



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 1991

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 1991

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NEW SCHEME TO PROVIDE HOME OWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

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THE SALE OF RENTAL FLATS TO SITTING TENANTS PROPOSED BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WOULD PROVIDE MANY FAMILIES WITH AN OPPORTUNITY THEY WOULD NOT OTHERWISE HAVE TO OWN THEIR HOME, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON PETER TSAO, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

WINDING UP THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED SCHEME IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR TSAO SAID HOME OWNERSHIP WAS OF GREAT BENEFIT IN FOSTERING A SENSE OF BELONGING AND ENGENDERING SOCIAL STABILITY AND SHARED PROSPERITY.

MR TSAO REJECTED AS "PATENT NONSENSE" AN ASSERTION BY THE HON KINGSLEY SIT THAT AFFECTED TENANTS WOULD BE FORCED OR COMPELLED TO PURCHASE FLATS UNDER THIS SCHEME.

"IT IS A MATTER OF CHOICE NOT COMPULSION," HE STRESSED.

THE SCHEME, MR TSAO ADDED, WILL BE PUT TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR APPROVED.

HE ALSO SAID OFFER LETTERS TO TENANTS SHOULD BE ISSUED TOWARDS THE END OF JULY THIS YEAR.

"THIS SHOULD ENABLE THE FIRST PHASE OF THE SALES PROGRAMME TO BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR," HE SAID.

ON THE PRICING FORMULA, MR TSAO SAID A MARKET PRICE WOULD BE DETERMINED, WITH DUE ALLOWANCE MADE FOR THE LESS ATTRACTIVE DESIGN OF THE RENTAL BLOCK COMPARED WITH A PURPOSE-BUILT SALE BLOCK, THE LACK OF UPGRADING OF THE PLASTERING, WIRING, SECURITY SYSTEM AND OTHER FACILITIES, AND THE AGE OF THE BLOCK.

HE SAID A SIMILAR DISCOUNT TO THAT GIVEN UNDER HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME (HOS) SALES WOULD BE APPLIED TO PRODUCE THE SELLING PRICE AS RECOMMENDED IN A REPORT BY A SPECIAL AD HOC COMMITTEE UNDER THE HOUSING AUTHORITY.

"THE LEVEL OF DISCOUNT FROM A COMPARABLE FLAT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR HAS BEEN AT 30 PER CENT IN MOST RECENT HOS SALES, THOUGH IT HAS AT TIMES VARIED IN ORDER TO HAVE MORE FLATS WITHIN THE AFFORDABILITY RANGE OF LESS WELL-OFF FAMILIES.

"THE HOUSING AUTHORITY SUGGESTED THAT A DISCOUNT OF 40 PER CENT WOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE SPECIAL NATURE OF THESE SALES AND PRODUCE MORE AFFORDABLE PRICES," MR TSAO SAID.

ON SUGGESTIONS THAT IT WOULD BE UNFAIR FOR SITTING TENANTS TO BE GIVEN A GREATER DISCOUNT THAN WOULD NORMALLY APPLY UNDER HOS SALE, MR TSAO SAID THE HOUSING AUTHORITY FELT THAT THE TWO SCHEMES WERE DIFFERENT IN NATURE AND IN THE TARGET GROUP WHICH THEY AIMED TO REACH.

"THE PRESENT SCHEME AIMS TO REACH A BROADER RANGE OF PUBLIC HOUSING TENANTS, INCLUDING THOSE OR AVERAGE ON BELOW-AVERAGE INCOMES," MR TSAO SAID.

/IN REPLY .....

IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS ON THE REASON FOR THE PRICE OF FLATS SOLD TO SITTING TENANTS AND FLATS SOLD UNDER THE HOS SHOULD BE TAGGED TO MARKET PRICES, MR TSAO SAID THE HOUSING AUTHORITY BELIEVED THAT AN APPROPRIATE RELATIONSHIP TO MARKET PRICES NEEDED TO BE ESTABLISHED TO AVOID THE CREATION OF TOO GREAT A DIVISION BETWEEN THE SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY THAT WAS ELIGIBLE TO BUY FLATS UNDER THESE SCHEMES AND THOSE WHO HAD NO CHOICE OTHER THAN TO BUY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

"IF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WERE TO SELL ITS FLATS AT PRICES THAT WERE TOO FAR BELOW MARKET PRICES, THIS WOULD IMPACT ADVERSELY ON THE STRENGTH OF THE PRIVATE PROPERTY MARKET," MR TSAO SAID.

"THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE HOUSING AUTHORITY AS LAID DOWN IN THE LONG TERM HOUSING STRATEGY HAS BEEN TO ENCOURAGE THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO EXTEND ITS OWN PRODUCTION OF SMALL FLATS.

ON THE CONDITION OF THE BLOCKS TO BE SOLD, MR TSAO SAID THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WOULD ONLY SELL BLOCKS THAT WERE IN SOUND STRUCTURAL CONDITION.

"TENANTS WILL BE ABLE TO REPORT DEFECTS FOUND INSIDE THEIR FLATS AND THOSE WHICH ARE CONFIRMED TO BE GENUINE AND NOT CAUSED BY THE TENANTS' WILL BE REPAIRED AT THE AUTHORITY'S EXPENSE," MR TSAO SAID.

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LIMITATION (AMENDMENT) BILL PASSED

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THE LIMITATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1990 WILL ONLY EXTEND THE POTENTIAL LIABILITY OF PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS IN THE LIMITED SITUATION WHERE A CLIENT WITH A CLAIM IN NEGLIGENCE DOES NOT KNOW THE FACTS RELEVANT TO THE CAUSE OF ACTION AT THE DATE WHEN THE DAMAGE TO HIS INTERESTS OCCURRED.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, SAID DURING THE SECOND READING DEBATE OF THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SUCH A CLIENT WOULD HAVE SIX YEARS FROM THE DATE ON WHICH THE DAMAGE OCCURRED TO BRING AN ACTION, THAT WAS THE NORMAL LIMITATION, OR THREE YEARS FROM THE DATE OF ACQUIRING THE REQUISITE KNOWLEDGE FOR BRINGING AN ACTION, WHICHEVER PERIOD WAS TO END LATER, HE SAID.

"WITHOUT SUCH A PROVISION, PERSONS WHO HAVE SUFFERED DAMAGE THROUGH THE NEGLIGENCE OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS BUT ARE UNAWARE OF IT WOULD BE DENIED RELIEF WHERE THE DAMAGE IS NOT DISCOVERED UNTIL AFTER A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS.

"THIS IS AN UNFAIR RESULT WHICH THIS BILL WILL RECTIFY," MR MATHEWS SAID.

/MR MATHEWS .....

MR MATHEWS WAS REPLYING TO MR PETER WONG'S RESERVATIONS TO THE EFFECT THAT THE LATENT DAMAGE PROVISIONS OF THE BILL WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE THE EXPOSURE OF ACCOUNTANTS TO NEGLIGENCE CLAIMS.

MR WONG ALSO REFERRED TO THE ACCOUNTANTS' PLEA FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION AND THE POSSIBILITY OF AN EXEMPTION FROM THE OPERATION OF THE NEW PROVISIONS.

TO ELIMINATE THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOMEONE WAS SUED BY VIRTUE OF THIS NEW PROVISION MANY YEARS AFTER THE ALLEGED NEGLIGENT ACT OR OMISSION OCCURRED, MR MATHEWS SAID, THE BILL PROVIDED THAT NO ACTION SHOULD BE BROUGHT AFTER THE EXPIRY OF 15 YEARS FROM THE DATE OF THAT ACT OR OMISSION.

"THIS IS A BENEFIT THAT POTENTIAL DEFENDANTS DO NOT PRESENTLY HAVE," HE SAID.

MR MATHEWS NOTED THAT THE ACCOUNTANTS WERE THE ONLY PROFESSIONAL GROUP TO HAVE SOUGHT SUCH AN EXEMPTION. "THE VIEW THAT THE PROVISIONS IN THE BILL CONCERNING LATENT DAMAGE WILL SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE THE POTENTIAL LIABILITY OF PROFESSIONALS IS, I THINK, UNFOUNDED."

ON MR WONG'S OBSERVATION THAT THE BILL WAS INTRODUCED TO DEAL WITH HIDDEN DEFECTS ARISING FROM CONSTRUCTION WORK, MR MATHEWS SAID THE BILL WAS BASED ON THE ENGLISH LATENT DAMAGE ACT 1986 WHICH GAVE EFFECT TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ENGLISH LAW REFORM COMMITTEE.

MR MATHEWS SAID WHILE THE COMMITTEE, IN ITS REPORT, RECOGNISED THAT THE MAJORITY OF CLAIMS FOR LATENT DAMAGE HAD ARISEN OUT OF BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION WORK, IT EXPRESSLY REJECTED A SUGGESTION THAT THE SPECIAL THREE-YEAR LIMITATION PERIOD SHOULD BE RESTRICTED TO CLAIMS IN RESPECT OF BUILDINGS.

PROPOSING AMENDMENTS TO THE BILL DURING THE COMMITTEE STAGE, MR MATHEWS SAID THE NEW DATE OF COMMENCEMENT OF THE ORDINANCE WOULD BE JULY 1, 1991.

PROPOSED NEW SECTION 33 OF THE BILL WAS DELETED AS THE SECTION HAD BEEN RENDERED UNNECESSARY FOLLOWING A RECENT DECISION OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

VIGILANT WATCH TO SAFEGUARD INTEGRITY OF ELECTORAL PROCESS

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THE ADMINISTRATION IS MINDFUL OF THE NEED TO KEEP A VIGILANT WATCH SO AS TO SAFEGUARD THE INTEGRITY AND FAIRNESS OF THE ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL PROCESS, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE SECOND READING DEBATE ON THE CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR MATHEWS SAID THIS BILL AND THE PREVENTION OF BRIBERY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991 SOUGHT TO ADDRESS, AMONG OTHER MATTERS, THE EXISTING ANOMALY BETWEEN INCUMBENT AND NON-INCUMBENT MEMBERS AS REGARDS THEIR ABILITY TO RECEIVE DONATIONS FOR THEIR ELECTION EXPENSES.

MR MATHEWS ALSO CONFIRMED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WAS CAREFULLY LOOKING INTO THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP'S CONCERN ABOUT A SIMILAR ANOMALY REGARDING DONATIONS FOR RUNNING A POLITICAL OFFICE.

"MEMBERS ARE OF COURSE AWARE THAT IT IS THE INTENTION OF THE ADMINISTRATION TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS AFTER THE SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS TO THIS COUNCIL," HE SAID.

