



## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 1989

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REGULATION OF FREE FEEDER BUS SERVICE DESIRABLE

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THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IT WAS DESIRABLE IN THE LONGER TERM TO REGULATE FREE FEEDER BUS SERVICES TO ENSURE MORE EFFECTIVE CO-ORDINATION BETWEEN COMPETING TRANSPORT SERVICES.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON MARIA TAM CONCERNING FREE FEEDER BUS SERVICES OFFERED BY THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION, MR LEUNG SAID THAT PRACTICAL MEASURES BEING EXAMINED INCLUDE GREATER REGULATION OF THE PERMITTED ROUTES OF FREE FEEDER SERVICES TO ENSURE THAT WASTEFUL COMPETITION WAS AVOIDED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE.

HE SAID THE KCRC ORDINANCE EMPOWERED THE CORPORATION TO OPERATE FREE FEEDER BUS SERVICES TO AND FROM RAILWAY PREMISES.

THESE SERVICES REQUIRED ONLY A PASSENGER SERVICE LICENCE ISSUED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT.

ON THE INTRODUCTION OF TWO NEW KCRC FREE FEEDER BUS ROUTES IN TAI PO, MR LEUNG SAID THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT HAD REMINDED THE CORPORATION OF THE IMPLICATIONS FOR OTHER TRANSPORT OPERATORS AND THEIR INTEREST, IN ADDITION TO COMPLYING WITH THE LICENSING CONDITION OF THE PASSENGER SERVICE LICENCE.

MR LEUNG SAID THESE RAILWAY FEEDERS FACILITATED PASSENGERS IN THE USE OF THE RAILWAY SYSTEM AND WERE BROADLY CONSISTENT WITH THE OVERALL POLICY OF ENCOURAGING THE USE OF OFF-ROAD PUBLIC TRANSPORT MODES.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, THE DEPARTMENT FOUND THAT THESE FREE SERVICES DID AFFECT OTHER PUBLIC TRANSPORT, PARTICULARLY THOSE MODES RUNNING PARALLEL SERVICES INCLUDING ONE GREEN MINIBUS ROUTE AND TWO KOWLOON MOTOR BUS SERVICES.

THE ADMINISTRATION WAS CONSIDERING POSSIBLE RATIONALISATION OF SUCH SERVICES, HE ADDED.

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FIGURES GIVEN ON WASTAGE RATE OF LIAISON OFFICERS

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THE WASTAGE RATE OF THE LIAISON OFFICER GRADE IN THE NEW TERRITORIES REGION OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS HAD RANGED FROM A HIGH OF 10.4 PER CENT IN 1980-81 TO A LOW OF 0.8 PER CENT IN 1986-87.

DURING THE SAME PERIOD, 181 LIAISON OFFICERS II HAD BEEN RECRUITED AND A RECRUITMENT EXERCISE IS NOW IN PROGRESS TO FILL EXISTING VACANCIES.

/THIS WAS .....

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THIS WAS STATED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON ADOLF HSU, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG.

CONCERNING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND STARTING SALARY OF LIAISON STAFF IN THE URBAN AND NEW TERRITORIES DISTRICTS, MR HSU SAID THAT LIAISON DUTIES IN THE URBAN AREAS WERE UNDERTAKEN BY EXECUTIVE OFFICERS WHO BELONGED TO A GENERAL GRADE, ENTRY TO WHICH REQUIRED A UNIVERSITY DEGREE.

"THEIR ENTRY QUALIFICATION IS SET HAVING REGARD TO THE WIDE RANGE OF DUTIES OF THE GRADE OF WHICH LIAISON WORK IN THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION IS ONLY A PART.

"LIAISON OFFICERS ON THE OTHER HAND ARE A DEPARTMENTAL GRADE OF THE CNTA AND ARE EMPLOYED EXCLUSIVELY ON LIAISON WORK IN THE NEW TERRITORIES. THEIR ENTRY QUALIFICATION IS MATRICULATION.

"THE STARTING SALARY FOR THESE TWO GRADES IS IN LINE WITH THE BENCHMARK FOR DEGREE AND MATRICULATION GRADES RESPECTIVELY," MR HSU SAID.

MR HSU ALSO SAID THAT SINCE THE MERGER OF THE FORMER HOME AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT AND THE FORMER NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION IN 1981, ATTEMPTS WERE MADE TO MOVE AWAY FROM THE SITUATION WHEREBY TWO DIFFERENT GRADES WERE REQUIRED TO UNDERTAKE SIMILAR DUTIES IN THE SAME DEPARTMENT BY MERGING THE LIAISON OFFICER GRADE INTO THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER GRADE.

"HOWEVER, DESPITE CONSIDERABLE EFFORTS BY THE ADMINISTRATION, THE ASSOCIATION OF LIAISON OFFICERS (ALO) AND THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVE GRADE ASSOCIATION (HKGEA) COULD NOT COME TO TERMS ON THE PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR DETERMINING THE SENIORITY OF LIAISON OFFICERS UPON REGRADING TO THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER GRADE," HE SAID.

"BOTH ASSOCIATIONS WERE THEREFORE OPPOSED TO THE PROPOSED MERGER. IN VIEW OF THEIR OPPOSITION THE PROPOSAL WAS ABANDONED IN 1987.

"RECENTLY THE ALO HAS WITHDRAWN ITS OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED MERGER AND HAS ASKED THAT IT BE PUT INTO EFFECT.

"THE CIVIL SERVICE BRANCH IS NOW SEEING IF A WAY CAN BE FOUND TO EFFECT THE MERGER IN A MANNER ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH GRADES."

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GOVT CONVEYANCING SERVICE FOR PSPS TRANSACTIONS NOT APPROPRIATE  
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IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE A CONVEYANCING SERVICE TO PURCHASERS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION SCHEME AS THE TRANSACTIONS ARE PRIVATE.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON KENNETH KWOK, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON LEUNG WAI-TUNG.

MR KWOK SAID ALTHOUGH THE DEVELOPER WAS OBLIGED TO ACCEPT THE PURCHASERS NOMINATED BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY, THE CONVEYANCING OF THE FLATS TO INDIVIDUAL PURCHASERS WAS A PRIVATE TRANSACTION.

SOLICITORS IN PRIVATE PRACTICE WERE THEREFORE EMPLOYED BY THE DEVELOPER FOR THE CONVEYANCING WORK.

HOWEVER, IN THE CASE OF THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME, THE FLATS WERE SOLD BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY.

"TO THIS END, THE TRANSACTION IS A GOVERNMENT TRANSACTION, HENCE CONVEYANCING WORK IS DONE 'IN HOUSE' BY THE GOVERNMENT'S LAWYERS," HE SAID.

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NO MAJOR REVIEW ON TEXTILE QUOTA ALLOCATION  
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THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR ANY MAJOR REVIEW OF THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENT FOR ALLOCATION OF TEXTILE QUOTAS, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID NENDICK, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON KINGSLEY SIT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR NENDICK SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS PLEASED TO SEE THAT THE FLEXIBILITY BUILT INTO THE PRESENT SYSTEM HAD GENERALLY RESULTED IN HIGH LEVELS OF QUOTA UTILISATION.

MR NENDICK EXPLAINED THAT UNDER THE TEXTILES EXPORT CONTROL SYSTEM, ALLOCATION OF QUOTA WAS BASED ON PAST PERFORMANCE.

PROVISION WAS ALSO MADE TO ALLOW NEWCOMERS AND OTHER COMPANIES WITH NO QUOTAS OR INSUFFICIENT QUOTAS TO OBTAIN THEM.

"TRANSFER OF TEXTILE QUOTAS, ON EITHER A PERMANENT OR A TEMPORARY BASIS, IS PERMITTED, SUBJECT TO CERTAIN CONDITIONS.

"ONE OF THESE CONDITIONS IS THAT ANY TEMPORARY TRANSFER OF QUOTAS EXCEEDING 50 PER CENT WILL TRIGGER A DEDUCTION IN QUOTA ALLOCATION IN THE FOLLOWING YEAR.

/"THE CALCULATION .....

"THE CALCULATION OF THE TEMPORARY TRANSFER PERCENTAGE IS DONE ON THE BASIS OF SEPARATE MARKETS AND DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PRODUCTS," HE SAID.

MR NENDICK POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS WELL AWARE THAT THE TRANSFER OF QUOTAS COULD LEAD TO A PREMIUM BUT, EVEN WITH THIS ADDED COST, HONG KONG'S EXPORTS HAD REMAINED COMPETITIVE.

"MOREOVER, IT IS IMPORTANT TO HIGHLIGHT THE FACT THAT THE PREMIUM IS DETERMINED BY DEMAND AND SUPPLY. THERE HAVE BEEN INSTANCES WHEN THE PREMIUM HAS BEEN NEGATIVE," HE SAID.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO PLANS FOR ANY MAJOR REVIEW OF THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS.

"THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE WILL HOWEVER CONSULT THE TEXTILES ADVISORY BOARD IF AND WHEN ANY NEED TO CHANGE THE EXISTING SYSTEM IS PERCEIVED," HE ADDED.

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#### MEASURES TO MAINTAIN NURSING STAFF NUMBERS

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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VARIOUS MEASURES WHICH THE GOVERNMENT WAS EXAMINING IN CONSULTATION WITH THE NURSING STAFF SHOULD HELP TO ALLEVIATE THE CURRENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION DIFFICULTIES BEING EXPERIENCED IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON T.H. CHAU, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON NELLIE FONG, MR CHAU SAID THERE HAD BEEN INCREASING DIFFICULTIES IN THE RECRUITMENT OF STUDENT NURSES.

"IN ADDITION, THE WASTAGE RATE AMONG REGISTERED NURSES HAS GONE UP," HE SAID.

"THERE WOULD BE DIFFICULTY IN MEETING FUTURE NEEDS IF THE PRESENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROBLEMS SHOULD CONTINUE," HE ADDED.

OUTLINING SOME OF THE MEASURES TO BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION, MR CHAU SAID A SUBMISSION PROPOSING IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PAY SCALES OF THE NURSING GRADES HAD BEEN MADE TO THE STANDING COMMISSION ON CIVIL SERVICE SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE, FOR EXAMINATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE OVERALL REVIEW OF THE SALARY STRUCTURE OF NON-DIRECTORATE GRADES.

"THE STANDING COMMISSION HAS BEEN REQUESTED TO GIVE PRIORITY TO THE EXAMINATION OF THIS SUBMISSION," HE SAID.

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AS AN INTERIM MEASURE TO IMPROVE THE RECRUITMENT OF NURSE TRAINEES, A RESIDENTIAL ALLOWANCE OF \$700 PER MONTH WOULD BE PAID TO NURSE TRAINEES FROM OCTOBER 1, MR CHAU NOTED.

"RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGNS FOR STUDENT NURSES WILL BE STEPPED UP THROUGH PROMOTION IN THE MEDIA AND CAREER EXHIBITIONS," HE ADDED.

AS A FURTHER MEASURE TO IMPROVE THE SUPPLY OF NURSING STAFF, THE HOSPITAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH WERE IDENTIFYING AREAS WHERE PART-TIME NURSES COULD BE SUITABLY EMPLOYED. MR CHAU SAID.

