND POLITICAL AWARENESS, HE ADDED.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LAU CHIN-SHEK IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR CHAN SAID IT WAS NOT CONSIDERED NECESSARY TO PROVIDE SCHOOLS WITH SEPARATE FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE.

"EACH SECONDARY SCHOOL IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR IS GIVEN A SCHOOL AND CLASS GRANT, AMOUNTING TO \$400,000 A YEAR FOR A STANDARD-CLASS SCHOOL, TO COVER THE COST OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THE SETTING UP OF STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS," HE SAID.

THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ALSO MAKES AVAILABLE AT ITS CIVIC EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRES REFERENCE MATERIALS TO HELP TEACHERS IN ADVISING THEIR STUDENTS ON THE OPERATION OF STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS.

THERE ARE AT PRESENT 198 SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITH STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS.

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ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT FOR DISPLACED HANDICAPPED WORKERS

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MANY OF THE HANDICAPPED WORKERS WHO HAVE BEEN DISPLACED AS A RESULT OF OFFICE AUTOMATION AND MOVING OF FACTORIES ACROSS THE BORDER HAVE FOUND ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT IN THE GROWING SERVICE INDUSTRIES, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, SAID.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MRS ELSIE TU IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR CHAN SAID THE MAIN LOSS OF JOBS FOR DISABLED WORKERS DUE TO OFFICE AUTOMATION HAD BEEN IN RESPECT OF BLIND TELEPHONISTS.

"TO ASSIST THOSE AFFECTED TO SEEK ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT, THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL (VTC) HAS CHANGED ITS TELEPHONE OPERATOR COURSE TO AN OFFICE RECEPTION COURSE WHICH INCORPORATES TRAINING IN COMPUTER SKILLS RELATED TO OFFICE PRACTICE," HE SAID.

"THESE ADDITIONAL SKILLS, WHEN USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH SPECIAL TECHNICAL AIDS FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED, WILL ENABLE THEM TO PERFORM A WIDER RANGE OF DUTIES."

MR CHAN SAID THE VTC HAD ALSO INTRODUCED GENERAL SERVICES COURSES FOR THE MENTALLY DISABLED WHO, UPON GRADUATION, GENERALLY HAD NO PROBLEM IN FINDING EMPLOYMENT IN AREAS SUCH AS CLEANING, FAST FOOD, GENERAL OFFICE WORK AND MESSENGERIAL SERVICE.

IN ADDITION, THE SELECTIVE PLACEMENT DIVISION OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE VTC AND THE REHABILITATION DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE, CONTINUES TO PROVIDE COUNSELLING, ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT SERVICES AND EXPLORE NEW EMPLOYMENT AVENUES FOR THE DISABLED.

OF THE 2,705 DISABLED WORKERS WHO APPLIED TO THE DIVISION FOR JOBS LAST YEAR, 1,366 HAD BEEN SUCCESSFULLY PLACED IN JOBS COMPATIBLE WITH THEIR ABILITY AND APTITUDE.

MR CHAN ALSO NOTED THAT EMPLOYERS WHO WISHED TO MAKE THE NECESSARY OFFICE ADAPTATION TO ACCOMMODATE DISABLED PERSONS WOULD BE GIVEN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND TECHNICAL ADVICE UNDER AN EMPLOYAID SCHEME FUNDED BY THE COMMUNITY CHEST.

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WAYS TO TACKLE CAR REPAIR WORKSHOP POLLUTION

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A STUDY ON THE PLANNING FOR VEHICLE REPAIR WORKSHOPS, WHICH WILL BE COMPLETED IN MID-1993, WOULD ENABLE THE ADMINISTRATION TO DEVISE A STRATEGY TO DEAL WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS CAUSED BY VEHICLE REPAIR WORKSHOPS.

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

MR EASON SAID THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS NORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THESE WORKSHOPS LOCATED ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF DOMESTIC PREMISES WERE NOISE AND AIR POLLUTION.

HE SAID NOISE POLLUTION FROM ACTIVITIES OF THESE WORKSHOPS SUCH AS HAMMERING, GRINDING AND WELDING OF CAR BODIES, MAINTENANCE AND TESTING OF ENGINES WERE DEALT WITH UNDER THE NOISE CONTROL ORDINANCE WHILE AIR POLLUTION WHICH COMPRISED MAINLY ODOUR OF PAINT MIST WAS COVERED BY THE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL ORDINANCE.

LEASE ENFORCEMENT ACTION COULD BE TAKEN AGAINST THOSE WORKSHOPS IF THEY WERE OPERATING IN PREMISES WHERE INDUSTRIAL USE WAS NOT PERMITTED UNDER THE LEASE CONDITIONS.

MEASURES HAD ALSO BEEN TAKEN TO DEVELOP INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS TO PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION FOR THEM.

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MOTION ON POLITICAL APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS DEFEATED

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THE MOTION ON POLITICAL APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, MOVED BY THE HON ANDREW WONG, WAS DEFEATED AFTER AN ONE-HOUR DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

A TOTAL OF 10 LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS SPOKE ON THE MOTION. WINDING UP THE DEBATE WAS THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM.

ANOTHER MOTION ON NATIONALITY OF ETHNIC MINORITIES PROPOSED BY THE HON EMILY LAU WAS PASSED. EIGHT MEMBERS SPOKE IN THE 45-MINUTE DEBATE.

TEN MEMBERS SPOKE IN AN ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON WIFE ABUSE RAISED BY THE HON MOSES CHENG.

A MOTION UNDER PUBLIC FINANCE ORDINANCE MOVED BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY WAS PASSED.

ALSO PASSED WAS THE MOTION UNDER MAGISTRATES ORDINANCE MOVED BY THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS.

THREE BILLS WERE PASSED. PARENT AND CHILD BILL AND TRADING FUNDS BILL WERE PASSED WITH AMENDMENTS. AUDIT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993 WAS PASSED WITHOUT AMENDMENT.

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