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BANKING (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1991 INTRODUCED

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THE BANKING (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1991 WHICH SEEKS TO IMPROVE THE REGIME REGULATING THE CHANGE OF CONTROL OF LOCALLY INCORPORATED AUTHORISED INSTITUTIONS AND TO UPDATE THE REGULATIONS ON RISK CONCENTRATIONS WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PIERS JACOBS, SAID THE PRESENT REGIME REGULATING THE CHANGE OF CONTROL OF AUTHORISED INSTITUTIONS HAD SOME DEFECTS.

"FIRST, THERE IS NO CONTROL OVER THE ACQUISITION OF SIGNIFICANT SHAREHOLDINGS, WHICH STOP SHORT OF FULL CONTROL, IN AN AUTHORISED INSTITUTION'S HOLDING COMPANY.

"SECONDLY, SHAREHOLDERS OF LOCALLY INCORPORATED INSTITUTIONS ARE ONLY REQUIRED TO SEEK THE APPROVAL OF THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING FOR THE EXERCISE OF THEIR VOTING RIGHTS AND CONTROL OVER THE INSTITUTION AFTER THEY HAVE ACQUIRED THEIR INTERESTS.

"THIRDLY, THERE IS NO PROVISION ENABLING CONSENT TO BE WITHDRAWN FROM A SHAREHOLDER OR CONTROLLER WHEN THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT HE IS NO LONGER FIT AND PROPER," SIR PIERS SAID.

/TO REMEDY .....

TO REMEDY THESE DEFECTS, SIR PIERS SAID THE GOVERNMENT SOUGHT TO EMPOWER THE COMMISSIONER TO OBJECT, ON SPECIFIED GROUNDS, TO PERSONS BECOMING OR REMAINING CONTROLLERS OF AUTHORISED INSTITUTIONS INCORPORATED IN HONG KONG.

"IN ADDITION, PROSPECTIVE CONTROLLERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO SEEK THE COMMISSIONER'S PRIOR APPROVAL BEFORE ACQUIRING THEIR HOLDINGS," HE SAID.

SIR PIERS SAID THIS WOULD APPLY TO HOLDINGS OF 10 PER CENT OR MORE IN AN AUTHORISED INSTITUTION'S HOLDING COMPANY AND THE PROPOSED SYSTEM WAS SIMILAR TO THAT CONTAINED IN THE INSURANCE COMPANIES ORDINANCE, WHICH IN TURN WAS MODELLED ON THE BANKING ACT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

"THE CONCEPT OF A 'CAPITAL BASE', WHICH WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE ORDINANCE IN 1986 IN CONNECTION WITH THE CALCULATION OF CAPITAL ADEQUACY RATIOS, IS NOW ACCEPTED AS A MORE APPROPRIATE MEASURE OF AN INSTITUTION'S ABILITY TO ABSORB RISK.

"THE PROPOSAL IS TO USE THIS CONCEPT IN PLACE OF 'CAPITAL AND RESERVES' AS THE BASIS FOR APPLYING THE LARGE EXPOSURE LIMITS UNDER PART XV OF THE ORDINANCE," HE SAID, ADDING THAT THE EXPOSURE LIMITS, NOAPPLICABLE TO BANKS ONLY, WOULD BE APPLIED TO ALL THREE CLASSES OF INSTITUTIONS.

SIR PIERS SAID WHEN THE INDUSTRY WAS CONSULTED ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO PART XV, THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS HAD EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN ABOUT THE PROPOSED REDUCTION OF THE PERIOD OF EXEMPTION FROM THE MAXIMUM PRUDENT LENDING LIMIT FOR THE UNDERWRITING OF EQUITIES AND DEBT FROM THE EXISTING THREE MONTHS TO SEVEN DAYS.

"THE PROPOSAL IS INTENDED TO ENABLE ANY POTENTIAL EXPOSURE EXCEEDING THE 25 PER CENT LIMIT TO BE BROUGHT UNDER SUPERVISION AT AN EARLY STAGE," HE SAID.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THOSE INSTITUTIONS WHICH WERE LEAD UNDERWRITERS WOULD BE EXPECTED TO DISCUSS WITH THE COMMISSIONER AND AGREE UPON A SET OF LIMITS WITHIN WHICH THEY WOULD EXPECT TO CONFINE THEIR RISKS IN RESPECT OF UNDERWRITING POSITIONS ONCE THE BILL WAS ENACTED.

"ARMED WITH FORE-KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT THE COMMISSIONER WOULD BE PREPARED TO APPROVE WITHIN AGREED LIMITS, INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE ABLE TO OPERATE FREELY AND WITHOUT DISRUPTION OF THE MARKET, WHILST ADHERING TO AN AGREED FRAMEWORK WHICH LIMITS RISK EXPOSURE," SIR PIERS SAID.

NOTING THAT THE BILL ALSO SOUGHT TO REMOVE UNNECESSARY BARRIERS TO DISCLOSURE TO ENABLE CLOSE CONTACT AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN BANKING AND OTHER FINANCIAL REGULATORS LOCALLY AND ABROAD, SIR PIERS SAID THE OVERALL CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION RECEIVED FOR SUPERVISORY PURPOSES WAS, HOWEVER, PRESERVED.

"THE PRINCIPAL PROPOSALS IN THE BILL HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED WITH AND ARE SUPPORTED BY THE BANKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE," HE ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

BILL TO CREATE WORKERS' COMPENSATION SCHEME INTRODUCED

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A BILL WHICH SEEKS TO CREATE THE EMPLOYEES COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE SCHEME TO PROTECT THE FULL ENTITLEMENT OF WORKERS UNDER THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ORDINANCE, IS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON CHRISTINE CHOW, IN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE EMPLOYEES COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE BILL 1991, SAID THE EMPLOYEES COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE SCHEME WAS AN IMPORTANT LANDMARK IN LABOUR LEGISLATION.

"IT INCREASES THE LEVEL OF PROTECTION FOR EMPLOYEES AGAINST UNFORESEEN CONTINGENCIES OF THEIR WORKING LIVES AND GUARANTEES THEIR ENTITLEMENT TO COMPENSATION UNDER THE LAW," SHE SAID.

EXPLAINING THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO ESTABLISH THE SCHEME, MISS CHOW SAID UNDER THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ORDINANCE, A COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT-RELATED COMPENSATION WAS AVAILABLE TO PROTECT WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES AGAINST LOSS OF INCOME IN THE EVENT OF INJURY AND DEATH.

EMPLOYERS HAD BEEN REQUIRED BY LAW SINCE 1984 TO INSURE THEMSELVES AGAINST THEIR LIABILITIES TO COMPENSATE THEIR EMPLOYEES, SHE ADDED.

HOWEVER, MISS CHOW NOTED: "DESPITE THIS PROVISION, SOME WORKERS STILL FAIL TO RECEIVE COMPENSATION BECAUSE OF DEFAULTING EMPLOYERS OR INSOLVENT INSURERS."

BETWEEN JANUARY 1984 AND JULY LAST YEAR, THERE WERE 86 SUCH CASES INVOLVING ABOUT \$4 MILLION OF UNSETTLED COMPENSATION CLAIMS.

MISS CHOW SAID THE BILL SOUGHT TO CREATE THE EMPLOYEES COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE SCHEME BY PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EMPLOYEES COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE FUND AND OF A STATUTORY BOARD TO ADMINISTER IT.

THE FUND BOARD WOULD BE A BODY CORPORATE WHICH SHOULD CONSIST OF A CHAIRMAN, TWO MEMBERS REPRESENTING EMPLOYERS, TWO MEMBERS REPRESENTING EMPLOYEES, ONE MEMBER WITH EXPERTISE IN THE PRACTICE OF ACCOUNTING, INVESTMENT OR LAW, THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE, AND THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AID OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE.

THE BILL ALSO PROVIDED FOR THE POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD, AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING TO THE OPERATION OF THE SCHEME, SHE SAID.

MISS CHOW SAID THE EMPLOYEES COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE SCHEME WOULD BE FUNDED BY A ONE PER CENT LEVY ON EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION INSURANCE PREMIA.

THIS LEVY CAME INTO EFFECT ON JULY 1 LAST YEAR WHEN THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION INSURANCE LEVIES ORDINANCE WAS ENACTED.

MISS CHOW CONTINUED: "THE SCHEME WILL COVER CLAIMS FROM EMPLOYEES WHO ARE INJURED AS A RESULT OF ACCIDENTS ARISING OUT OF AND IN THE COURSE OF THEIR EMPLOYMENT, OR DEPENDANTS OF EMPLOYEES KILLED AS A RESULT OF SUCH ACCIDENTS, WHO FAIL TO RECEIVE COMPENSATION BECAUSE OF DEFAULTING EMPLOYERS OR INSOLVENT INSURERS.

"SUBJECT TO A QUEUING SYSTEM, PAYMENTS WILL BE MADE IN ALL SUCH CASES IN RESPECT OF ACCIDENTS OCCURRING ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 1984, WHEN COMPULSORY INSURANCE WAS FIRST INTRODUCED."

IN THE CASE OF INSOLVENCY OF INSURERS, MISS CHOW SAID THE SCHEME WOULD EITHER PAY THE COMPENSATION ON BEHALF OF THE EMPLOYER OR RE-IMBURSE HIM.

THE SCHEME WOULD COVER ACCIDENTS OCCURRING ON OR AFTER JULY 1 LAST YEAR, PROVIDED THESE WERE A VALID POLICY OF INSURANCE ON WHICH THE LEVY HAD BEEN PAID, SHE SAID.

IT WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, COVER THE EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY IN RESPECT OF ACCIDENTS OCCURRING BEFORE JULY 1 LAST YEAR, THE DATE WHEN THE LEVY BECAME EFFECTIVE.

"ANY EMPLOYER WHO HAS NOT PAID THE LEVY AND WHO HAS DOUBTS ABOUT THE SOLVENCY OF AN INSURER SHOULD CONSIDER EXTENDING OR RENEWING HIS INSURANCE POLICY, THEREBY PAYING THE LEVY AND SECURING PROTECTION AGAINST THE INSOLVENCY OF HIS INSURER FROM A CURRENT DATE," SHE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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#### TWO BILLS TO BETTER PROTECT WORKERS INTRODUCED

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TWO BILLS WERE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) TO PROVIDE BETTER PROTECTION TO HONG KONG'S WORKERS.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON CHRISTINE CHOW SAID THE BILL SOUGHT TO EXTEND THE COVER FOR SEVERANCE PAYMENT UNDER THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY FUND FROM \$4,000 TO \$8,000 AND 50 PER CENT OF ANY ENTITLEMENT IN EXCESS OF \$8,000.