"IN ADDITION, A NUMBER OF OTHER IMPROVEMENT PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN DEvised AND THE NECESSARY APPROVAL FOR THEIR IMPLEMENTATION IS NOW BEING SOUGHT," HE SAID.

"THESE MEASURES INCLUDE THE CREATION OF ADDITIONAL POSTS, THE PROVISION OF CLERICAL SUPPORT, THE ENHANCEMENT OF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES, ETC," HE ADDED.

THE NUMBER OF VACANT POSTS FOR REGISTERED NURSES IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS AT THE END OF 1986, 1987 AND 1988 WERE 103, 152 AND 255 RESPECTIVELY, REPRESENTING 1.2 PER CENT, 1.7 PER CENT AND 2.7 PER CENT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT AT THE END OF EACH YEAR, MR CHAU SAID.

THE CORRESPONDING NUMBER OF VACANCIES IN THE SUBVENTED SECTOR FOR THE SAME PERIOD WERE 185, 353 AND 335, AND THESE REPRESENTED 4.6 PER CENT, 8.3 PER CENT AND 7.9 PER CENT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT AT THE END OF EACH YEAR, HE ADDED.

THE NUMBER OF STUDENT NURSES REGISTERING WITH THE NURSING BOARD AFTER RECEIVING TRAINING IN THE GOVERNMENT AND SUBVENTED SECTORS WAS 1,094 IN 1986; 991 IN 1987; AND 799 IN 1988.

MR CHAU SAID THAT DURING THE NEXT FIVE YEARS TO 1993-94, THERE WOULD BE A REQUIREMENT FOR 5,200 ADDITIONAL REGISTERED NURSES TO COPE WITH THE EXPANSION OF HOSPITAL AND CLINIC SERVICES.

"THERE WILL ALSO BE AN ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR ABOUT 4,200 REGISTERED NURSES TO FILL VACANT POSTS ARISING FROM PROJECTED WASTAGE AND TO EFFECT CERTAIN IMPROVEMENTS TO NURSING SERVICES WHICH THE ADMINISTRATION WISHES TO INTRODUCE," HE SAID.

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STUDY ON ELECTRONIC DATA INTERCHANGE  
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A CONSULTANCY STUDY RELATING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ELECTRONIC DATA INTERCHANGE (EDI) FOR TRADE-RELATED APPLICATION IN HONG KONG IS SCHEDULED TO BE COMPLETED BY MID-JULY, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID NENDICK, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE STUDY REPORTS WERE EXPECTED TO BE AVAILABLE IN STAGES FROM JULY TO AUGUST, MR NENDICK SAID IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON JAMES MCGREGOR.

THE GOVERNMENT WAS TAKING PART IN THE CONSULTANCY STUDY, WHICH HAD BEEN JOINTLY ORGANISED BY A NUMBER OF FIRMS AND OTHER BODIES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, HE SAID.

"THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CENTRAL AND PERMANENT BODY TO CO-ORDINATE THE DRAWING UP OF STANDARDS WOULD SEEM AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDI.

"THE POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF EDI STANDARDS IS ONE OF THE SUBJECTS BEING EXAMINED IN THE CONSULTANCY STUDY AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL THEREFORE BE CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR SUCH A STANDARDS BODY IN THE LIGHT OF THE CONSULTANT'S RECOMMENDATIONS," HE SAID.

MR NENDICK SAID THE SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY WAS A MUCH BROADER ISSUE THAN MESSAGE STANDARDS.

"IT IS ONE OF THE SUBJECTS OF A CURRENT TECHNO-ECONOMIC STUDY COMMISSIONED BY THE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT BOARD.

"OTHER ASPECTS, SUCH AS MANPOWER PROVISION FOR THE INDUSTRY, ARE BEING EXAMINED BY THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY," HE SAID.

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CONTROL ON AIR POLLUTANT EMISSIONS FROM INDUSTRIES  
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THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO FURTHER CONTROL GASEOUS AND PARTICULATE EMISSIONS FROM INDUSTRIES THROUGH THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW REGULATIONS TO CONTROL THE SULPHUR CONTENT OF FUEL OIL, AND THROUGH THE TIGHTENING OF PERMITTED SMOKE EMISSIONS AS CONTROLLED UNDER PRESENT REGULATIONS.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON KENNETH KWOK, SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON PETER WONG ON THE GOVERNMENT'S PLANS TO STRENGTHEN THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONTROL OF AIR POLLUTANT EMISSIONS.

MR KWOK .....

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MR KWOK ALSO NOTED THAT THE NEW REGULATIONS UNDER THE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL ORDINANCE, REQUIRING NEW LARGE AIR POLLUTING FACTORIES TO INSTALL EQUIPMENT TO REDUCE THEIR EMISSION OF AIR POLLUTANTS TO THE LOWEST PRACTICABLE LEVEL, HAD COME INTO FORCE IN OCTOBER 1987.

ON WHETHER POWER STATIONS WERE FITTED WITH PARTICLE SEPARATORS AND GAS SCRUBBERS TO MINIMISE AIR POLLUTION, HE SAID THAT SINCE OIL-FIRED POWER STATIONS DID NOT GENERATE UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF SOLID EMISSIONS, THEY WERE NOT FITTED WITH PARTICLE SEPARATOR EQUIPMENT.

"THE ONLY CONTROL DEVICES USED FOR THE CONTROL OF GASEOUS AIR POLLUTANTS ARE THE VERY TALL CHIMNEYS. HOK UN POWER STATION, WHICH HAS RELATIVELY LOWER CHIMNEYS, HAD BEEN REQUIRED TO USE A LOWER SULPHUR FUEL," HE SAID.

MR KWOK ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE OIL-FIRED POWER STATIONS IN THE TERRITORY WERE IN THE PROCESS OF BEING PHASED OUT, AND THE ELECTRICITY GENERATION REQUIREMENTS WOULD THEN BE MET BY THE COAL-FIRED POWER STATIONS.

MR KWOK SAID THE TWO COAL-FIRED POWER STATIONS AT LAMMA ISLAND AND TAP SHEK KOK WERE BOTH FITTED WITH ELECTROSTATIC PRECIPITATORS FOR THE REMOVAL OF SOLID MATERIALS FROM THE FLUE GAS.

"THESE TWO POWER STATIONS DO NOT REQUIRE GAS SCRUBBING EQUIPMENT, BECAUSE THEY BOTH USE VERY HIGH QUALITY COAL WITH SULPHUR CONTENT OF LESS THAN ONE PER CENT BY WEIGHT.

"IN ADDITION, VERY TALL CHIMNEYS ARE USED TO ADEQUATELY DISPERSE AND DILUTE THE EMISSIONS," HE SAID.

WITH REGARD TO INCINERATORS, MR KWOK SAID ALL OF THE THREE EXISTING MUNICIPAL INCINERATORS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE LAI CHI KOK "B" INCINERATION PLANT, WHICH WOULD BE CLOSED DOWN UPON THE FULL COMMISSIONING OF THE ELECTROSTATIC PRECIPITATOR EQUIPMENT AT LAI CHI KOK INCINERATION PLANT "A" BY THE END OF THIS MONTH, WERE FITTED WITH ELECTROSTATIC PRECIPITATORS, WITH EFFICIENCY OF REMOVAL RANGING FROM 94 TO 99 PER CENT.

"THESE INCINERATORS HAVE VERY TALL CHIMNEYS AND ARE NOT REQUIRED TO BE FITTED WITH GAS SCRUBBERS," HE ADDED.

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SECURE SEATS FOR PASSENGERS IN A GOODS VEHICLE  
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FROM SEPTEMBER 1, 1989, ALL PASSENGERS IN A GOODS VEHICLE WOULD BE REQUIRED TO BE SEATED IN A PROPERLY CONSTRUCTED AND SECURED SEAT, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON RONALD CHOW, MR LEUNG SAID THAT DRIVERS WOULD NO LONGER BE ALLOWED TO DRIVE A VEHICLE WITH A PORTER RIDING ON THE TAILBOARD OR THE LOAD.

DRAFT LEGISLATION WAS ALSO BEING PREPARED TO REQUIRE ENCLOSED VAN-TYPE LIGHT GOODS VEHICLE TO HAVE AN EFFECTIVE PROTECTIVE PARTITION BETWEEN THE PASSENGER SEATS AND THE GOODS COMPARTMENT.

MR LEUNG SAID THAT AT PRESENT, THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TRAFFIC CONTROL) REGULATIONS REQUIRED ALL DRIVERS TO ENSURE THAT THE LOAD WAS PROPERLY SECURED TO THE VEHICLE, THAT NO PORTION OF IT TOUCHED THE GROUND OR WAS SOLELY SUPPORTED BY THE TAILGATE.

THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND PRACTICAL GUIDANCE ON THE SAFE CARRIAGE OF GOODS AND PASSENGERS WERE ALREADY PROVIDED IN THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE LOADING OF VEHICLES, WHICH WAS DISTRIBUTED TO ALL GOODS VEHICLE OPERATORS IN NOVEMBER 1988.

THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT HAD ORGANISED A GOODS VEHICLE LOADING EXHIBITION TO DEMONSTRATE THE CORRECT METHODS OF SECURELY LOADING DIFFERENT KINDS OF LORRIES AND TRUCKS.

THE SAFETY AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE PUBLICISED, HE SAID.

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SPENDING ON VIETNAMESE AMOUNTS TO \$1,458 MILLION  
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EXPENDITURE ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEES AND BOAT PEOPLE INCURRED BY THE GOVERNMENT SINCE 1979 HAS AMOUNTED TO \$1,458.03 MILLION, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON ALISTAIR ASPREY, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR ASPREY GAVE THIS FIGURE IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON RONALD CHOW.

/HE PROVIDED .....

HE PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING TABLE ON ANNUAL EXPENDITURE:

	CAPITAL COSTS (A) (\$MILLION)	RECURRENT COSTS (\$MILLION)		TOTAL COSTS (A) + (B) (\$ MILLION)
		(B) NOTE 1	(C) NOTE 2	
1979-80)		137.70	-	271.90
1980-81)	134.20			
1981-82)				
1982-83	22.40	56.60	7.91	79.00
1983-84	47.70	47.50	15.84	95.20
1984-85	7.80	92.90	17.40	100.70
1985-86	1.56	115.70	16.31	117.26
1986-87	2.20	120.50	14.87	122.70
1987-88	11.04	143.60	17.28	154.64
1988-89	183.33	333.30	52.39	516.63
TOTAL	410.23	1,047.80	142.00	1,458.03

NOTE 1: THESE ARE RECURRENT COSTS INCURRED BY THE GOVERNMENT ON PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS AND DEPARTMENTAL EXPENSES FOR STAFF AND ACTIVITIES RELATING TO VIETNAMESE REFUGEES AND BOAT PEOPLE.

NOTE 2: THESE ARE RECURRENT COSTS INITIALLY INCURRED BY THE GOVERNMENT ON CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES AND BOAT PEOPLE IN CLOSED CENTRES AND DETENTION CENTRES, BUT SUBSEQUENTLY RECOVERED FROM THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR).

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CODE OF PRACTICE KEPT UP TO DATE  
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THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR MINIMUM FIRE SERVICES INSTALLATION AND EQUIPMENT, WHICH WAS REVIEWED AND UPDATED IN 1987, IS CONSIDERED ADEQUATE TO COVER ALL EXISTING BUILDING DESIGNS AND USES, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON ALISTAIR ASPREY, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON JAMES TIEN, MR ASPREY SAID THE CODE WAS KEPT UNDER REGULAR REVIEW TO ENSURE THAT IT REMAINED UP TO DATE IN LINE WITH DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BUILDING INDUSTRY.

"STAIRCASES PROVIDE THE MAIN MEANS OF ESCAPE FOR OCCUPANTS OF MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS, AND THE MAIN MEANS OF ACCESS FOR FIREMEN, IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE," HE SAID.

"ALL MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS IN HONG KONG ARE DESIGNED TO HAVE SUFFICIENT STAIRCASES FOR THIS PURPOSE.

"THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT INSPECTS ALL PREMISES, FOR WHICH A RESTAURANT LICENCE IS SOUGHT, TO ENSURE THAT FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS, INCLUDING ADEQUATE MEANS OF ACCESS AND ESCAPE, ARE COMPLIED WITH," HE ADDED.

"WINDOW OPENINGS ARE NOT AN ESSENTIAL, NOR IN MANY CASES A PRACTICAL, MEANS OF ACCESS AND ESCAPE IN THE CASE OF MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS, AND NO ADDITIONAL FIRE EXITS ARE REQUIRED IN CASES WHERE WINDOWS ARE BLOCKED BY DECORATION," HE SAID.

MR ASPREY SAID AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP, WHOSE TERMS OF REFERENCE WERE TO DEVISE ADEQUATE LICENSING ARRANGEMENTS FOR GUEST HOUSES, WOULD SUBMIT ITS PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS SHORTLY.

"THESE WILL NOT DEAL WITH RESTAURANTS," HE SAID.

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EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING BY-LAWS PASSED  
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) APPROVED THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING BY-LAWS.

MOVING A MOTION, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, SAID THAT THE BY-LAWS WOULD ENABLE THE NEW HONG KONG TUNNEL COMPANY EFFECTIVELY TO CONTROL, OPERATE AND MANAGE THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING TO BE OPENED THIS SUMMER.

PROPER OBSERVATION OF THE BY-LAWS WOULD FACILITATE THE SAFE AND EFFICIENT PASSAGE OF MOTOR VEHICLES THROUGH THE ROAD TUNNEL.

/HE SAID .....

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HE SAID THAT THE BY-LAWS COVERED THE CONTROL OF TRAFFIC, PAYMENT OF TOLLS AND PROHIBITION AND RESTRICTION OF CERTAIN TYPES OF VEHICLES IN THE ROAD TUNNEL AREA.

MOTORISTS WHO CONTRAVENED THOSE BY-LAWS, WHICH WERE REGULATORY IN NATURE, WERE LIABLE TO A FINE OF \$2,000 ON CONVICTION, HE ADDED.

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TUNNEL OFFENDERS MAY PLEAD GUILTY BY LETTER  
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) PASSED A RESOLUTION ENABLING A PERSON CHARGED WITH OFFENCES UNDER THE ROAD TUNNELS (GOVERNMENT) REGULATIONS TO PLEAD GUILTY BY LETTER.

A MOTION TO AMEND THE THIRD SCHEDULE TO THE MAGISTRATES ORDINANCE WAS MOVED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG.

AT PRESENT THE ORDINANCE PROVIDED FOR A DEFENDANT TO PLEAD GUILTY BY LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE MAGISTRATE FOR AN OFFENCE UNDER THE LION ROCK TUNNEL REGULATIONS, WHICH HAD BEEN REPEALED AND REPLACED BY THE ROAD TUNNEL (GOVERNMENT) REGULATIONS, MR LEUNG SAID.

HOWEVER, THE SCHEDULE HAD NOT BEEN REVISED ACCORDINGLY.

MR LEUNG SAID THE PRESENT SITUATION WAS NOT SATISFACTORY AS IT INCREASED PUBLIC INCONVENIENCE, ADMINISTRATIVE COST AND COURT TIME.

IT WAS THEREFORE PROPOSED TO AMEND THE SCHEDULE BY REFERRING TO THE ROAD TUNNELS (GOVERNMENT) REGULATIONS INSTEAD OF THE REPEALED ONES AND THEREBY COVER ALL EXISTING AND FUTURE GOVERNMENT TUNNELS UNDER THE "PLEAD-GUILTY-BY-LETTER" ARRANGEMENT.

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LIMITATION ON PLB NUMBERS CONTINUES  
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A MOTION TO EXTEND THE LIMITATION ON THE NUMBER OF PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES UNTIL JUNE 20, 1991 WAS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE MOTION, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, SAID THAT THE EXISTING LIMIT OF 4,350 PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES WAS ORDERED BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL ON JUNE 10, 1986.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 1989

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BILL ON SEPARATE TAXATION OF MARRIED WOMEN

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A BILL WHICH SEEKS TO GIVE LEGISLATIVE EFFECT FROM APRIL 1, 1990 TO PROPOSALS TO PROVIDE FOR THE SEPARATE TAXATION OF MARRIED WOMEN WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO.3) BILL 1989, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID NENDICK, SAID IF ENACTED THE PROPOSALS WOULD BE APPLICABLE TO 1989-90 FINAL SALARIES TAX ASSESSMENTS ISSUED ON OR AFTER APRIL 1, 1990.

HE SAID THE INTRODUCTION OF THE BILL WAS THE OUTCOME OF A PERIOD OF CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC DEBATE AS TO HOW BEST A FAMILY'S INCOME SHOULD BE TAXED.

THE SEPARATE TAXATION PROPOSALS IN THE BILL HAD BEEN FORMULATED IN CONSULTATION WITH A NUMBER OF PROFESSIONAL AND OTHER INTERESTED ORGANISATIONS, INCLUDING THE JOINT LIAISON COMMITTEE ON TAXATION, MR NENDICK SAID.

"THE SYSTEM PROPOSED PROVIDES THAT HUSBANDS AND WIVES WILL BE INDIVIDUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL ASPECTS OF THEIR PERSONAL TAXATION AFFAIRS," HE SAID.

"PROVIDED THAT THEY ARE NOT ASSESSABLE AT THE STANDARD RATE, WORKING HUSBANDS AND WIVES WILL EACH RECEIVE A BASIC ALLOWANCE.

"IN SINGLE INCOME FAMILIES, THE SOLE-EARNER WILL RECEIVE A MARRIED TAXPAYER ALLOWANCE.

"TAXPAYERS WILL CONTINUE TO BE ENTITLED TO CLAIM ALLOWANCES IN RESPECT OF THEIR CHILDREN AND DEPENDENT PARENTS.

"IN CASES WHERE ON SPOUSE'S INCOME IS NOT SUFFICIENTLY HIGH TO ABSORB ALL OF HIS OR HER ALLOWANCE, A SYSTEM OF JOINT ASSESSMENT WILL APPLY," MR NENDICK EXPLAINED.

"IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, A COUPLE MAY CONTINUE TO HAVE THEIR SALARIES TAX LIABILITY COMPUTED ON THEIR JOINT AGGREGATED INCOME, IN VERY MUCH THE SAME WAY AS AT PRESENT, IF THIS WILL RESULT IN THE FAMILY'S OVERALL TAX LIABILITY BEING REDUCED," HE ADDED.

CONCURRENT WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SEPARATE TAXATION, THE PERSONAL ASSESSMENT LEGISLATION AS IT APPLIED TO MARRIED COUPLES WOULD ALSO BE APPROPRIATELY AMENDED, MR NENDICK SAID.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID THE MAIN LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS OF THE BILL WERE CONTAINED IN FIVE CLAUSES:

- \* CLAUSE 3 REPEALS THE EXISTING MANDATORY JOINT TAXATION PROVISIONS AND PROVIDES THAT HUSBANDS AND WIVES WILL BE CHARGEABLE TO TAX ON THEIR RESPECTIVE INCOMES. AT THE SAME TIME IT ALSO SETS OUT THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH A MARRIED COUPLE MAY ELECT JOINT ASSESSMENT IF ONE OF THEM HAS ALLOWANCES EXCEEDING INCOME.
- \* CLAUSE 6 PROVIDES THE MECHANICS FOR CALCULATING A COUPLE'S NET CHARGEABLE INCOME WHEN JOINT ASSESSMENT IS ELECTED.
- \* CLAUSE 9 ALLOWS TAXPAYERS TO BE GRANTED A BASIC ALLOWANCE UNLESS THEY ARE ENTITLED TO A MARRIED TAXPAYER ALLOWANCE. WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SEPARATE TAXATION THE WORKING WIFE ALLOWANCE IS REPEALED.
- \* CLAUSE 10 CONSOLIDATES ALL OF THE PERSONAL ASSESSMENT INTERPRETATION CLAUSES INTO ONE SECTION AND AMENDS THE EXISTING DEFINITION OF "INDIVIDUAL" TO REMOVE THE EXCLUSION OF A MARRIED WOMAN BEING A PERSON ENTITLED TO ELECT PERSONAL ASSESSMENT.
- \* CLAUSE 28 INTRODUCES TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS TO DEAL WITH THE VALIDITY OF ASSESSMENTS ISSUED PRIOR TO THE DATE OF COMMENCEMENT OF THE AMENDING LEGISLATION. THE PROVISIONS ALSO DEAL WITH PAYMENT OF TAX ON LUMP SUM PAYMENTS RELATED BACK TO EARLIER YEARS OF ASSESSMENT. ASSESSMENT OF TAXPAYERS LEAVING HONG KONG AND SUBSEQUENTLY RETURNING WITHIN THE TRANSITIONAL YEAR OF ASSESSMENT, OMISSIONS OF INCOME FROM ASSESSMENTS AND THE APPLICATION OF PROVISIONAL SALARIES TAX PAID IN RESPECT OF THE TRANSITIONAL YEAR.

MR NENDICK ESTIMATED THAT THE FULL YEAR COST TO THE REVENUE IN 1990-91 OF IMPLEMENTING SEPARATE TAXATION TO BE SOME \$585 MILLION.

"HOWEVER, WITH THE SIMULTANEOUS ABOLITION OF THE WORKING WIFE ALLOWANCE, WHICH HAS A FULL YEAR COST OF SOME \$355 MILLION, THE NET ADDITIONAL COST OF IMPLEMENTING SEPARATE TAXATION IS ESTIMATED TO BE SOME \$230 MILLION," HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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BILL TO STRENGTHEN LAW AGAINST MARINE LITTERING

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THE SUMMARY OFFENCES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989 AIMS AT STRENGTHENING LEGISLATION AGAINST MARINE LITTERING AND SEEKS TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR MARINE LITTERING OFFENCES.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON KENNETH KWOK, SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL.

CLAUSE 3 WOULD INCREASE THE MAXIMUM PENALTY IMPOSED ON THE OFFENDER FROM \$5,000 TO \$10,000.