AT PRESENT, THE FUND PROVIDED FOR THE PAYMENT OF WAGES IN ARREARS UP TO \$8,000, UNPAID WAGES IN LIEU OF NOTICE UP TO \$2,000 AND SEVERANCE PAYMENT UP TO \$4,000 TO AN EMPLOYEE WHOSE EMPLOYER HAD BECOME INSOLVENT, MISS CHOW SAID.

"COMPARED WITH THE PRESENT SITUATION IN WHICH AN EMPLOYEE EARNING, SAY, \$10,000 PER MONTH WITH 20 YEARS' SERVICE BEHIND HIM GETS ONLY \$4,000 AGAINST HIS ENTITLEMENT OF \$120,000, HE WILL NOW OBTAIN \$64,000," SHE NOTED.

EXPLAINING THE REASONS FOR EXTENDING THE SEVERANCE PAYMENT COVER, THE ACTING SECRETARY SAID THOUGH THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE REQUIRED AN EMPLOYER TO MAKE LONG SERVICE PAYMENTS TO HIS EMPLOYEES UNDER CERTAIN PRESCRIBED CIRCUMSTANCES, THE LAW DID NOT REQUIRE HIM TO MAKE ANY PROVISION FOR THESE LIABILITIES.

IT HAD BEEN ARGUED, WITH SOME JUSTIFICATION, THAT IF AN EMPLOYER DID NOT MAKE SUFFICIENT PROVISION FOR HIS LONG SERVICE PAYMENT LIABILITIES, HE MIGHT RUN INTO FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES WHEN SUCH LIABILITIES AROSE, RESULTING IN HIS EMPLOYEES BEING UNABLE TO OBTAIN THEIR ENTITLEMENTS, SHE SAID.

"THE MAIN PROBLEM IN REQUIRING EMPLOYERS TO FUND THEIR LONG SERVICE PAYMENT LIABILITIES IS THAT IT WOULD TIE UP LARGE AMOUNTS OF WORKING CAPITAL AND, FOR SMALL BUSINESSES, CREATE DISPROPORTIONATE ADMINISTRATIVE OVERHEADS.

"AN EMPLOYER SHOULD BE ABLE TO MEET HIS LONG SERVICE PAYMENT LIABILITIES UNLESS HE IS INSOLVENT, IN WHICH EVENT, SEVERANCE PAYMENT WOULD BE PAYABLE," MISS CHOW SAID.

SHE SAID RATHER THAN PURSUING THE FUNDING OF LONG SERVICE PAYMENT, THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSED, INSTEAD, THAT THE EMPLOYEES' SEVERANCE PAYMENT ENTITLEMENT SHOULD BE MORE ADEQUATELY PROTECTED BY EXTENDING THE COVER UNDER THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY FUND.

MISS CHOW POINTED OUT THAT THE PROPOSED EXTENSION WOULD ENSURE THAT FULL COVERAGE WOULD BE GIVEN TO THOSE LOWER-PAID EMPLOYEES WHOSE ENTITLEMENTS DID NOT EXCEED \$8,000.

IT WOULD ALSO PROTECT THE FUND FROM BEING DEPLETED TOO QUICKLY, SHE SAID.

"IF WE WERE TO COVER SEVERANCE PAYMENT ENTITLEMENTS IN FULL FOR ALL EMPLOYEES, THE COST WOULD BE VERY HIGH.

"THERE IS THE ADDED DANGER THAT SUCH A MEASURE MIGHT ENCOURAGE CONTRIVED INSOLVENCIES AS A MEANS OF PASSING ON TO THE FUND THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAKING SEVERANCE PAYMENTS," MISS CHOW SAID.

THE ACTING SECRETARY NOTED THAT THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY FUND WAS PRESENTLY FINANCED BY A LEVY OF \$100 PER ANNUM ON EACH BUSINESS REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE AND BRANCH CERTIFICATE.

"TO ENABLE THE FUND TO MEET THE ADDITIONAL COMMITMENT ARISING FROM THE EXTENDED COVER, IT IS NECESSARY TO INCREASE THE RATE OF THE LEVY ON EACH BUSINESS REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE AND BRANCH CERTIFICATE FROM \$100 TO \$250.

"THIS SHOULD GENERATE SUFFICIENT INCOME TO COVER FORECAST EXPENDITURE UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES," SHE ADDED.

THE BUSINESS REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, WHICH WAS ALSO GIVEN A SECOND READING TODAY, SOUGHT TO INCREASE THE RATE OF LEVY FROM \$100 TO \$250.

/MISS CHOW .....

MISS CHOW SAID TOGETHER WITH THE BILL ON THE PRUDENTIAL SUPERVISION OF RETIREMENT SCHEMES MOVED BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY LAST WEEK AND THE BILL ON EMPLOYEES COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE INTRODUCED TODAY, THESE PROPOSALS WERE A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD IN ACHIEVING THE TARGET OF A LEVEL OF LABOUR LEGISLATION COMPARABLE TO THE BEST PREVAILING IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION.

DEBATES ON THE BILLS WERE ADJOURNED.

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NEW LAW TO ENSURE SAFETY OF PRIVATE CLUB-HOUSE  
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A BILL WHICH SEEKS TO INTRODUCE A STATUTORY SCHEME REQUIRING ALL CLUB-HOUSES TO OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE WITH FIRE AND BUILDING REGULATIONS WAS PROPOSED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON PETER TSAO, AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE CLUBS (SAFETY OF PREMISES) BILL, MR TSAO SAID:

"WITH THE ENACTMENT OF THE BILL, ANY PERSON WHO OPERATES A CLUB-HOUSE WITHOUT A VALID CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE OR EXEMPTION WILL COMMIT AN OFFENCE AND IS LIABLE ON CONVICTION TO A FINE OF \$200,000 AND TO IMPRISONMENT FOR TWO YEARS AND TO A FINE OF \$20,000 FOR EACH DAY DURING WHICH THE OFFENCE CONTINUES."

THERE WAS AT PRESENT NO SYSTEMATIC OR COMPREHENSIVE CONTROL OF SAFETY CONDITIONS IN CLUB PREMISES.

"ENFORCEMENT ACTION UNDER THE FIRE SERVICES ORDINANCE AND THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE IS TAKEN ON AN AD HOC BASIS OR IN RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS," MR TSAO SAID.

THIS BILL, HE STRESSED, SOUGHT TO ESTABLISH A SCHEME FOR THE REGULATION AND CONTROL OF CLUB-HOUSES TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS.

BUT HE ADDED THAT CLUBS WHICH HAD NO CLUB-HOUSES WOULD BE OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE BILL.

"NEITHER WILL THE BILL BE CONCERNED WITH THE FORMATION OF CLUBS, WHICH WILL REMAIN A TASK FOR THE REGISTRAR OF SOCIETIES AND THE REGISTRAR GENERAL."

DUE TO RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS, MR TSAO POINTED OUT THAT IT WOULD BE IMPRACTICAL TO ENFORCE CONTROLS ON ALL CLUBS WITH CLUB-HOUSES IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE ENACTMENT OF THE BILL.

THE CERTIFICATION SCHEME WOULD THEREFORE BE PHASED, WITH THE FIRST PHASE TARGETTED AT PROPRIETARY OR SHAM CLUBS WHICH USED THEIR CLUB-HOUSES AS ORDINARY BUSINESS PREMISES, HE SAID.

PHASING OF CONTROL PRIORITIES WOULD BE ACHIEVED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS ISSUING CERTIFICATES OF EXEMPTION TO THOSE CLUB-HOUSES WHICH WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE CERTIFICATION SCHEME AT LATER STAGES.

APPLICANTS FOR A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE HAD TO SATISFY THE CERTIFYING AUTHORITY THAT THEIR PREMISES HAD COMPLIED WITH THE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE FIRE SERVICES ORDINANCE AND THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE.

THE CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE WOULD HAVE TO BE RENEWED UPON EXPIRATION.

THE PREMISES WOULD BE REINSPECTED TO ENSURE THAT THE SAFETY STANDARDS HAD BEEN MAINTAINED BEFORE A CERTIFICATE WAS RENEWED.

THE BILL ALSO PROVIDED FOR APPEALS ARISING FROM ENFORCEMENT OF THE LEGISLATION TO BE DETERMINED BY AN APPEAL BOARD CHAIRED BY A PERSON QUALIFIED FOR APPOINTMENT AS A DISTRICT JUDGE.

THE GOVERNOR WOULD APPOINT THE CHAIRMAN AND A PANEL OF PERSONS WHOM HE CONSIDERED SUITABLE FOR APPOINTMENT AS MEMBERS OF THE APPEAL BOARD TO HEAR ANY APPEAL, MR TSAO SAID.

"IT IS, HOWEVER, THE INTENTION OF THE ADMINISTRATION THAT THE APPEAL BOARD CONSTITUTED UNDER THE HOTEL AND GUESTHOUSE ACCOMMODATION ORDINANCE WILL ALSO HEAR APPEALS UNDER THIS BILL," MR TSAO SAID.

FEES WOULD BE PAYABLE FOR THE ISSUE OF CERTIFICATES OF EXEMPTION OR COMPLIANCE. A CLAUSE IN THE BILL PROVIDED FOR THE MAKING OF REGULATIONS FOR SUCH FEES BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL.

THE TOTAL COST OF THE SCHEME, MR TSAO SAID, WOULD BE RECOVERED BY WAY OF CERTIFICATE FEES.

THE CERTIFICATION SCHEME, TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE LICENSING OFFICE FOR HOTELS AND GUESTHOUSES, WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE ENACTMENT OF THE BILL, MR TSAO CONCLUDED.

DEBATE OF THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

BILL PROVIDES FOR IMPROVED SYSTEM OF APPEAL AGAINST  
TOWN PLANNING BOARD'S DECISIONS

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THE TOWN PLANNING (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL 1991 PROVIDES FOR AN INDEPENDENT AND PRACTICABLE SYSTEM OF APPEAL AGAINST DECISIONS OF THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD UNDER SECTION 17 OF THE EXISTING ORDINANCE, AND IN SO DOING ADDRESSES MUCH OF THE CONCERN ON THE INADEQUACIES OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF APPEALS.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, THE HON MARTIN LEWIS, STATED THIS WHEN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE TOWN PLANNING (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL 1991 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR LEWIS SAID THE QUESTION OF ESTABLISHING AN INDEPENDENT APPEAL SYSTEM TO CONSIDER OBJECTIONS TO PLANS PREPARED BY THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD WAS BEING ACTIVELY CONSIDERED BY THE ADMINISTRATION AS PART OF THE OVERALL REVIEW OF THE ORDINANCE.