IT WOULD ALSO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM PENALTY IMPOSED ON THE OWNER OR MASTER OF A VESSEL OR THE PROPRIETOR OR OCCUPIER OF A PLACE OR PREMISES FROM WHERE AN OFFENCE WAS COMMITTED, FROM \$5,000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR SIX MONTHS, TO \$50,000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR ONE YEAR.

"THE BILL ALSO SEEKS TO FACILITATE PROSECUTION BY GIVING AUTHORISED PUBLIC OFFICERS POWER OF ENTRY AND POWER TO REQUIRE A PERSON TO DECLARE HIS NAME AND ADDRESS AND PRODUCE EVIDENCE OF HIS IDENTITY," MR KWOK SAID.

"THIS IS CONSIDERED NECESSARY BECAUSE THE LACK OF POWER OF ENTRY UNDER THIS ORDINANCE HAS TO SOME EXTENT PREVENTED PUBLIC OFFICERS FROM IDENTIFYING AND PROSECUTING OFFENDERS WHO LITTER IN AND FROM SHIPYARDS, RECLAMATIONS AND OTHER PRIVATE PREMISES ALONG THE WATERFRONT."

THE BILL HAD BEEN ENDORSED BY THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS, HE ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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OLI IS A MILESTONE IN HK'S EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE (OLI) IS A MAJOR MILESTONE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN HONG KONG AND WILL GO A LONG WAY TO QUENCHING STUDENTS' THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE.

THE CONVENER OF THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP FORMED TO STUDY THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE OF HONG KONG BILL 1989, DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP, SAID THIS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL.

DR IP SAID THAT HER GROUP WAS THRILLED OVER THE WIDE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES THE OLI WOULD OPEN UP FOR THOSE WHO ASPIRED TO ADVANCE THEIR LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE.

/ "MANY PEOPLE .....

"MANY PEOPLE WHO HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO GET ADMITTED TO OUR VERY COMPETITIVE TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS CAN NOW FURTHER THEIR EDUCATION THROUGH ENROLMENT WITH THE OLI."

ALSO, BY USING A VARIETY OF INSTRUCTIONAL MEANS, THE OLI ALLOWED STUDENTS TO STUDY IN THE STYLE, IN THE PLACE AND AT THE PACE THAT BEST SUITED THEIR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS, DR IP SAID.

"I THINK THE ONE MOST IMPORTANT FEATURE OF THE ENTIRE CONCEPT OF OPEN LEARNING RELATES TO ITS OPENNESS. IT PROVIDES ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF THEIR PREVIOUS ACADEMIC ATTAINMENTS."

DR IP SAID HER GROUP HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT THE OLI WOULD ACCEPT THE TRANSFER OF CREDITS ACQUIRED FROM RECOGNISED INSTITUTIONS, WHETHER LOCAL OR OVERSEAS, FOR THE PURPOSE OF PARTIAL EXEMPTION FROM STUDIES LEADING TO AN ACADEMIC AWARD BY THE OLI.

IT HAS EXPECTED OTHER INSTITUTIONS TO SIMILARLY RECOGNISE ITS CREDITS.

DR IP SAID THE WHILE THE GROUP UNDERSTOOD THAT THE OLI COURSES WOULD NOT BE OPEN ONLY TO PEOPLE LIVING IN HONG KONG, IT HOPED THAT PRIORITY WOULD BE GIVEN TO LOCAL STUDENTS SEEKING ADMISSION.

"AS THE OLI BECOMES MORE DEVELOPED, OPPORTUNITIES CAN THEN BE EXTENDED TO STUDENTS OUTSIDE HONG KONG," SHE SAID.

DR IP ALSO SAID THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD INITIALLY MEET THE OLI'S SETTING UP COSTS AND SUBVENT ITS OPERATING EXPENSES, AND THERE WOULD BE PROVISION FOR THE SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE OLI'S ESTIMATES UNTIL 1993-94 WHEN THE OLI WAS EXPECTED TO BE SELF-FINANCING.

ACCORDING TO DR IP, THE LEGCO GROUP WAS OF THE VIEW THAT THE OLI SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO FINANCIAL CONTROL EVEN AFTER IT HAD BECOME SELF-FINANCING, IN ORDER TO SAFEGUARD THE PUBLIC'S INTERESTS.

SHE SAID THE GROUP ACCEPTED THE ADMINISTRATION'S ADVICE THAT AN OVERALL REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND RELEVANT STATUTORY BODIES WAS BEING UNDERTAKEN, AND IF THE REVIEW FAVOURED THE INCORPORATION OF A ROLE FOR GOVERNMENT IN THE LEGISLATION OF THE RELEVANT STATUTORY BODIES, SUITABLE AMENDMENTS COULD BE INTRODUCED TO THE OLI ORDINANCE.

DR IP PAID TRIBUTE TO AD HOC GROUP MEMBERS FOR THEIR VALUABLE EFFORTS, IN PARTICULAR THE HON LEUNG WAI-TUNG WHO HAD MADE VERY SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SCRUTINY OF THE CHINESE TEXT OF THIS BILL.

SHE HOPED THAT THE MANY USEFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE POINTS RAISED ON THE CHINESE TEXT WILL NOT BE LOST SIGHT OF AND THAT THEY WOULD PROVE TO BE OF USE FOR FUTURE CHINESE LEGISLATION.

MEANWHILE, A TOTAL OF SIX AMENDMENT CLAUSES TO THE BILL WERE MOVED BY DR IP DURING THE BILL'S COMMITTEE STAGE.

MOVING THESE CLAUSES, DR IP SAID THAT THEY CONCERNED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE DEFINITION OF OPEN LEARNING AND THE PROVISION FOR THE PRESIDENT TO APPOINT A MAXIMUM OF 14 MEMBERS, INCLUDING TWO WITH RELEVANT EXPERIENCE IN OTHER PROFESSIONS IN THE COMMUNITY.

MOREOVER, AN AMENDMENT WAS MADE TO THE EFFECT THAT THE CHAIRMAN, THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN AND THE TREASURER OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL WOULD BE APPOINTED FROM AMONG THOSE MEMBERS WITH EXPERIENCE IN COMMERCE, INDUSTRY OR IN OTHER PROFESSIONS.

THE POWER OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD TO SET STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION AND EXAMINATION HAD ALSO BECOME CLEAR UNDER ANOTHER AMENDMENT TO THE BILL.

THE LAST AMENDMENT PROVIDED FOR A RIGHT OF APPEAL TO THE OLI COUNCIL AGAINST ANY FINDING OF, OR PENALTY IMPOSED, AT A DISCIPLINARY ENQUIRY.

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#### OLI EXPANDS EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

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THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE (OLI) WILL CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO AN EXPANSION IN OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION WITHOUT CREATING A BURDEN ON PRECIOUS PUBLIC RESOURCES, THE HON CHENG HON-KWAN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE OF HONG KONG BILL 1989, MR CHENG, WHO WAS CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE FOR THE OLI, SAID THE INTRODUCTION OF THE BILL WOULD ESTABLISH THE NEW INSTITUTION AND OPEN A NEW CHAPTER ON EDUCATION IN THE TERRITORY.

THIS WAS BECAUSE THE OLI WOULD PROVIDE THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WITH NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDY AT THE TERTIARY LEVEL AT A TIME AND IN AN ENVIRONMENT THEY THEMSELVES COULD CONTROL. MOREOVER, THEIR PRIOR EDUCATION ATTAINMENT WOULD NOT BE MADE A CRITERION FOR ADMISSION.

"THE OLI IS THUS OPEN IN TERMS OF BOTH ACCESS TO ITS COURSES AND THE METHOD OF INSTRUCTION," MR CHENG SAID, ADDING THAT ITS COURSE DELIVERY METHODS WERE MORE COST-EFFECTIVE WHEN COMPARED TO CONVENTIONAL ONES.

HE SAID THE PLANNING COMMITTEE WOULD SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR NEXT MONTH ON ITS DELIBERATIONS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF SETTING UP THE OLI AND THAT THE STAGE WHEN THE INSTITUTE ITSELF HAD TO CARRY ON WITH THE TASK OF DELIVERING OPEN LEARNING TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG HAD NOW BEEN REACHED.

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OPEN LEARNING IS AN INNOVATIVE CONCEPT

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THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE (OLI) NOT ONLY PROVIDED NEW LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE LOCAL PEOPLE WHO WISHED TO RECEIVE HIGHER EDUCATION, BUT ALSO LAID A MORE SOLID FOUNDATION FOR OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, THE HON ROSANNA TAM SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE OF HONG KONG BILL 1989 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MRS TAM SAID SHE SUPPORTED AND WELCOMED THE INTRODUCTION OF THE BILL BECAUSE THE HONG KONG COMMUNITY ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO MANPOWER RESOURCES.

NOTHING COULD BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT THAN MANPOWER TRAINING, SHE SAID.

SHE ALSO APPRECIATED THE DILIGENT EFFORTS MADE BY THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HEADED BY THE HON CHENG HON-KWAN AS WELL AS THE LEADERSHIP OF DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP, CONVENER OF THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP, WHICH HAD CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESSFUL SCRUTINY OF THE BILL.

"HOWEVER, THERE ARE STILL SOME AREAS IN THE BILL WHICH MERIT OUR CONCERN AND HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY DEALT WITH BY THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED," SHE SAID.

"ACCORDING TO THE PRESENT PROPOSAL, THE GOVERNMENT WILL MEET THE INITIAL CAPITAL OUTLAY IN SETTING UP THE OLI, AND ITS OPERATING EXPENSES IN THE FIRST FOUR YEARS. THE AIM OF THE GOVERNMENT IS THAT THE OLI SHOULD BECOME SELF-FINANCING FOUR YEARS AFTER ITS INAUGURATION, WHILE THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT, BY WAY OF ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS, CAN EXAMINE THE ACCOUNTS OF THE OLI BEFORE IT BECOMES FINANCIALLY INDEPENDENT.

"NEVERTHELESS, THE BILL HAS NOT SPELT OUT CLEARLY THE SCHEME OF FINANCIAL CONTROL ON THE OLI WHEN IT BECOMES SELF-FINANCING. NOR HAS IT MENTIONED HOW PUBLIC INTERESTS CAN BE PROPERLY PROTECTED.

"ONLY WITH A PROPER SYSTEM OF CONTROL CAN PUBLIC INTERESTS BE SAFEGUARDED," SHE STRESSED.

MRS TAM HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD, UPON THE COMPLETION OF A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND STATUTORY BODIES, CONSIDER IN THE LIGHT OF THE FINDINGS WHETHER IT WAS NECESSARY TO MAKE ANY CHANGES TO THE RELEVANT ORDINANCE SO THAT AMENDMENTS COULD BE INTRODUCED.

"THE PROVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH OPEN LEARNING IS AN INNOVATIVE CONCEPT IN HONG KONG. IT BRINGS ON A NEW ERA IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM," SHE SAID.

/MRS TAM .....

MRS TAM THEREFORE FELT THAT THE NEW EDUCATIONAL CONCEPT SHOULD BE ADEQUATELY PROMOTED AND PUBLICISED SO THAT THOSE WHO WISHED TO PURSUE FURTHER STUDIES MIGHT REALLY BENEFIT FROM IT.

SHE SUGGESTED THAT IN SETTING UP THE OLI, THE INSTITUTION SHOULD AT THE SAME TIME CONSIDER ESTABLISHING SOME DISTRICT STUDY CENTRES TO PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH A SUITABLE STUDYING ENVIRONMENT.

GUIDANCE SERVICE SHOULD ALSO BE GIVEN TO THOSE WHO HAD LEFT SCHOOL FOR A LONG TIME TO HELP THEM COPE WITH THE NEW CHANGES IN ENVIRONMENT, SHE NOTED.

"I SINCERELY HOPE THAT THE OLI WILL ACHIEVE ITS EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE IN PRODUCING MORE ABLE PERSONS FOR THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG," SHE ADDED.

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EXPERIENCED PEOPLE TO SERVE ON OLI COUNCIL  
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RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE WITH A WIDE RANGE OF EXPERIENCE AND BACKGROUND WILL BE APPOINTED TO THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE (OLI), THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

WINDING UP DEBATE ON THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE OF HONG KONG BILL 1989, MR BRIDGE SAID ONE OF THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COUNCIL WOULD BE TO EXERCISE PROPER FINANCIAL CONTROL OVER THE OLI AFTER IT HAD BECOME SELF-FINANCING.

"THE COUNCIL IS REQUIRED, UNDER CLAUSE 16, TO SUBMIT A YEARLY REPORT ON ITS ACTIVITIES AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE GOVERNOR WHO SHALL TABLE THEM BEFORE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL," HE SAID.

"UNDER CLAUSE 5, THE OLI IS ALSO REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH DIRECTIONS OF THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL," HE ADDED.

IN ADDITION, MR BRIDGE SAID, AS LONG AS THE OLI WAS SUBVENTED BY PUBLIC FUNDS, THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT WOULD HAVE FULL ACCESS TO ITS BOOKS AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON ITS FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS.

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND STATUTORY BODIES SUCH AS THE OLI WAS BEING REVIEWED.

"WE SHALL CERTAINLY RECOMMEND ANY CHANGES IN THE LAW WHICH THIS REVIEW, OR OUR EXPERIENCE OF THE ACTUAL RUNNING OF THE OLI ITSELF, SHOW TO BE NECESSARY," MR BRIDGE SAID.

ON A POINT RAISED AS TO WHETHER THE OLI SHOULD CATER FOR STUDENTS OVERSEAS, MR BRIDGE SAID INITIALLY IT WOULD CONCENTRATE ON LOCAL NEEDS.

/"BUT WE .....

"BUT WE DO NOT RULE OUT ACCEPTING OVERSEAS STUDENTS IN DUE COURSE, ESPECIALLY IF THIS WILL, THROUGH ECONOMIES OF SCALE, ENABLE US TO REDUCE OUR COSTS AND SO REDUCE OUR FEES," HE SAID.

MR BRIDGE AGREED WITH COMMENTS THAT THE OLI WOULD OPEN UP WIDE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR HONG KONG PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO MISSED OUT ON HIGHER EDUCATION.

HE ALSO THANKED THE LEGCO AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE OLI BILL FOR ALL THE HARD WORK IT HAD PUT IN TO IMPROVE THE LEGISLATION.

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LEGCO MEMBERS PRAISE HANDLING OF BIG DEMONSTRATION  
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THE SENIOR MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE HON ALLEN LEE, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) EXPRESSED ON BEHALF OF COUNCIL MEMBERS THEIR GREAT APPRECIATION OF THE RESPONSIBLE WAY IN WHICH THE MAJOR DEMONSTRATION ON HONG KONG ISLAND LAST SUNDAY WAS HANDLED.

MAKING A STATEMENT BEFORE THE CLOSE OF TODAY'S LEGCO MEETING, MR LEE SAID THAT OVER HALF A MILLION CITIZENS OF HONG KONG HAD TAKEN TO THE STREETS IN A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION.

"THEY CONGREGATED, SANG, MARCHED AND MADE SPEECHES FOR OVER SIX HOURS," HE SAID.

"THEY CAME FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE, MANY WITH THEIR FAMILIES IN TOW, IN SUPPORT OF ONE MISSION.

"THAT MISSION WAS TO EXPRESS THEIR GRAVE CONCERN OVER THE RECENT DECISIONS ANNOUNCED BY THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES TO DEAL WITH THE STUDENT MOVEMENT IN BEIJING."

MR LEE SAID THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO JOINED THE DEMONSTRATION WAS UNPRECEDENTED. YET THE ENTIRE DEMONSTRATION TOOK PLACE WITHOUT A SINGLE INCIDENT OF DISORDER OR CROWD-RELATED INJURY.

"THIS WAS NOTHING SHORT OF MIRACULOUS, GIVEN THE PHYSICAL CONGESTION ON HONG KONG ISLAND, THE ENORMOUS SIZE OF THE CROWD, AND THE STRENGTH OF EMOTIONS ON THAT DAY," HE SAID.

MR LEE SAID CREDIT SHOULD IN THE FIRST PLACE BE GIVEN TO THE POLICE FORCE IN CONTROLLING THE PROCESSION.

"THEY SHOWED PROFESSIONALISM AND ABILITY OF THE HIGHEST ORDER. THEY WERE SUMMONED ALMOST WITHOUT NOTICE TO DEAL WITH AN EVENT THAT HONG KONG HAD NEVER BEFORE SEEN, AND THEY DID SO WITH GREAT CALMNESS AND EFFICIENCY."

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID CREDIT SHOULD ALSO BE GIVEN TO THE STAFF OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT WHO ENSURED QUICK DISPERSAL OF THE PEOPLE AFTER THE EVENT, AND TO THE STAFF OF THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT WHO CLEANED UP AFTERWARDS.

HE ALSO EXPRESSED SPECIAL THANKS TO THE STEWARDS AND STAFF OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB FOR MAKING THE CLUB'S GROUNDS AND FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR THE EVENT.

"BUT, ABOVE ALL, ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL, I WANT TO EXPRESS HEARTFELT PRIDE AND APPRECIATION FOR THE SHEER ORDERLINESS AND SENSE OF CO-OPERATION SHOWN BY ALL CONCERNED," HE SAID.

HE ALSO PAID TRIBUTE TO THE NEWS MEDIA FOR THEIR HARD WORK IN COVERING THE EVENT.

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FOUR BILLS PASSED IN LEGCO

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FOUR BILLS WERE PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THEY WERE THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989; THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989; THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989; AND THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE OF HONG KONG BILL 1989.

IN ADDITION, TWO BILLS WERE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS. THEY WERE THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 1989 AND THE SUMMARY OFFENCES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989. DEBATES ON THE BILLS WERE ADJOURNED.

BEFORE THE MEETING CONCLUDED, THE SENIOR MEMBER, THE HON ALLEN LEE, MADE A STATEMENT IN WHICH HE EXPRESSED MEMBERS' GREAT APPRECIATION OF THE WAY IN WHICH THE AUTHORITIES HANDLED EVENTS OF LAST SUNDAY, WHEN LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE JOINED A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION ON HONG KONG ISLAND CONCERNING DEVELOPMENTS IN CHINA.

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SPEEDING UP SCREENING AND APPEAL PROCEDURES FOR VBP  
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THE GOVERNMENT IS TO REVISE ITS PROCEDURES TO SPEED UP THE SCREENING OF VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE (VBP) AND THE PROCESSING OF APPEALS FROM THOSE WHO ARE SCREENED OUT AS NON REFUGEES.

THIS WAS APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL FOLLOWING THE COMPLETION OF A GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF THE PRESENT SCREENING AND APPEAL ARRANGEMENTS.

APART FROM STREAMLINING THE SCREENING PROCEDURES TO MINIMISE THE TIME REQUIRED FOR STATUS DETERMINATION, IT IS PROPOSED TO SET UP REFUGEE STATUS REVIEW BOARDS TO DEAL SPECIFICALLY WITH APPEAL CASES.

TO THIS END, THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSES TO INTRODUCE SHORTLY AN AMENDMENT BILL INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROPOSED REVIEW BOARDS.

REFUGEE CO-ORDINATOR, MR MIKE HANSON, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE EXISTING SCREENING AND APPEAL PROCEDURES WERE TOO SLOW TO COPE WITH THE GROWING POPULATION OF VBP WITHIN A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME.

"UNLESS AND UNTIL WE CAN COMPLETE SCREENING AND APPEALS QUICKLY, REPATRIATION, WHETHER VOLUNTARY OR MANDATORY, OF THOSE FOUND NOT TO BE REFUGEES WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE," HE SAID.

"WITH THE REVISED PROCEDURES, WE ARE AIMING TO COMPLETE SCREENING FOR THE CURRENT POPULATION OF VBP AND DEAL WITH THE RESULTING APPEALS WITHIN A PERIOD OF 12 MONTHS, AND TO COMPLETE THE PROCEDURES FOR NEWLY ARRIVED VBP WITHIN THREE MONTHS OF ARRIVAL.

"TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE, WE ESTIMATE THAT THE SCREENING AND APPEAL MECHANISMS MUST BE ABLE TO COPE WITH 400 PERSONS PER WEEK."

MR HANSON SAID THAT OF THE 20,000-ODD VBP WHO HAD ARRIVED IN HONG KONG SINCE THE SCREENING POLICY WAS IMPLEMENTED LAST JUNE, 1,573 HAD BEEN SCREENED.

"OF THOSE SCREENED, 163 OR 10.4 PER CENT HAVE BEEN GRANTED REFUGEE STATUS; THE REST HAVE BEEN SCREENED OUT AS NON-REFUGEES," HE SAID.

"SO FAR, ALL THOSE REFUSED REFUGEE STATUS HAVE NOTIFIED THE GOVERNMENT OF THEIR INTENTION TO APPEAL AGAINST THE DECISION."

UNDER STREAMLINED SCREENING PROCEDURES, VBP WILL BE INTERVIEWED BY IMMIGRATION ASSISTANTS ON THE PART OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE DEALING WITH PERSONAL DETAILS INCLUDING FAMILY COMPOSITION, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND.

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ON THE PART OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE DEALING SPECIFICALLY WITH THE CLAIMS FOR REFUGEE STATUS, VBP WILL BE INTERVIEWED BY HIGHER-RANKING IMMIGRATION OFFICERS.

IN MOST CASES, THE IMMIGRATION OFFICERS WHO CONDUCT THE INTERVIEWS WILL MAKE RECOMMENDATION WHICH WILL BE ENDORSED OR REVIEWED BY THE SUPERVISING SENIOR IMMIGRATION OFFICER.

A VBP IS INFORMED OF THE RESULTS BY A NOTICE OF DETERMINATION WHICH MAY BE GIVEN TO HIM IN PERSON OR BY DISPLAYING IT IN A PROMINENT PLACE IN THE CENTRE IN WHICH HE IS DETAINED.

AS TO THE PROPOSED REVIEW BOARDS, THEY WILL CONSIDER APPEAL CASES FROM THOSE VBP WHO HAVE BEEN REFUSED REFUGEE STATUS. AT PRESENT THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL DEALS WITH OBJECTIONS TO SUCH A DECISION.