"THE BILL INTRODUCED TODAY SETS OUT THE ESTABLISHMENT, POWERS, MEMBERSHIP AND PROCEDURES OF THAT APPEALS BODY.

"IN ADDITION, IT PROVIDES FOR A FURTHER RIGHT OF REVIEW IN RESPECT OF CONDITIONS IMPOSED ON PLANNING PERMISSION, WHICH IS CURRENTLY NOT PROVIDED FOR IN THE EXISTING ORDINANCE, AS AN APPLICANT CAN ONLY ASK THE BOARD TO REVIEW ITS DECISION OF REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION," HE SAID.

THE AMENDMENTS CONTAINED IN THE BILL WILL MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO THE ORDINANCE. THEY WILL:

- \* PROVIDE A RIGHT OF REVIEW IN RESPECT OF CONDITIONS IMPOSED ON THE PLANNING PERMISSION;
- \* PROVIDE FOR AN INDEPENDENT APPEAL BOARD TO BE SUBSTITUTED FOR THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL UNDER SECTION 17(7);
- \* SET OUT THE ESTABLISHMENT, MEMBERSHIP, POWERS AND PROCEDURE OF THE APPEAL BOARD;
- \* PROVIDE FOR REGULATIONS PRESCRIBING THE PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IN MAKING AN APPEAL, AND IN THE HEARING AND DETERMINATION OF AN APPEAL; AND
- \* PROVIDE FOR THE REGISTRATION OF NOTICES SERVED UNDER SECTION 23(1), (2) AND (3).

THE BASIC APPROACH IS TO SUBSTITUTE THE APPEAL BOARD FOR THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL AS THE INDEPENDENT CHANNEL OF APPEAL AGAINST THE BOARD'S DECISION ON A REVIEW UNDER SECTION 17, EXTENDED TO INCLUDE THE RIGHT OF REVIEW OF AN APPLICANT AGGRIEVED BY THE CONDITIONS THE BOARD IMPOSED ON A PLANNING PERMISSION.

"THE APPEAL BOARD MAY ADJOURN A HEARING, CONFIRM, REVERSE OR VARY THE DECISION APPEALED AGAINST. ITS DECISION ON ANY APPEAL SHALL BE FINAL," MR LEWIS SAID.

"TO DETER FRIVOLOUS APPEALS, THE BILL PROVIDES FOR THE APPEAL BOARD TO ORDER, AS IT THINKS FIT, THE PAYMENT OF COSTS TO ANY PARTY OF THE APPEAL.

"SUBSEQUENT TO THE PUBLICATION OF THE BILL AND IN THE COURSE OF DRAFTING THE REGULATIONS, I HAVE RECEIVED LEGAL ADVICE THAT THE CLARIFICATION ON THE LIMITATION OF COSTS TO EXPENSES REASONABLY INCURRED IN THE PREPARATION OR PRESENTATION OF AN APPEAL SHOULD APPEAR IN THE ORDINANCE RATHER THAN THE REGULATIONS," MR LEWIS SAID.

"I SHALL BE MOVING AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE AN AMENDMENT TO THIS EFFECT," HE ADDED.

MR LEWIS SAID THE PROCEDURE AND DRAFT REGULATIONS PRESCRIBING THOSE PROCEDURES HAD BEEN DRAWN UP WITH A VIEW TO ENSURING A FAIR BUT EFFICIENT HEARING, RECOGNISING THAT TIME WAS A VITAL CONSIDERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENTS.

"MEMBERS MAY WISH TO NOTE THAT BY ALLOWING BOTH THE APPELLANT AND THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD EACH 60 DAYS TO PREPARE THEIR RESPECTIVE CASE, THE SECRETARY TO THE APPEAL BOARD SHOULD BE ABLE TO ARRANGE A HEARING WITHIN 15 WEEKS OF THE RECEIPT OF A NOTICE OF AN APPEAL.

"A DRAFT OF THE TOWN PLANNING (APPEALS) REGULATIONS 1991 HAS ALSO BEEN PRESENTED FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION AND TO EXPLAIN TO MEMBERS HOW THE APPEAL BOARD WILL OPERATE.

"SHOULD THE BILL BE ENACTED, THE DRAFT REGULATIONS WILL BE FINALISED FOR SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL FOR THE REGULATIONS TO BE MADE AND PROMULGATED," MR LEWIS SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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#### BIGGER GRANTS TO REFLECT HIGHER FEE

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THE MAXIMUM GRANT PAYABLE UNDER THE LOCAL STUDENT FINANCE SCHEME WILL BE INCREASED TO REFLECT THE CHANGES IN TUITION FEES IN 1993-94, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON CHRISTINE CHOW, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE MAXIMUM GRANT WOULD GO UP FROM THE PRESENT \$18,260 TO \$28,500, MISS CHOW SAID.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON C. K. POON, SHE SAID "THIS SHOULD ENSURE THAT NO STUDENT WHO HAS BEEN OFFERED A PLACE WILL BE DENIED OF TERTIARY EDUCATION BECAUSE OF LACK OF MEANS."

MISS CHOW POINTED OUT THAT UNDER THE SCHEME, GRANTS AND LOANS WERE AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS STUDYING AT UPGC-FUNDED INSTITUTIONS.

/GRANTS WERE .....

GRANTS WERE PROVIDED TO COVER TUITION FEES AND OTHER ACADEMIC EXPENSES WHILE LOANS WERE FOR LIVING EXPENSES, SHE SAID.

"THE SCHEME IS MEANS-TESTED BUT NOT SUBJECT TO ANY CASH LIMIT.

"THE LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE ADJUSTED IN THE LIGHT OF INFLATION AND CHANGES IN FEE LEVEL," SHE ADDED.

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VISA NO GUARANTEE FOR ADMITTANCE

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THE POSSESSION OF A VISA DOES NOT GUARANTEE THAT THE VISITOR WILL DEFINITELY BE ADMITTED INTO HONG KONG, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON IAN STRACHAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PANG CHUN-HOI, MR STRACHAN SAID VISAS DID NOT CONFER THE RIGHT TO LAND, NOR THE RIGHT OF ABODE.

THEREFORE, UNDER SECTION 11(1) OF THE IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE, AN IMMIGRATION OFFICER MIGHT REFUSE A VISITOR LEAVE TO ENTER HONG KONG, EVEN IF HE HELD A VISA, HE SAID.

"SUCH A VISITOR CAN, FOR EXAMPLE, BE REFUSED ADMISSION IF IT IS DISCOVERED THAT FALSE REPRESENTATIONS WERE EMPLOYED OR MATERIAL FACTS WERE CONCEALED FOR THE PURPOSE OF OBTAINING THE VISA; OR THAT THERE HAD BEEN A CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES SINCE THE VISA WAS ISSUED WHICH REMOVED THE BASIS OF THE HOLDER'S CLAIM TO ADMISSION," HE SAID.

MR STRACHAN NOTED THAT THE NUMBER OF VISITORS WHO HELD VISAS FOR HONG KONG BUT WERE SUBSEQUENTLY REFUSED PERMISSION TO LAND WAS 575 IN 1988, 614 IN 1989, 305 LAST YEAR AND 94 SO FAR THIS YEAR.

HOWEVER, MR STRACHAN POINTED OUT THAT ANY PERSON AGGRIEVED BY A DECISION OF AN IMMIGRATION OFFICER MIGHT LODGE AN OBJECTION UNDER SECTION 53(1) OF THE IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE.

"IN THE CASE OF A VISITOR WITH A VISA FOR HONG KONG, THIS SHOULD BE BY NOTICE IN WRITING TO THE CHIEF SECRETARY WITHIN 14 DAYS," HE SAID.

THE OBJECTION WOULD THEN BE CONSIDERED BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL WHO MIGHT VARY, REVERSE, OR COMPLETELY CHANGE THE ORIGINAL DECISION.

"HOWEVER, MAKING AN OBJECTION IN THIS WAY DOES NOT GIVE A VISITOR THE RIGHT TO REMAIN HERE PENDING A DECISION. THIS IS MADE CLEAR IN SECTION 53(7) OF THE IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE," HE ADDED.

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CONTROL OF KARAOKE ACTIVITIES BEING CONSIDERED

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THE ADMINISTRATION IS NOW LOOKING INTO THE PRACTICABILITY OF LICENSING CONTROL OF KARAOKE ACTIVITIES THROUGH A LICENSING SYSTEM, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON PETER TSAO, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MRS ELSIE TU, MR TSAO SAID AT PRESENT, THERE WAS NO REQUIREMENT FOR KARAOKE CENTRES TO OBTAIN SPECIFIC LICENCES FOR THEIR OPERATION.

HOWEVER, AS MANY OF THEM WERE LOCATED WITHIN ESTABLISHMENTS WHICH PROVIDED FOOD AND/OR LIQUOR FOR CONSUMPTION, OPERATORS WERE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN A LICENCE UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES ORDINANCE.

"AS A PRE-REQUISITE FOR OBTAINING SUCH A LICENCE, THEY ARE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN FIRE SAFETY AND STRUCTURAL SAFETY CERTIFICATES FROM THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES," HE SAID.

HE ALSO SAID AS SOME KARAOKE CENTRES WERE RUN AS CLUBS, THESE PREMISES WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE CLUBS (SAFETY OF PREMISES) BILL.

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PRICING CONTROL ON PROPERTIES RULED OUT

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO INTENTION TO EXERCISE PRICING CONTROL ON PROPERTIES BUT IS CURRENTLY ASSESSING EXISTING MEASURES TO SEE IF FURTHER ACTION IS REQUIRED TO REDUCE UNSCRUPULOUS TRADING IN THE PROPERTY MARKET, AND TO IMPROVE PRE-SALE ARRANGEMENTS.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, THE HON MARTIN LEWIS, SAID THIS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN REPLY TO A QUESTION RAISED BY THE HON DAVID CHEUNG CONCERNING THE RECENT INCREASE IN FLAT PRICES.

MR LEWIS NOTED THAT THE RECENT INCREASE IN THE PRICES OF FLATS APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY A COMBINATION OF FACTORS, SUCH AS RENEWED INTEREST IN PURCHASES AFTER THE GULF WAR, RISING AFFLUENCE STIMULATING FURTHER DEMAND FOR BOTH FIRST-TIME HOME OWNERSHIP AND TRADE-UPS, LOWERING OF MORTGAGE INTEREST, AND GENERAL RELAXATION IN BANK LOANS.