THE PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE OF THE BOARDS WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF A FURTHER SUBMISSION TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WHEN REGULATIONS ARE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

IT IS ENVISAGED THAT THE BOARDS WILL CONSIDER APPEAL CASES IN PRIVATE AND WILL CONFIRM OR REVERSE THE FIRST-INSTANCE DECISION AS IT THINKS FIT WITHOUT A REQUIREMENT TO ASSIGN REASONS FOR ITS DECISION WHICH WILL BE FINAL.

LEGAL REPRESENTATION WILL NOT BE ALLOWED AT THE HEARING BY A BOARD BUT THE APPLICANT WILL BE ASSISTED IN PREPARING HIS CASE BY HIS LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE.

IT IS PROPOSED THAT EACH REVIEW BOARD WILL COMPRISE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARDS, OR A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, AND ONE MEMBER, ALL OF WHOM WILL BE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR.

MR HANSON SAID THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SCREENING AND APPEAL PROCEDURES HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR), INCLUDING LEGAL OFFICERS FROM UNHCR GENEVA.

"THERE HAS BEEN A BROAD MEASURE OF AGREEMENT WITH UNHCR BOTH ON THE OBJECTIVE TO SPEED UP THE SCREENING AND APPEAL PROCESS, AS WELL AS THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE EXISTING PROCEDURES INCLUDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF REVIEW BOARDS TO CONSIDER APPEALS; THERE ARE A FEW ISSUES WHICH WILL REQUIRE FURTHER CONSULTATION," HE SAID.

"UNHCR HAS ALSO CONFIRMED ITS COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO APPELLANTS IN THE PREPARATION OF THEIR APPEALS THROUGH THE AGENCY FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICE."

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CUSTOMS FACES CHALLENGES IN THE 1990'S

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THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT WILL HAVE TO UNDERGO CHANGES IN MEETING THE NEW CONDITIONS AND CHALLENGES THAT IT WILL FACE IN THE 1990'S, THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE, MR K.S. TONG, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE CHANGES WOULD BE NECESSARY IF THE DEPARTMENT WERE TO COPE WITH AN INCREASE IN WORKLOAD, AS WELL AS WITH THE ACTIVITIES OF WELL-ORGANISED CRIME RINGS, MR TONG SAID IN A LUNCH ADDRESS TO THE LIONS CLUB OF VICTORIA.

"IN ORDER TO AVOID THIS POSSIBLE PREDICAMENT, AND TO TAKE FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN CUSTOMS RESPONSIBILITIES INTO FULL ACCOUNT, THE DEPARTMENT HAS TO INITIATE NECESSARY REFORMS NOW," HE SAID.

MR TONG SAID THE DEPARTMENT WOULD FIRST LOOK INTO THE MATTER OF FULL UTILISATION OF ALL AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND FUTURE ALLOCATIONS TO MEET ITS NEEDS IN THE 1990'S.

REGARDING OTHER ASPECTS, HE SAID THE DEPARTMENT WOULD PROPOSE AMENDMENTS TO THE DUTIABLE COMMODITIES ORDINANCE, SEEKING TO WAIVE LICENSING CONTROLS ON RETAIL SALES OF DUTY-PAID GOODS.

THESE AMENDMENTS WOULD ALSO SEEK TO WAIVE LICENSING AND PERMIT CONTROLS ON THE IMPORT, EXPORT AND RE-EXPORT OF GOODS CONTAINING ALCOHOL, METHYL ALCOHOL OR HYDROCARBON OIL AS AN INGREDIENT BUT ON WHICH NO DUTY WAS PAYABLE.

"IN DOING SO, WE WOULD ADHERE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF PROMOTING TRADE MOVEMENTS ON THE ONE HAND AND EXERCISING NECESSARY CONTROLS ON THE OTHER," HE SAID.

MR TONG SAID THE DEPARTMENT WOULD ALSO CARRY OUT A COMPREHENSIVE UPDATING OF ITS DATA PROCESSING SYSTEM SO AS TO KEEP PACE WITH ADVANCES MADE IN ELECTRONIC DATA COMMUNICATION NETWORKS, AND THUS ENHANCE EFFICIENCY.

MANAGEMENT POLICIES RELATING TO DAILY LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION WOULD BE REVIEWED AND THE DEPARTMENT WOULD SEEK TO ESTABLISH A COMPREHENSIVE CUSTOMS INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM.

"THE OBJECTIVE IS TO ENSURE MORE EFFECTIVE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES TO COPE WITH THE EVER INCREASING WORKLOAD," HE SAID.

MR TONG POINTED OUT THAT THE CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT HAD TO COPE WITH GROWING NUMBERS OF PASSENGERS, VEHICLES, VESSELS AND AIRCRAFT, AS WELL AS LARGER QUANTITIES OF GOODS, BUT ITS GROWTH IN RESOURCES WAS LIMITED.

THE DEPARTMENT WOULD HAVE TO CHANGE FROM THE LABOUR-INTENSIVE AND RISK-MINIMISING APPROACH IN ROUTINE CARGO EXAMINATION, RUMMAGING AND PASSENGER EXAMINATION, HE SAID.

/"IF HIGH .....

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"IF HIGH EFFICIENCY IN ANTI-NARCOTICS AND ANTI-SMUGGLING OPERATIONS IS TO BE MAINTAINED, WE WILL HAVE TO ADOPT A NEW LAW ENFORCEMENT CONCEPT AND POLICY AND TURN TO A RISK MANAGEMENT METHOD," HE ADDED.

MR TONG EXPLAINED THAT RISK MANAGEMENT INVOLVED A FLEXIBLE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES IN ORDER TO SELECT SUSPICIOUS TARGETS OR CARGO FOR FURTHER EXAMINATION BASED ON INFORMATION ANALYSIS, INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION AND RISK ASSESSMENT.

IN CONCLUSION, MR TONG SAID THAT IN VIEW OF INCREASINGLY DIVERSIFIED RESPONSIBILITIES, SUCH AS CONTROLLING THE SALE OF UNSAFE TOYS AND PRODUCTS AND RESTRICTING THE IMPORT AND EXPORT OF CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO THE EARTH'S OZONE LAYER, THE DEPARTMENT WOULD BE PROGRESSIVE, POSITIVE AND INNOVATIVE IN ITS FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS.

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#### BUILDING INDUSTRY URGED TO TAKE STEPS TO ATTRACT WORKERS

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THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO REDUCE THE UNATTRACTIVENESS OF THE PROFESSION IN ORDER TO ATTRACT MORE WORKERS, PARTICULARLY YOUNG WORKERS, TO JOIN THE INDUSTRY, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY, SIR DAVID AKERS-JONES, SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 6TH INTERNATIONAL BUILDING EXHIBITION, SIR DAVID SAID MUCH BUILDING WORK IS DIRTY, PHYSICALLY DEMANDING AND DANGEROUS.

IF YOUNG MEN ARE TO BE ATTRACTED INTO THE INDUSTRY AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO WORK WHICH IS CLEAN, PHYSICALLY EASY AND SAFE, HE SAID STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE WORKING CONDITIONS IN BUILDING SITES AND THERE SHOULD BE A GREATER CONCERN FOR THE SAFETY OF WORKERS, MANY OF WHOM ARE YOUNG AND INEXPERIENCED.

SIR DAVID ALSO CALLED ON THE INDUSTRY TO WORK OUT A RETIREMENT BENEFIT SCHEME FOR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AS A FURTHER MEASURE TO ATTRACT WORKERS.

"THIS WILL BE DIFFICULT, IT WILL NEED COOPERATION, BUT I BELIEVE IT CAN BE DONE," HE NOTED.

TURNING TO PUBLIC HOUSING, SIR DAVID SAID THAT HOUSING REMAINS ONE OF HONG KONG'S MAIN SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

HE SAID IN 1960, THERE WERE ONLY 287 000 PEOPLE LIVING IN PUBLIC HOUSING. THE FIGURE CONTINUED TO GROW, TO 1.5 MILLION IN 1970 AND 2.5 MILLION IN 1980.

NOW, THERE ARE 2.7 MILLION PEOPLE LIVING IN PUBLIC HOUSING AND FLATS FOR OVER 200 000 PEOPLE ARE BUILT EVERY YEAR, SIR DAVID SAID, NOTING THAT ANOTHER MILLION FLATS HAVE TO BE BUILT BY THE YEAR 2001.

/ "EVERY EFFORT .....

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"EVERY EFFORT MUST BE MADE TO EMPLOY LABOUR AND TIME-SAVING TECHNIQUES AND TO STANDARDISE PRODUCTION SO THAT WE CAN ACHIEVE MAXIMUM RESULTS WITH A DIMINISHING WORK FORCE," HE NOTED.

HE ADDED THAT HARMONY BLOCKS, WHICH EMPLOY A CONCEPT OF MODULAR AND DIMENSIONAL COORDINATION, HAVE BEEN DESIGNED BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO ENABLE MORE OF THE BUILDING COMPONENTS TO BE FABRICATED OFF-SITE.

"WE ARE NOW WORKING WITH INDUSTRIALISTS IN REFINING THE DESIGN OF THESE COMPONENTS WITH A VIEW TO PROMOTING FACTORY PRODUCTION," SIR DAVID SAID.

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#### ECONOMIC SITUATION AND UPDATED FORECASTS OF GDP AND PRICES

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THE HONG KONG ECONOMY WAS GENERALLY BUOYANT DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1989, BUT THERE WAS SOME SLOWING DOWN IN THE GROWTH RATES OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, RE-EXPORTS.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE REMAINED AT AN HISTORIC LOW LEVEL, WHILE THE RATE OF INFLATION INCREASED FURTHER.

IN ISSUING THE FIRST QUARTER ECONOMIC REPORT 1989 TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE GOVERNMENT ECONOMIST, DR ALAN MCLEAN, SAID THAT USING THE INFORMATION IN THE REPORT AND OTHER RECENT DATA A REVIEW HAD BEEN MADE OF THE FORECASTS OF THE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP) AND OF PRICE TRENDS FOR 1989.

THE REVIEW CONCLUDED THAT ALTHOUGH ADJUSTMENTS WERE REQUIRED IN SOME OF THE COMPONENTS, THE FORECASTS OF THE RATES OF INCREASE OF THE GDP (AT 6 PER CENT), THE GDP DEFLATOR (AT 9 PER CENT) AND THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A) (AT 8.5 PER CENT) MADE AT THE TIME OF THE BUDGET COULD REMAIN UNCHANGED.

HE ADDED THAT THIS REVIEW WAS THE FIRST IN A NEW PROGRAMME UNDER WHICH THE SHORT-TERM GDP FORECAST WOULD BE UPDATED AT QUARTERLY INTERVALS.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY HAD REFERRED TO THIS NEW APPROACH IN HIS CONCLUDING SPEECH ON THE BUDGET DEBATE. THE RELEASE OF THE RESULTS OF EACH REVIEW WOULD COINCIDE WITH THE PUBLICATION OF THE QUARTERLY ECONOMIC REPORTS.

IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1989, DOMESTIC EXPORTS GREW BY ABOUT 6 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS OVER THE SAME QUARTER LAST YEAR. THIS WAS CONSIDERABLY SLOWER THAN THE CORRESPONDING GROWTH RATES OF 11 PER CENT IN THE PRECEDING QUARTER, AND OF 9 PER CENT FOR 1988 AS A WHOLE.

/DOMESTIC EXPORTS .....

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DOMESTIC EXPORTS TO THE VARIOUS MAJOR MARKETS SHOWED A MIXED PERFORMANCE, WITH EXPORTS TO JAPAN AND CHINA RECORDING THE FASTEST INCREASES IN REAL TERMS IN THE FIRST QUARTER, BY ABOUT 37 PER CENT AND 33 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY OVER A YEAR EARLIER.

DOMESTIC EXPORTS TO THE UNITED KINGDOM GREW BY ABOUT 10 PER CENT, WHILE THOSE TO THE UNITED STATES AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY FELL BY ABOUT 3 PER CENT AND 6 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY.

AS A RESULT, THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES AS A MARKET FOR HONG KONG'S DOMESTIC EXPORTS FELL TO 29 PER CENT IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1989, FROM A HIGH OF 47 PER CENT IN THE THIRD QUARTER OF 1985.

RE-EXPORTS ROSE BY ABOUT 34 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1989 OVER THE SAME QUARTER LAST YEAR.

IN THE FIRST QUARTER, 61 PER CENT BY VALUE OF TOTAL EXPORTS WERE RE-EXPORTS, COMPARED WITH 54 PER CENT A YEAR EARLIER. THIS RAPID SHIFT WAS ATTRIBUTABLE PARTLY TO THE FLOURISHING ENTREPOT TRADE WITH CHINA AND WITH THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION GENERALLY, AND PARTLY TO INCREASED OUTWARD PROCESSING ACTIVITIES.

OVER THE SAME PERIOD, IMPORTS GREW BY ABOUT 26 PER CENT, AND RETAINED IMPORTS BY ABOUT 19 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS.

A VISIBLE TRADE DEFICIT OF \$6,982 MILLION, EQUIVALENT TO 5 PER CENT OF IMPORTS, WAS RECORDED IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1989.

THIS COMPARES WITH A DEFICIT OF \$1,829 MILLION, EQUIVALENT TO 2 PER CENT OF IMPORTS, RECORDED IN THE SAME QUARTER LAST YEAR.

WITHIN THE LOCAL ECONOMY, CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE REMAINED STRONG, SUPPORTED BY INCREASES IN REAL INCOMES OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS.

AS AN INDICATION, RETAINED IMPORTS OF FOODSTUFFS AND OF CONSUMER GOODS GREW BY ABOUT 17 PER CENT AND 7 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY IN REAL TERMS IN THE FIRST QUARTER COMPARED WITH A YEAR EARLIER.

REFLECTING THE CONTINUED HIGH LEVEL OF INVESTMENT IN PLANT AND EQUIPMENT, RETAINED IMPORTS OF CAPITAL GOODS GREW BY ABOUT 17 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS OVER THE SAME PERIOD.

ON INFLATION, THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A) RECORDED A YEAR-ON-YEAR RATE OF INCREASE OF 9.8 PER CENT IN THE FIRST QUARTER, COMPARED WITH 7.9 PER CENT IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF LAST YEAR.

THE CORRESPONDING RATES OF INCREASE FOR THE CPI(B) AND THE HANG SENG CPI IN THE FIRST QUARTER WERE 9.4 PER CENT AND 10.7 PER CENT.

INCREASES IN THE RETAIL PRICES OF FOODSTUFFS AND IN CHARGES FOR SERVICES ACCOUNTED FOR A MAJOR PART OF THE OVERALL INCREASE IN CONSUMER PRICES.

/GIVEN THE .....

GIVEN THE STRONG DEMAND FOR LABOUR, THE RATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT WAS EXCEPTIONALLY LOW. THE SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AND THE UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATE WERE 1.3 PER CENT AND 0.8 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY IN THE FIRST QUARTER, WHILE IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF LAST YEAR THEY WERE 1.3 PER CENT AND 0.7 PER CENT.

VACANCIES WERE WIDESPREAD, AND LABOUR INCOMES REGISTERED FURTHER INCREASES BOTH IN MONEY AND IN REAL TERMS. OVER THE COURSE OF 1988, LABOUR RESOURCES CONTINUED TO MOVE FROM THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR TO THE SERVICE SECTORS.

AS REGARDS THE PROPERTY MARKET, THE DEMAND FOR MOST TYPES OF PROPERTY REMAINED STRONG AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR.

HOWEVER, PARTLY AS A RESULT OF THE INCREASES IN INTEREST RATES, SOME MODERATION SEEMS TO HAVE OCCURRED MORE RECENTLY. PROSPECTIVE BUYERS OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY APPEAR TO HAVE BECOME MORE CAUTIOUS AND SELECTIVE IN RESPONSE TO MUCH INCREASED FLAT PRICES AND HIGHER MORTGAGE RATES.

THE DEMAND FOR SHOPPING AND OFFICE SPACE CONTINUED TO BE STRONG, WHILE THE DEMAND FOR FACTORY SPACE IN REMOTE LOCATIONS TENDED TO STABILISE. MEANWHILE, THE DEMAND FOR STORAGE PREMISES WAS INCREASING.

IN THE FINANCIAL SECTOR, THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE FIRST QUARTER ARE NOTEWORTHY.

FIRST, THE MARKET EXCHANGE RATE OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR REMAINED STABLE AGAINST THE US DOLLAR, WHILE THE OVERALL EXCHANGE VALUE OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR SHOWED A MODERATE APPRECIATION, IN LINE WITH THE FIRING UP OF THE US DOLLAR.

SECONDLY, CONTINUING THE TREND WHICH BEGAN IN 1988, LOCAL INTEREST RATES ROSE FURTHER. DESPITE THIS, DOMESTIC LOANS AND ADVANCES CONTINUED TO INCREASE RAPIDLY.

THIRDLY, TRADING IN LOCAL STOCKS AND IN HANG SENG INDEX FUTURES PICKED UP. HOWEVER, THE MARKET FOR DEBT INSTRUMENTS REMAINED RELATIVELY QUIET.

THE GOVERNMENT ECONOMIST INDICATED THAT IT WAS IN THE LIGHT OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS, THAT IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE FORECAST GROWTH RATES OF THE MAIN DOMESTIC DEMAND COMPONENTS SHOULD REMAIN SUBSTANTIALLY UNCHANGED FROM THOSE RELEASED AT THE TIME OF THE BUDGET SPEECH.

HOWEVER, IT WAS CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE TO LOWER THE FORECAST GROWTH RATE OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS FROM 7 PER CENT TO 6 PER CENT, AND THAT OF RE-EXPORTS FROM 22 PER CENT TO 18 PER CENT, BOTH IN REAL TERMS.

CORRESPONDINGLY, THE FORECAST GROWTH RATES OF IMPORTS AND RETAINED IMPORTS WERE ADJUSTED DOWNWARDS FROM 15.5 PER CENT TO 13 PER CENT, AND FROM 9.5 PER CENT TO 8.5 PER CENT.

TAKEN TOGETHER, THESE CHANGES HAVE NOT ALTERED THE FORECAST GROWTH RATE OF GDP FOR 1989, AT 6 PER CENT (SEE DETAILS IN THE ATTACHED TABLE).

THE PERFORMANCE OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN THE FIRST QUARTER HAD NOT BEEN AS GOOD AS INITIALLY EXPECTED.

ALTHOUGH THE LATEST ORDERS POSITION AND THE RECENT INCREASES IN RETAINED IMPORTS OF RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-MANUFACTURES SUGGEST THAT THE PERFORMANCE OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS COULD BE BETTER IN THE SECOND QUARTER, THE SLOW-DOWN IN ECONOMIC GROWTH IN HONG KONG'S MAJOR OVERSEAS MARKETS, PARTICULARLY THE UNITED STATES AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, SEEMS LIKELY TO RESTRAIN THEIR DEMAND FOR HONG KONG'S PRODUCTS IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE YEAR.

MOREOVER, THE STRENGTHENING OF THE US DOLLAR SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR COULD BE EXPECTED TO AFFECT ADVERSELY THE PRICE COMPETITIVENESS OF HONG KONG'S PRODUCTS IN SOME MARKETS.

DOMESTIC EXPORTS TO CHINA ARE LIKELY TO BE RESTRAINED BY CHINA'S AUSTERITY MEASURES AS WELL AS BY A POSSIBLE SLOW-DOWN IN THE EXPANSION OF OUTWARD PROCESSING ACTIVITIES, IN LINE WITH THE SLOWER GROWTH IN OVERSEAS DEMAND FOR HONG KONG'S PRODUCTS. FOR THE SAME REASONS HONG KONG'S RE-EXPORTS TO CHINA ARE EXPECTED TO GROW MORE SLOWLY.

DOMESTIC DEMAND IS EXPECTED TO REMAIN ROBUST FOR MOST OF THE YEAR BUT WOULD EVENTUALLY BE RESTRAINED BY THE SLOWER GROWTH IN EXPORTS.

A NUMBER OF FACTORS ARE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE SUPPORT IN THE SHORT TERM, INCLUDING THE INCREASE IN CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE BROUGHT ABOUT BY HIGHER INCOMES, CONTINUED INVESTMENT IN MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE TIGHT LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS, INTENSIVE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY, AND THE FAST EXPANDING SERVICE SECTORS.

THUS, DOMESTIC DEMAND IS EXPECTED TO PROVIDE A RELATIVELY GREATER IMPETUS TO OVERALL ECONOMIC GROWTH IN 1989 THAN WAS ENVISAGED IN THE EARLIER FORECAST.

INFLATIONARY PRESSURES ARE EXPECTED TO BE SUSTAINED FOR A WHILE BEFORE EASING, PROBABLY TOWARDS THE END OF THE YEAR AS A RESULT OF A CONTINUED MODERATION IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY. CURRENTLY, EXCESS DEMAND IN THE ECONOMY IS THE MAIN SOURCE OF SUCH INFLATIONARY PRESSURES.

IN ADDITION, GENERALLY HIGHER INFLATION IN THE WORLD ECONOMY, NOT LEAST HIGHER PRICES OF BASIC COMMODITIES, INCLUDING THOSE OF OIL PRODUCTS, ARE ALSO CONTRIBUTING.

HOWEVER, THE FIRMING UP IN THE EXCHANGE VALUE OF THE US DOLLAR, AND HENCE THAT OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR, SHOULD BE HAVING SOME STABILISING EFFECT.

THE LATEST PRICE INDICATORS DO NOT SUGGEST THAT THERE IS A NEED TO CHANGE THE FORECAST RATES OF INCREASE IN THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A), AT 8.5 PER CENT, AND THE GDP DEFLATOR, AT 9 PER CENT.

ON THE GDP DEFLATOR, MARGINAL REDUCTIONS IN THE FORECAST RATES OF INCREASE IN THE DEFLATORS FOR BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION EXPENDITURE AND FOR PLANT AND EQUIPMENT EXPENDITURE SEEM LIKELY TO BE OFFSET BY MARGINAL RISES IN THE FORECAST RATES OF INCREASE IN THE DEFLATORS FOR EXPORTS AND FOR GOVERNMENT CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE.