OTHER FACTORS INCLUDED INCREASE IN THE COST OF CONSTRUCTION AND LABOUR, MARKETING STRATEGIES OF PROPERTY DEVELOPERS, AND AN EXPECTATION THAT PRICES MAY GO UP FURTHER.

MR LEWIS TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT WITH CURRENT MARKET CONDITIONS IN MIND, A NUMBER OF MEASURES HAD BEEN TAKEN TO REDUCE UNSCRUPULOUS TRADING IN THE PROPERTY MARKET, AND TO IMPROVE PRE-SALE ARRANGEMENTS.

"THE ADMINISTRATION IS CURRENTLY ASSESSING THESE MEASURES TO SEE IF FURTHER ACTION IS WARRANTED," HE SAID, WHILE STRESSING THAT GOVERNMENT POLICY WAS NOT TO INTERVENE IN A FREE MARKET ECONOMY, OR EXERCISE PRICING CONTROL ON PROPERTIES.

MR LEWIS ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUED TO ENCOURAGE HOME OWNERSHIP THROUGH A NUMBER OF PROVEN SCHEMES.

THESE INCLUDED THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME, THE PUBLIC SECTOR PARTICIPATION SCHEME, AND THE HOME PURCHASE LOAN SCHEME; AND ALSO A PROPOSAL THAT SITTING TENANTS IN RENTAL FLATS IN HOUSING AUTHORITY ESTATES PURCHASED THEIR OWN FLATS.

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LAND FUND INVESTMENTS A MATTER FOR ITS TRUSTEES

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INVESTMENTS BY THE SAR LAND FUND IS A MATTER FOR THE LAND FUND TRUSTEES, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING A QUESTION BY THE HON CHAN YING-LUN, SIR PIERS SAID THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WAS AWARE OF THE RECENT INVESTMENT OF THE LAND FUND IN BUYING A SIX PER CENT STAKE IN HONGKONG INTERNATIONAL TERMINALS LIMITED.

"BUT IT IS NOT FOR THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT TO ENCOURAGE OR DISCOURAGE ANY PARTICULAR INVESTMENT," HE ADDED.

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MORE VEHICLES DIVERTED TO LOK MA CHAU CROSSING

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ABOUT 1,300 VEHICLES WOULD BE DIVERTED FROM THE MAN KAM TO BORDER CROSSING TO THE LOK MA CHAU CROSSING FROM THIS MONTH WITH THE FULL CO-OPERATION OF THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG, MR LEUNG SAID THIS MEASURE WOULD BRING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VEHICLES TO BE DIVERTED TO LOK MA CHAU SO FAR TO 3,200, THEREBY BRINGING FURTHER RELIEF TO THE MAN KAM TO CROSSING FACILITY.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION AND WORK CLOSELY WITH THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES TO ACHIEVE A MORE EVEN DISTRIBUTION OF TRAFFIC BETWEEN THE THREE CROSSINGS AT MAN KAM TO, SHA TAU KOK AND LOK MA CHAU.

OF THE THREE BORDER CROSSINGS, MAN KAM TO WAS THE OLDEST AND A WELL-ESTABLISHED ROUTE WHICH PROVIDED A DIRECT AND CONVENIENT LINK TO THE CENTRE OF SHENZHEN CITY.

FOR THIS REASON, MANY HONG KONG LORRY DRIVERS PREFERRED TO USE THIS ROUTE, THE SECRETARY SAID.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS AWARE OF THE CURRENT CONGESTION AT MAN KAM TO AND HAD TAKEN STEPS IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES TO RELIEVE THE SITUATION.

FOLLOWING THE OPENING OF LOK MA CHAU CROSSING IN DECEMBER 1989, ABOUT 1,900 VEHICLES PREVIOUSLY USING MAN KAM TO HAD BEEN DIVERTED TO THE NEW CROSSING.

AS REGARDS THE SHA TAU KOK CROSSING, THERE WAS AN AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC OF ABOUT 2,000 VEHICLES, WHICH WAS CONSIDERED TO BE THE OPTIMAL LEVEL FOR THE UTILISATION OF THIS CROSSING, MR LEUNG ADDED.

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GOVT INFORMED IN ADVANCE MERGING DECISION

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THE GOVERNMENT WAS INFORMED IN ADVANCE OF THE HONG KONG TELECOM GROUP'S INTENTION TO MERGE CERTAIN FUNCTIONS IN THE HONG KONG TELEPHONE COMPANY AND HONG KONG TELECOM INTERNATIONAL AND TO MAKE REDUNDANT STAFF CONSIDERED BY THE COMPANIES TO BE IN EXCESS OF OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON CHRISTINE CHOW, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG, MISS CHOW SAID DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD WITH THE GROUP TO ENSURE THAT THE CHANGES WOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THEIR SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC AND THE GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO REGULATE THEIR FRANCHISED ACTIVITIES.

SHE SAID THE GOVERNMENT ALSO OFFERED ADVICE TO THE GROUP ON LABOUR RELATIONS ASPECTS, PARTICULARLY THE DESIRABILITY TO CONSULT EMPLOYEES.

"THE STAFF LEVELS MAINTAINED BY PUBLIC UTILITY COMPANIES ARE ESSENTIALLY A MATTER FOR THE COMPANIES CONCERNED.

"SO LONG AS THEY MEET THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THEIR FRANCHISES, THERE WOULD BE NO GROUNDS FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO INTERFERE IN THIS ASPECT OF COMPANY MANAGEMENT," SHE SAID.

HOWEVER, MISS CHOW SAID THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT DID PLAY AN ADVISORY AND MONITORING ROLE IN STAFF RETRENCHMENT EXERCISES IN GENERAL.

THE DEPARTMENT ADVISED EMPLOYERS ON HOW TO HANDLE RETRENCHMENTS IN A WAY THAT WOULD MINIMISE THE IMPACT ON THE EMPLOYEES INVOLVED, SHE SAID.

/MISS CHOW .....

MISS CHOW NOTED THAT THE EMPLOYEES WERE ADVISED OF THEIR ENTITLEMENTS UNDER THE LAW AND WERE ASSISTED IN FINDING ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT.

"WHERE THERE ARE DISPUTES BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES OVER RETRENCHMENT TERMS, THE DEPARTMENT PROVIDES A CONCILIATION SERVICE TO RESOLVE THE DIFFERENCES.

"WHERE NECESSARY, CASES WILL BE REFERRED TO THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL FOR ADJUDICATION," SHE ADDED.

MISS CHOW SAID THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE PROVIDED SOME DEGREE OF JOB SECURITY.

THE EMPLOYER WAS REQUIRED TO GIVE NOTICE OR PAYMENT IN LIEU OF NOTICE BEFORE AN EMPLOYEE COULD BE DISMISSED, EXCEPT FOR SERIOUS MISCONDUCT ON THE PART OF THE EMPLOYEE, SHE ADDED.

ADDITIONALLY, MISS CHOW SAID IF AN EMPLOYEE WAS DISMISSED BY REASON OF REDUNDANCY, HE WOULD BE ENTITLED TO SEVERANCE PAYMENT.

SHE SAID LONG SERVING EMPLOYEES WHO WERE DISMISSED BY REASON OTHER THAN REDUNDANCY AND ELDERLY EMPLOYEES WHO RETIRED ON OLD AGE OR HEALTH GROUNDS WERE ENTITLED TO LONG SERVICE PAYMENTS.

"WE DO NOT CONSIDER IT FEASIBLE TO IMPOSE STATUTORY RESTRICTIONS ON RETRENCHMENT.

"WE MUST NOT PUT UNDUE RESTRICTIONS ON THE RIGHT OF EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES TO ENTER INTO EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS OR TO TERMINATE THEM," SHE SAID.

MISS CHOW POINTED OUT THAT HIRE AND FIRE SHOULD REMAIN THE PREROGATIVE OF MANAGEMENT.

"EQUALLY, AN EMPLOYEE SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO RESIGN AND MOVE ON TO ANOTHER JOB.

"OUR MAIN CONCERN SHOULD BE TO ENSURE THAT THE EMPLOYEES' ENTITLEMENT UNDER THE ORDINANCE TO COMPENSATION IN THE EVENT OF RETRENCHMENT IS FULLY PROTECTED," SHE ADDED.

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VICTIMS ARE PROTECTED TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT

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THE POLICE DO HAVE STANDARD PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE FOR FLEXIBILITY IN RESPECT OF LOCATION IN RECEIVING REPORTS OR TAKING STATEMENTS FROM ALL VICTIMS OF CRIMES, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON IAN STRACHAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HENRIETTA IP, MR STRACHAN SAID THAT THESE WERE LAID DOWN IN THE POLICE GENERAL ORDERS AND THE MANUAL OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION FOR THE GUIDANCE OF ALL OFFICERS.

FOR CASES OF OFFENCES SUCH AS BATTERED WIVES AND CHILD ABUSE, A PLAINCLOTHES OFFICER COULD, UPON REQUEST, TAKE STATEMENTS FROM THE VICTIM AND OTHER WITNESSES AT A PLACE OR PLACES OF THEIR CHOICE, THE SECRETARY NOTED.

IF THE VICTIM WAS WILLING TO GIVE A STATEMENT IN A POLICE STATION, A SEPARATE ROOM WOULD ALWAYS BE USED, MR STRACHAN ADDED.

"IN THE CASE OF SEXUAL OFFENCES IN PARTICULAR, EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO PROTECT THE VICTIM AND TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT AND DISTURBANCE TO THAT VICTIM.

"FEMALE VICTIMS OF SUCH CASES ARE ALWAYS INTERVIEWED BY A WOMAN OFFICER," MR STRACHAN SAID.

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CROSS-BORDER IMPROVEMENT SOUGHT IN PROCEDURES  
TO CURB POISONOUS VEGETABLES

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THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HAS BEEN MEETING WITH THE SHENZHEN COMMODITY INSPECTION BUREAU ON WAYS FOR THEM TO IMPROVE THE TAGGING SYSTEM, VEGETABLE INSPECTION AND FARM MANAGEMENT IN VIEW OF THE FREQUENT OCCURRENCE OF VEGETABLE POISONING CASES IN THE TERRITORY.

THIS FOLLOWED THE REVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT'S HYGIENE SERVICES COMMITTEE ON THE EXISTING PROCEDURES ON INSPECTION AND TESTING OF IMPORTED VEGETABLES IN WAKE OF THE OUTBREAK EARLIER THIS YEAR OF POISONING VEGETABLES.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MICHAEL CHENG TAK-KIN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON ELIZABETH WONG, STATED THAT THE COMMITTEE RECOGNISED THAT, IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, THE BEST MEANS OF CONTROL WAS MORE EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT AT SOURCE.

THIS COMMITTEE, COMPRISING THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED, HAD RECOMMENDED ENHANCING CONTROL, INTENSIFYING VEGETABLE SAMPLING AT THE BORDER AND STRENGTHENING PUBLIC EDUCATION ON THE PROPER PREPARATION OF VEGETABLES.

SHE POINTED OUT THAT THE SHENZHEN BUREAU HAD ALREADY BARRED THE OFFENDING FARMS FROM FURTHER EXPORTING VEGETABLES TO HONG KONG.

"THE DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN CLOSE CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION AND HOLD REGULAR MEETINGS WITH THE BUREAU," MRS WONG SAID.

UNER THE PRESENT PROCEDURES, THE SHENZHEN IMPORT AND EXPORT COMMODITY INSPECTION BUREAU REQUIRED FARMS WHICH GREW VEGETABLES FOR EXPORT TO SUBMIT INFORMATION ON THE TYPE, CONCENTRATION AND DATE OF PESTICIDES USED ON THE CROP.

/"THIS, SUPPLEMENTED .....

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"THIS, SUPPLEMENTED BY RANDOM TESTS, ENABLE THE BUREAU TO DETERMINE IF THE VEGETABLES ARE SAFE FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION," MRS WONG SAID.

THE VEGETABLES WERE THEN CLEARED FOR EXPORT AND TAGGED FOR IDENTIFICATION, SHE ADDED.

IN HONG KONG, THE SECRETARY SAID, STAFF OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH STATIONED AT BORDER CONTROL POINTS ENSURED THAT ONLY PROPERLY-TAGGED VETETABLES WERE IMPORTED.

SCREENING, SAMPLING AND EXAMINATION OF IMPORTED VEGETABLES WERE ALSO CARRIED OUT IN HONG KONG.

"ANY VEGETABLE FOUND TO BE CONTAMINATED ARE DESTROYED," SHE NOTED.

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11 BILLS PASSED IN LEGCO  
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A TOTAL OF 11 BILLS WERE PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL : TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

TEN OF THEM WERE GOVERNMENT BILLS.

THEY WERE URBAN COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, REGIONAL COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, LIMITATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, PREVENTION OF BRIBERY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, APPRENTICESHIP (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, INDUSTRIAL TRAINING (CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, AND INDUSTRIAL TRAINING (CLOTHING INDUSTRY) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991.

THE ELEVENTH ONE WAS A PRIVATE BILL, THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF PLANNERS INCORPORATION BILL 1991, MOVED BY THE HON CHENG HON-KWAN.

MEANWHILE, SIX BILLS WERE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS AND DEBATES ON THEM WERE ADJOURNED.

THEY WERE BANKING (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL 1991, EMPLOYEES COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE BILL 1991, PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, BUSINESS REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991, CLUBS (SAFETY OF PREMISES) BILL 1991 AND TOWN PLANNING (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL 1991.

TWELVE NON-GOVERNMENT MEMBERS SPOKE IN AN ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE MATTER OF "THE HOUSING AUTHORITY'S PROPOSED SCHEME OF SALE OF FLATS TO SITTING TENANTS" RAISED BY THE HON LEUNG WAI-TUNG. THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS SPOKE ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 1991

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HOPE FOR FURTHER ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS ON AIRPORT SOON: GOVERNOR  
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THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, SAID TONIGHT (WEDNESDAY) THAT HE HOPED THAT THERE WOULD BE A FURTHER ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS SOMETIME SOON ON THE NEW AIRPORT PROJECT.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS BEFORE LEAVING FOR VISITS TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, SIR DAVID SAID HE COULD NOT, AT THE MOMENT, SAY THAT THERE WAS A PARTICULAR TIME FIXED FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS WITH CHINA.

ASKED IF HE WOULD INTRODUCE THE AIRPORT PROJECT TO PARTIES CONCERNED IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, THE GOVERNOR SAID THE OBJECT OF HIS VISITS WAS NOT TO TALK ABOUT OR TO SELL THE AIRPORT.

"BUT I HAVE NO DOUBT AT ALL THAT I SHALL BE TALKING ABOUT THE AIRPORT IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS. BUT THAT IS NOT THE SOLE OBJECT OF MY JOURNEY," HE SAID.

"I WILL TALK ABOUT HOW IMPORTANT THE AIRPORT PROJECT IS FOR THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG. I WILL DESCRIBE THE STATE OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH CHINA ON THE AIRPORT," HE ADDED.

SIR DAVID SAID THE REASON FOR HIS VISITS TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND WAS TO TRY TO MAKE SURE THAT THE SORT OF INVESTMENT FROM AUSTRALIA AND THE USE THAT AUSTRALIA MAKES OF HONG KONG AS AN ENTREPOT FOR ITS TRADE PARTICULARLY WITH CHINA, CONTINUED.

"MY MESSAGE IS THAT HONG KONG IS A PLACE WHICH IS STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE ECONOMICALLY AND A PLACE WHICH WELCOMES EXTERNAL INVESTMENT AND WELCOMES OTHER COUNTRIES LIKE AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND MAKING USE OF HONG KONG AS A BASE IN THE REGION, AND A PLACE FOR THEIR OWN ENTREPOT TRADE PARTICULARLY WITH CHINA," HE SAID.

WHEN ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE RESIGNATION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE STOCK EXCHANGE OF HONG KONG, THE GOVERNOR SAID HE HAD HEARD THE NEWS THAT MR PHILIP WONG HAD RESIGNED. "BUT I DON'T WANT TO COMMENT ON WHAT HIS REASONS MIGHT BE. THAT IS A PERSONAL MATTER."

"THE ONLY POINT I WOULD MAKE ABOUT THE STOCK EXCHANGE, AND IT IS TOTALLY UNRELATED TO PERSONALITIES, IS THAT WHAT WE NEED IS A STOCK EXCHANGE WHICH IS WELL RUN AND WHICH HAS THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PEOPLE WHO OPERATE IN THE STOCK EXCHANGE HERE AND INTERNATIONALLY," SIR DAVID SAID.

SIR DAVID AND LADY WILSON WERE SEEN OFF AT THE AIRPORT BY THE CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR DAVID FORD; THE SENIOR MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, BARONESS DUNN; AND THE SENIOR MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR ALLEN LEE.

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CIVIL SERVICE CONSULTATIVE MACHINERY

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS ACCEPTED MOST OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE STANDING COMMISSION ON CIVIL SERVICE SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE (STANDING COMMISSION) IN ITS REPORT, "CONSULTATIVE MACHINERY IN THE CIVIL SERVICE".

THE REPORT COVERS THE SECOND OVERALL REVIEW OF THE CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE CONDUCTED BY THE STANDING COMMISSION.

IT WAS PUBLISHED IN DECEMBER 1988, AND CONTAINED OVER 50 RECOMMENDATIONS.

SUBSEQUENTLY, THE ADMINISTRATION CARRIED OUT FURTHER EXTENSIVE CONSULTATION WITH STAFF ASSOCIATIONS AND DEPARTMENTS ON THE STANDING COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT HAVING CONSIDERED THESE COMMENTS AND THE ADMINISTRATION'S VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT, THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HAD DIRECTED THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS BE ACCEPTED AND IMPLEMENTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE STANDING COMMISSION RECOGNISED THE IMPORTANCE AND THE VALUE OF EFFECTIVE CONSULTATIVE MACHINERY IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.

IT FOUND THE EXISTING SYSTEM GENERALLY WORKING WELL BUT ALSO MADE A NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS.

"THE STANDING COMMISSION IS OF THE VIEW THAT THE SENIOR CIVIL SERVICE COUNCIL AS PRESENTLY CONSTITUTED HAS PROVIDED A SUITABLE FORUM FOR DIALOGUE BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND STAFF ASSOCIATIONS AND HAS BEEN OPERATING SATISFACTORILY SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 1968," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"THE GOVERNMENT HAS ACCEPTED THE RECOMMENDATION THAT THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF CONSULTATION SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AND THAT THE CURRENT POLICY OF NOT ALLOWING FEDERAL BODIES TO JOIN CENTRAL CONSULTATIVE COUNCILS SHOULD BE UPHOLD," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

ONE OF THE MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE STANDING COMMISSION HAS ALREADY BEEN IMPLEMENTED. IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT A NEW CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL THE NON-POLICE DISCIPLINED SERVICES SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED.

THE SAME RECOMMENDATION WAS MADE BY THE REVIEW COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLINED SERVICES PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE AND THIS LED TO THE FORMATION OF THE DISCIPLINED SERVICES CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL IN FEBRUARY LAST YEAR.

CONSULTATION AT DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL WILL BE IMPROVED BY A RELAXATION OF THE MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT FOR UNION REPRESENTATION AT DEPARTMENTAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES.

INFORMAL CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE FURTHER PROMOTED IN DEPARTMENTS AND SENIOR OFFICERS WILL CONDUCT MORE GOODWILL VISITS.

DEPARTMENTS WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF STAFF COMPLAINTS OFFICERS AND TO CIRCULATE STAFF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES TO ALL STAFF MORE FREQUENTLY.

WHILE IT IS CONSIDERED THAT THE STAFF SUGGESTIONS SCHEME SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE OPERATED AT CENTRAL LEVEL, THE ADMINISTRATION HAS RAISED THE LEVEL OF MONETARY AWARDS AND WILL TAKE APPROPRIATE STEPS TO ENCOURAGE SUGGESTIONS BY EXTENDING THE SCOPE OF THE SCHEME.

WITH A VIEW TO IMPROVING THE FLOW OF INFORMATION TO STAFF, THE ADMINISTRATION HAS ACCEPTED THE STANDING COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATION TO INCREASE THE FREQUENCY OF THE CIVIL SERVICE NEWSLETTER AND TO REVIEW ITS EDITORIAL POLICY.

THE ADMINISTRATION HAS ALSO AGREED TO DEVELOP A SET OF ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR VETTING APPLICATIONS FROM CIVIL SERVICE UNIONS FOR JOINING THE MODEL SCALE 1 STAFF CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL.

A RECOMMENDATION FOR THE PROVISION OF RECOURSE TO A COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY FOR THE MOD 1 COUNCIL WILL BE GIVEN FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY THE ADMINISTRATION.

THIS WILL TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE CHANGES BEING INTRODUCED TO THE COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL NECESSITATED BY THE TRANSFER OF THE ARTISAN/SENIOR ARTISAN SEGMENTS OF THE MODEL SCALE 1 TO THE MASTER PAY SCALE.