THE FIRST QUARTER ECONOMIC REPORT 1989 WILL BE ON SALE ON 25 MAY 1989 AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE IN CONNAUGHT PLACE, CENTRAL, AT \$19 A COPY.

	FORECAST FOR 1989 RELEASED WITH THE BUDGET	UPDATED FORECAST
	(%)	(%)
GROWTH RATE IN REAL TERMS OF :		
PRIVATE CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE	7	7
GOVERNMENT CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE	4.6	4.6
GROSS DOMESTIC FIXED CAPITAL FORMATION	6	6
TRANSFER COSTS OF LAND AND BUILDINGS	5	5
BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION	3	3.3
PRIVATE	2	3
PUBLIC	5	4
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS' MARGIN	6	6
PLANT, MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT	8	8
PRIVATE	8	8
PUBLIC	11	11
TOTAL EXPORTS OF GOODS	15.2	12.6
DOMESTIC EXPORTS	7	6
RE-EXPORTS	22	18
IMPORTS OF GOODS	15.5	13
EXPORTS LESS IMPORTS OF SERVICES	14	14
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)	6	6
PER CAPITA GDP	4.8	4.8

GROWTH RATE IN MONEY TERMS OF :

GDP	15.6	15.6
PER CAPITA GDP	14.3	14.3

RATE OF INCREASE IN :

GDP DEFLATOR	9	9
DOMESTIC DEMAND DEFLATOR	9	9
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A)	8.5	8.5

NO CHANGE ADVISED IN PRIMARY SCHOOL ENTRY AGE

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THE EDUCATION COMMISSION HAS CONSIDERED THE QUESTION OF THE AGE OF ENTRY TO PRIMARY SCHOOL AND HAS RECOMMENDED THAT THE LOWEST AGE OF ENTRY SHOULD REMAIN AT FIVE YEARS AND EIGHT MONTHS.

IN MAKING THIS RECOMMENDATION THE COMMISSION TOOK INTO ACCOUNT EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL, AND FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS, AS WELL AS VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

"THE COMMISSION CONSIDERED THAT, WHILE AN EARLIER START TO PRIMARY SCHOOLING HAD CERTAIN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES IN THAT CHILDREN WOULD COMPLETE THEIR EDUCATION SOONER AND THEIR PARENTS WOULD SAVE MONEY, THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE THAT IT WOULD BE EDUCATIONALLY BETTER," THE ACTING SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION, MR JOHN DEAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"NOR WERE THE ADVANTAGES SUFFICIENT TO JUSTIFY THE DISRUPTION AND EXPENSE WHICH CHANGING THE SYSTEM WOULD ENTAIL," HE SAID.

THE COMMISSION WILL INCLUDE THIS RECOMMENDATION IN ITS REPORT NO. 4 WHICH IT HOPES TO PUBLISH LATER THIS YEAR.

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CONSULTATION ON DMC PROPOSALS ENDS ON MAY 31

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A SPOKESMAN FOR THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION TODAY (WEDNESDAY) REMINDED THE PUBLIC THAT THE CONSULTATION PERIOD ON PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE EXISTING DEEDS OF MUTUAL COVENANT (DMC'S) WILL END NEXT WEDNESDAY (MAY 31).

"IT IS HOPED THAT THOSE WITH VIEWS ON THE PROPOSALS WOULD SEND THEIR OPINIONS IN WRITING TO US BEFORE THAT DAY.

"REPRESENTATIONS CAN BE MADE ANY DISTRICT OFFICE OR TO THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION IN WORLD SHIPPING CENTRE AT 7 CANTON ROAD, TSIM SHA TSUI," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

THE CNTA IS SEEKING THE VIEWS OF THE PUBLIC AND INTERESTED BODIES ON THE PROPOSALS WHICH WERE RECOMMENDED BY AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP TO RECTIFY DEFICIENCIES IN DMC'S.

"MOST DISTRICT BOARDS HAVE DISCUSSED THE PROPOSALS, AND GENERALLY SUPPORT THE SPIRIT OF THE CHANGES," THE SPOKESMAN NOTED.

COPIES OF THE CONSULTATION PAPER ON THE PROPOSALS ARE AVAILABLE AT ALL DISTRICT OFFICES.

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YUEN LONG DB COMMITTEE TO MEET

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THE YUEN LONG DISTRICT BOARD'S INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE WILL HOLD ITS FIRST MEETING FOR 1989-90 TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

MEMBERS WILL DISCUSS A GOVERNMENT CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT ON PROPOSALS TO AMEND LEGISLATION COVERING LOCAL CRAFT.

THE COMMITTEE WILL ALSO BE CONSULTED ON GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS TO REVISE PROCEDURES IN PROCESSING EX-GRATIA ALLOWANCE PAYMENT UNDER THE LIVESTOCK WASTE CONTROL SCHEME.

A MEMBER WILL ASK WHAT MEASURES THE GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE TO TACKLE THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION PROBLEM CAUSED BY THE DUMPING OF SCRAP-IRON AND ABANDONED VEHICLES ON AGRICULTURAL LAND.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE MEETING OF THE YUEN LONG DISTRICT BOARD'S INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE TO BE HELD TOMORROW (THURSDAY) IN THE DB CONFERENCE ROOM, 13TH FLOOR, TAI KIU GOVERNMENT OFFICES BUILDING, 2 KIU LOK SQUARE, YUEN LONG. THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 10 AM.

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TRAINING COURSE FOR PRIVATE ELDERLY HOME WORKERS

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THIRTY-ONE PEOPLE WORKING IN PRIVATE ELDERLY HOME HAVE COMPLETED THE TRAINING COURSE FOR "HEALTH WORKERS FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE".

THE THREE-MONTH COURSE WAS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND THE HONG KONG NURSES ASSOCIATION AND HONG KONG COLLEGE OF NURSING.

THE COURSE ENABLED PARTICIPANTS TO LEARN SKILLS IN LOOKING AFTER THE ELDERLY, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL CHANGES IN THE ELDERLY, INTER-PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP AND BASIC PRINCIPLES IN THE RUNNING OF A HOME FOR THE ELDERLY.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE (FAMILY WELFARE), MR ALFRED CHUI, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) COMMENDED THE HONG KONG NURSES ASSOCIATION AND HONG KONG COLLEGE OF NURSING FOR ORGANISING THE COURSE, SAYING THAT IT WAS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE ELDERLY PEOPLE IN HONG KONG.

AN EVALUATION EXERCISE OVER THE COURSE WOULD BE CONDUCTED AND THE FINDINGS WOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN SIMILAR COURSES WERE ORGANISED IN THE FUTURE.

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LABOUR CHIEF VISITS METAL FACTORY

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THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, MR TONY HAMMOND, VISITED THE MODERN METAL AND REFINING LTD. IN THE YUEN LONG INDUSTRIAL ESTATE TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE VISIT WAS PART OF AN ON-GOING PROGRAMME AIMED AT KEEPING THE COMMISSIONER ABREAST OF THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE LABOUR FIELD.

FOLLOWING A GENERAL DISCUSSION WITH THE FACTORY'S MANAGING DIRECTOR, MR C.T. FUNG, ADMINISTRATION MANAGER, MISS JULIA YU, AND THE FACTORY MANAGER, MR EDMOND LAM, MR HAMMOND WAS TAKEN ON A TOUR OF VARIOUS SECTIONS WHICH PRODUCE SECONDARY ALUMINIUM ALLOY INGOTS AND ALUMINIUM DIE-CAST PARTS FOR EXPORT TO EUROPE, JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES.

HE CONCLUDED HIS VISIT BY DISCUSSING WITH THE MANAGEMENT A WIDE RANGE OF LABOUR MATTERS INCLUDING STAFF SHORTAGE, WORKERS' BENEFITS, LABOUR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS, AND LABOUR LEGISLATION.

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TEMPORARY URBAN CLEARWAYS IN CENTRAL AND POKFULAM

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES THAT FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (MAY 26), THE SECTION OF RUMSEY STREET FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL TO A POINT ABOUT 20 METRES TO THE NORTH WILL BE DESIGNATED A 7 AM TO 7 PM DAILY URBAN CLEARWAY.

THIS MEASURE WILL LAST FOR ABOUT FOUR MONTHS TO FACILITATE ROADWORKS.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS OF POKFULAM ROAD WILL BE DESIGNATED URBAN CLEARWAYS ROUND-THE-CLOCK FOR ABOUT TWO MONTHS TO FACILITATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF CENTRAL DIVIDER:

- \* THE SOUTHBOUND CARRIAGEWAY FROM A POINT ABOUT 140 METRES SOUTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH POKFULAM INTERCHANGE TO A POINT ABOUT 295 METRES TO THE SOUTH; AND
- \* THE NORTHBOUND CARRIAGEWAY FROM A POINT ABOUT 150 METRES SOUTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH POKFULAM INTERCHANGE TO A POINT ABOUT 280 METRES TO THE SOUTH.

NO VEHICLES EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS WITHIN THE RESTRICTED AREAS.

IN ADDITION, THE EXISTING TRAM-ONLY LANE ON THE WESTBOUND TRAM TRACK OF DES VOEUX ROAD WEST FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH HILL ROAD TO A POINT ABOUT 35 METRES TO THE WEST WILL BE LIFTED FOR ABOUT THREE MONTHS TO FACILITATE ROAD WORKS.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 1989

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TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENT IN SHA TIN AND TO KWA WAN  
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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES THAT TO FACILITATE THE REPAIRING OF THE DAMAGED SAFETY FENCE ON THE NORTHBOUND CARRIAGEWAY OF LION ROCK TUNNEL ROAD NEAR WORLDWIDE GARDENS IN SHA TIN, THE SLOW LANE OF THE SAID CARRIAGEWAY ABOUT 200 METRES IN LENGTH WILL BE CLOSED FROM 10 PM ON FRIDAY (MAY 26) TO 6 AM ON THE FOLLOWING DAY.

ON THE OTHER HAND, IN ORDER TO FACILITATE DRAINAGE WORK, THE RIGHT-TURN FROM YUK YAT STREET NORTHBOUND INTO KWEI CHOW STREET EASTBOUND IN TO KWA WAN WILL BE BANNED FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY FOR TWO MONTHS.

DURING THE PERIOD, VEHICLES ON YUK YAT STREET NORTHBOUND HEADING FOR KWEI CHOW STREET EASTBOUND WILL BE DIVERTED TO TRAVEL VIA KWEI CHOW STREET WESTBOUND, MEI KING STREET, SAN MA TAU STREET AND LONG YUET STREET.

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INSTALLATION OF PARKING METERS IN DUNBAR ROAD  
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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT IS GOING TO INSTALL PARKING METRES IN DUNBAR ROAD, MA TAU WAI TO RATION THE UTILIZATION OF THE PARKING SPACES.

THE PARKING METERS WILL COMMENCE OPERATION FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (MAY 26).

THE TWO-HOUR METERED PARKING SPACES FOR VEHICLES OTHER THAN MEDIUM AND HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES, BUSES, MOTOR CYCLES AND PEDAL CYCLES WILL CHARGE AT \$2 FOR EACH 30 MINUTES, AND WILL OPERATE FROM 8 AM TO MIDNIGHT DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS.

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