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APPOINTMENTS TO SECURITIES AND FUTURES APPEALS PANEL

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THE GOVERNOR HAS RE-APPOINTED MR WONG CHUNG-HIN AND MR LESLIE WRIGHT AS THE CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE SECURITIES AND FUTURES APPEALS PANEL (SFAP) AND MR LESTER KWOK CHI-HANG, MR SELWYN MAR, MR FRANK PONG FAI AND MR YAO KANG AS INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF THE PANEL.

ANNOUNCING THIS TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR MONETARY AFFAIRS, MR DAVID NENDICK, SAID THE GOVERNOR HAS ALSO APPOINTED MR DENNIS LAM HAW-SHUN TO SUCCEED MRS ALICE LAM AS A MEMBER OF THE PANEL.

MR LAM IS THE GENERAL MANAGER OF COMMERCIAL BANK OF HONG KONG AND SERVES ON THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND AIR TRANSPORT LICENSING AUTHORITY.

"I AM MOST GRATEFUL TO MRS LAM FOR HER SERVICE TO THE PANEL SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN MAY 1989," MR NENDICK SAID.

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ALL THE APPOINTMENTS ARE FOR THE PERIOD FROM MAY 8, 1991 TO APRIL 30, 1993.

SECTION 18 OF THE SECURITIES AND FUTURES COMMISSION (SFC) ORDINANCE PROVIDES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN SFAP TO HEAR APPEALS AGAINST DECISIONS BY THE SFC IN RELATION TO APPLICATION FOR, OR SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF REGISTRATION AND THE EXERCISE OF INTERVENTION POWERS BY THE COMMISSION.

THE SFAP HAS 12 MEMBERS, NAMELY THE CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, WHO ARE BOTH QUALIFIED IN LAW, THE FIVE NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF THE SFC, AND THE FIVE INDEPENDENT MEMBERS.

EACH APPEAL WILL BE HEARD BY A TRIBUNAL OF THREE CONSISTING OF EITHER THE CHAIRMAN OR THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, ONE INDEPENDENT MEMBER AND ONE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE SFC.

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FINANCE COMMITTEE TO MEET ON FRIDAY

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THE FINANCE COMMITTEE WILL HOLD A MEETING ON FRIDAY (MAY 10) IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 2.30 PM.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO OBSERVE THE COMMITTEE'S PROCEEDINGS FROM THE CHAMBER'S PUBLIC GALLERIES AND THEY MAY MAKE RESERVATIONS BY TELEPHONING 844 0899.

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFORM THE WAY BUSINESS IS DONE

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ARE TRANSFORMING THE WAY BUSINESS IS DONE IN ALMOST ALL AREAS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER (DESIGNATE), MR JOHN CHAN, SAID THIS (WEDNESDAY) EVENING.

SPEAKING AT THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, MR CHAN SAID MOST INDUSTRIES WERE, OR WOULD BECOME, TECHNOLOGY-OR KNOWLEDGE-INTENSIVE.

"NEW MATERIALS, ELECTRONICS, INFORMATION SYSTEMS - ALL OF THESE MANIFESTATIONS OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY ARE CONSTANTLY CREATING NEW POSSIBILITIES BOTH FOR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES AND FOR THE PROCESSES BY WHICH THEY ARE PRODUCED.

"TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN INNOVATION INCREASINGLY UNDERPINS ECONOMIC HEALTH AND THE GAINS IN STANDARDS OF LIVING WHICH THAT BRINGS," HE SAID.

TO TRANSLATE TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES INTO TANGIBLE ECONOMIC BENEFITS REQUIRED EFFORT TO PROMOTE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, TO FOSTER THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND IDEAS AND TO ENCOURAGE COLLABORATION, PARTICULARLY BETWEEN SCIENTISTS AND INDUSTRIALISTS.

"I AM SURE THAT THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WILL MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THIS EFFORT AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL IN THE SAME WAY AS ITS INDIVIDUAL MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS DO AT THE LOCAL LEVEL.

"I BELIEVE THAT HONG KONG ALSO HAS A PART TO PLAY, AS A CENTRE TO FACILITATE THE DISSEMINATION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WITHIN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION AND MORE WIDELY," MR CHAN SAID.

TURNING TO THE SUBJECT OF MANUFACTURING INVESTMENT, MR CHAN SAID AT THE SAME TIME AS HONG KONG MANUFACTURERS HAD BEEN DIVERSIFYING THEIR INVESTMENTS TO CHINA, AND OTHER LOCATIONS IN THE REGION WHICH OFFERED ADVANTAGES IN TERMS OF LAND AND LABOUR COSTS, HONG KONG ITSELF HAD CONTINUED TO ATTRACT INVESTMENT FROM OVERSEAS.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF OVERSEAS COMPANIES BASED IN HONG KONG HAD INCREASED FOR THE LAST FIVE YEARS AT THE RATE OF NEARLY 60 PER YEAR.

THERE WAS A STRONG OVERSEAS PRESENCE IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR AND IN MANY SERVICE INDUSTRIES SUCH AS RETAILING AND BANKING.

HONG KONG WAS THE BASE FOR THE REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS OF MANY MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES.

"AND, WITH ITS WELL-DEVELOPED FINANCIAL SECTOR, HONG KONG IS ALSO A NATURAL CHANNEL FOR INVESTORS FROM AROUND THE WORLD WHO WANT TO EXPLORE THE OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED BY THE OPENING AND MODERNISATION OF CHINA," MR CHAN SAID.

"IN ESSENCE, HONG KONG IS EMERGING AS A BUSINESS HUB WITHIN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION WITH CONNECTIONS REACHING TO EVERY PART OF THE GLOBE.

"THIS ROLE IS MADE POSSIBLE BY HONG KONG'S NATURAL ASSETS: ITS GEOGRAPHY AND ITS SUPERB DEEP-WATER HARBOUR.

"BUT THE PROVISION OF A SOUND ECONOMIC AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND SOUND INFRASTRUCTURE HAS BEEN - AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE - THE KEY UNLOCKING HONG KONG'S POTENTIAL AS A REGIONAL BUSINESS CENTRE."

INTAKES TO IT-RELATED COURSES TO INCREASE

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THERE WILL BE A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN INTAKES TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)-RELATED COURSES IN TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTES IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER (DESIGNATE), MR JOHN CHAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF THE COMPUTER CONFERENCE '91 AT THE HONG KONG CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE, MR CHAN SAID INTAKES TO IT-RELATED COURSES IN THE TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS CURRENTLY STOOD AT 1,750 AND THE INTENTION WAS TO EXPAND EXISTING COURSES AND TO INTRODUCE NEW COURSES TO MAKE AVAILABLE AN ADDITIONAL 680 PLACES THIS YEAR.

"THE NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL PLACES IS INTENDED TO RISE TO OVER 1,000 BY 1994/95," HE SAID.

AS REGARDS TECHNICAL INSTITUTES, MR CHAN SAID THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL HAD INCREASED INTAKES ON IT-RELATED COURSES FROM 1,730 IN 1989/90 TO 3,175 IN 1990/91.

"A FURTHER INCREASE TO 3,345 IS PLANNED FOR 1991/92 - NEARLY DOUBLE THE 1989/90 NUMBERS," HE SAID.

MR CHAN SAID THE COUNCIL WAS INTRODUCING A RANGE OF NEW COURSES IN RESPONSE TO CHANGING SKILLS NEEDS.

"THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL ALSO PROVIDES TRAINING IN IT, OFFERING IN-CLASS TRAINING PLACES AS WELL AS SEMINARS AND IN-COMPANY TRAINING," HE SAID.

ALL IN ALL, MR CHAN SAID, THERE HAD BEEN AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN INVESTMENT IN IT EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

"THE ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE TO CONSIDER HOW BEST TO RESPOND TO IT USERS' NEEDS FOR SKILLED MANPOWER.

"THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY HAS RECENTLY MADE A NUMBER OF CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER ACTION BASED ON ITS SURVEY OF THE IT ENVIRONMENT AND MANPOWER IN HONG KONG.

"THE ADMINISTRATION IS CONSIDERING THESE PROPOSALS AND WILL RESPOND SOON," HE SAID.

MR CHAN SAID THE DEMAND FOR SKILLED STAFF WAS LIKELY TO INTENSIFY IN THE COMING YEARS AS IT USERS UPGRADED THEIR SYSTEM AND DEVELOPED NEW APPLICATIONS, AND AS OTHER ORGANISATIONS STARTED USING IT FOR THE FIRST TIME.

"THE TYPE OF SKILLS REQUIRED WILL ALSO CHANGE, AS THE EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS PLANNED FOR NEW APPLICATIONS FOLLOW STATE OF THE ART TRENDS," HE SAID.

/MR CHAN .....

MR CHAN SAID SHORTAGES OF SKILLED PEOPLE WERE NOT A NEW PROBLEM IN HONG KONG, WHERE UNEMPLOYMENT LEVELS HAD TRADITIONALLY BEEN LOW.

"HONG KONG MANAGERS HAVE HAD TO BECOME ADEPT AT FINDING SOLUTIONS TO VACANCIES AND SHORTAGES AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO.

"THE APPROACHES ADOPTED INCLUDE RECRUITMENT FROM OVERSEAS; THE SUB-CONTRACTING OF SOME WORK OFF-SHORE; AND MORE INTENSIVE TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR IT PROFESSIONALS," HE SAID.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROJECTS PROVIDE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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HONG KONG'S DETERMINATION TO CLEAN UP ITS ENVIRONMENT HAS PROVIDED ATTRACTIVE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOTH LOCAL AND OVERSEAS COMPANIES, THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE HONG KONG ECONOMIC AND TRADE OFFICE IN SAN FRANCISCO, MR JACK CHAN, SAID YESTERDAY (TUESDAY).

HE WAS ADDRESSING A SEMINAR IN LOS ANGELES HELD BY THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA COMMISSION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHAIRED BY THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA, MR LEO MCCARTHY.

MR CHAN SAID IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS HONG KONG WOULD BE SPENDING AT LEAST US\$30 BILLION ON MASSIVE CIVIL ENGINEERING AND OTHER PROJECTS TO CLEAN UP THE ENVIRONMENT.

HE EXPLAINED THAT MANY OF THE TERRITORY'S POLLUTION PROBLEMS WERE TYPICAL OF THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH A RAPIDLY DEVELOPING ECONOMY.

"IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE ANNUAL GENERATION OF WASTES NORMALLY INCREASES IN LINE WITH POPULATION AND GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT. HONG KONG IS NO EXCEPTION.

"OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS, OUR POPULATION HAS INCREASED BY 30 PER CENT, OUR GDP BY 300 PER CENT AND OUR WASTES ALSO BY 300 PER CENT.

"IT IS THESE WASTES, IN THE WRONG PLACE OR AT THE WRONG TIME, THAT CAUSE POLLUTION," MR CHAN SAID.

CONCEDING OUT THAT IN THE PAST HONG KONG HAD GIVEN TOO LITTLE EMPHASIS TO THE NEEDS OF THE ENVIRONMENT, MR CHAN SAID IN ADDITION TO ALLOCATING MORE FINANCIAL RESOURCES, ADDITIONAL STAFF WOULD BE REQUIRED BY THE GOVERNMENT IN CONNECTION WITH MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROJECTS.

HE TOLD HIS AUDIENCE THAT SOME AMERICAN COMPANIES HAD ALREADY TAKEN A LEAD IN EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLEANING UP HONG KONG'S ENVIRONMENT.

/"FIVE MONTHS .....

"FIVE MONTHS AGO, A NEWLY FORMED COMPANY CALLED ENVIROPACE, 70 PER CENT OWNED BY WASTE MANAGEMENT INTERNATIONAL INC OF ILLINOIS, WAS AWARDED A US\$166 MILLION CONTRACT TO BUILD AND OPERATE A MAJOR CHEMICAL WASTE TREATMENT CENTRE IN HONG KONG.

"OVERALL DESIGN OF THE CENTRE WILL BE HANDLED BY BECHTEL ENVIRONMENT INC OF SAN FRANCISCO," HE SAID.

"ANOTHER MAJOR PROJECT SOON TO OPEN FOR BIDS IS THE US\$1.8 BILLION UPGRADE OF HONG KONG'S SEWAGE SYSTEM WHICH WILL INCLUDE ONE OF THE WORLD'S LONGEST SEA OUTFALLS," HE ADDED.

IN ADDITION TO ELIMINATING, OR AT LEAST ALLEVIATING, EXISTING PROBLEMS, MR CHAN EMPHASISED THAT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED IT EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO AVOID CREATING NEW ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS.

WORKING TOWARDS THESE ENDS INCLUDED ADOPTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS IN THE PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, MR CHAN SAID.

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PROPER TREATMENT OF LIVESTOCK WASTES NEEDED

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THE SUCCESS OF THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY DEPENDS ON EFFECTIVE CONTAINMENT OF ANIMAL WASTES THROUGH PROPER TREATMENT MEASURES AND RECYCLING PROCESSES, THE DIRECTOR OF THE KADOORIE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG, PROFESSOR DANIEL CHAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

PROF CHAN WAS SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE HELD AT THE RESEARCH CENTRE TO ANNOUNCE DETAILS OF HONG KONG'S FIRST-EVER INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON "MODERN TECHNOLOGY IN TREATMENT AND RECYCLING OF LIVESTOCK WASTES".

HE SAID: "THE QUEST FOR A CLEANER ENVIRONMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC IS OFTEN IN DIRECT CONFLICT WITH REARING LIVESTOCK ESPECIALLY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA WHERE PEOPLE, FARM ANIMALS AND MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY COMPETE FOR SPACE AND WATER RESOURCES.

"THERE IS A NEED, THEREFORE, FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO INTRODUCE SOME FORM OF CONTROL ON DISPOSAL OF LIVESTOCK WASTES AT THIS POINT OF TIME."

PROF CHAN SAID THE TIGHT PROFIT MARGIN AND LIMITED LAND SPACE IN THE TERRITORY, AS WELL AS IN MOST ASIAN REGION, IMPOSED SEVERE CONSTRAINTS ON THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY SO THAT THE TRADITIONAL MEANS OF TREATING ANIMAL WASTES WAS NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE.

/"THERE IS .....

"THERE IS THUS AN URGENT NEED TO IDENTIFY A MEANS OF WASTE TREATMENT THAT IS BOTH ECONOMICAL AND PRACTICAL TO THE FARMERS AND SCIENTIFICALLY EFFICIENT," HE SAID.

"THROUGH THE HARD WORK OF THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT, THE PIG-ON-LITTER (POL) SYSTEM, WHICH OFFERS A VIABLE AND ATTRACTIVE ALTERNATIVE TO THE DRY AND WET MUCK OUT METHODS, WAS DEVELOPED.

"THE SYSTEM ALSO AROUSES INTERESTS FROM ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH WORKERS AND SOME WORK HAS BEEN CONDUCTED TO UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM OF THE DEGRADATION OF WASTES IN SITU, THE PROPERTY AND QUALITY OF THE WASTES AND THEIR USEFUL RECYCLING."

THE SYMPOSIUM WILL FOCUS ON THE TECHNICAL AND PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF THE POL SYSTEM AND COMPARE THIS WITH OTHER LIVESTOCK WASTES TREATMENT AND RECYCLING METHODS, WITH THE VIEW OF DEVISING APPLICATION MODELS FOR THE ASIAN PIG FARMERS.

"WE FEEL THAT THIS IS AN OPPORTUNE TIME FOR US TO SHARE WITH OUR COUNTERPARTS OUR FINDINGS AND EXPERIENCE IN THE PROPER TREATMENT AND RECYCLING OF LIVESTOCK WASTES," PROF CHAN SAID.

THE SYMPOSIUM IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE HKU, THE JOINT FEDERATION OF HONG KONG AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND MARKETING SOCIETIES (JFHKAPMS) AND THE AFD.

MORE THAN 80 DELEGATES, INCLUDING EXPERTS AND PEOPLE FROM THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY, FROM AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, THE U.S., JAPAN, THE UK, HOLLAND, SWITZERLAND, ITALY, TAIWAN AND CHINA HAVE REGISTERED FOR PARTICIPATION.

LOCAL PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE BIOCHEMISTS, BOTANISTS AND ZOOLOGISTS FROM HKU, THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG AND THE CITY POLYTECHNIC AS WELL AS OFFICERS FROM AFD AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT.

THE SYMPOSIUM WILL SPREAD OVER A PERIOD OF FIVE DAYS FROM MAY 13 TO 17.

THE PROGRAMME CONSISTS OF SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS WHERE INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS EXCHANGE THE LATEST TECHNICAL INFORMATION ON THE TREATMENT AND RECYCLING OF PIG WASTES AND ASSESS ITS IMPACTS ON INTEGRATED FARMING PLUS AN EXHIBITION WHICH IS OPEN FREE TO THE PUBLIC.

IN ADDITION, TRAINING COURSES WILL BE ORGANISED FOR FARMERS ON WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND THE USE OF COMPOST FROM PIG WASTE IN CROP PRODUCTION, HORTICULTURE AND LANDSCAPE GARDENING.

A FIELD EXCURSION TO SEE THE LOCAL AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES WILL ALSO BE ARRANGED.

ALSO PRESENT AT TODAY'S PRESS CONFERENCE WERE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JFHKAPMS, MR CHAN KWOK-WAI, AND AFD'S SENIOR AGRICULTURAL OFFICER, MISS VERA SO.

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APPLICATIONS FOR UK PASSPORTS TO BE PROCESSED IN HK

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WITH EFFECT FROM JUNE 1, APPLICATIONS FOR UK PASSPORTS NEED NOT BE SENT TO THE UK FOR PROCESS, THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE TIME REQUIRED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO ISSUE A UK PASSPORT WILL NORMALLY BE 20 WORKING DAYS, A DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID.

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\$1.4 BILLION FOR SUBVENTED AGENCIES

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SUBVENTED AGENCIES, TOTALLING 161 IN NUMBER, WILL THIS YEAR RECEIVE GRANTS MORE THAN \$1.4 BILLION, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR M.D. CARTLAND SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

ADDRESSING A DINNER CONCERT ORGANISED BY THE YAN CHAI HOSPITAL, MR CARTLAND POINTED OUT THAT THE GRANTS WERE WELL OVER TWO-THIRDS OF TOTAL GOVERNMENT RECURRENT EXPENDITURE ON SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES.

"IF THE GOVERNMENT IS PICKING UP THE MAJOR PORTION OF THE BILL, DO WELFARE AGENCIES NEED TO PUT SO MUCH TIME AND EFFORT INTO FUND RAISING?" HE ASKED.

MR CARTLAND SAID THE FACT WAS THAT THE AGENCIES WERE NOT A PART OR AN EXTENSION OF THE GOVERNMENT.

"THEY ARE FREE TO SUPPLEMENT SUBVENTIONS FROM OTHER SOURCES AND HAVE A DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY IN THE DEPLOYMENT OF RESOURCES," HE NOTED.

HE SAID HONG KONG HAD BEEN WELL-SERVED BY THE MANY AGENCIES THAT WERE INVOLVED IN THE DIRECT PROVISION OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES.

THE YAN CHAI HOSPITAL WAS AN EXTREMELY SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLE OF HOW THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE AGENCY COULD WORK IN PRACTICE TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE PROVISION OF WELFARE SERVICES, HE ADDED.

"FROM ITS CORE ACTIVITY OF RUNNING A HOSPITAL, YAN CHAI HAS EXTENDED ITS ACTIVITIES INTO THE AREAS OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE," HE NOTED.

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FEWER SUMMER JOB STUDENTS INJURED

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THE NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS INVOLVING SUMMER JOB STUDENTS HAS BEEN ON THE DECLINE SINCE THE MOUNTING OF A JOINT PUBLICITY PROGRAMME FOUR YEARS AGO, THE CHIEF FACTORY INSPECTOR OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT, MR YIP YUK-LUN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE PRIZE PRESENTATION CEREMONY OF A BOOKMARK DESIGN COMPETITION ON WORK SAFETY FOR STUDENTS, MR YIP SAID THERE WERE 18 SUCH ACCIDENTS LAST YEAR, COMPARED WITH 41 IN 1987.

ALL THE ACCIDENTS LAST YEAR WERE MINOR ONES WITH 13 STUDENT WORKERS INJURED BY MACHINERY AND THE REST BY HOT OR CORROSIVE SUBSTANCES, STEPPING ON OR STRIKING AGAINST OBJECTS, AND HAND TOOLS.

WHILE DESCRIBING THE FALLING TREND AS "ENCOURAGING", MR YIP URGED STUDENT WORKERS TO BE "ALWAYS ON THE ALERT AGAINST POSSIBLE INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS".

"TO BRING HOME THE MESSAGE OF WORK SAFETY, FACTORY INSPECTORS WILL VISIT SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTES TO GIVE TALKS AND DISTRIBUTE PUBLICITY LEAFLETS TO STUDENTS BETWEEN NOW AND EARLY JULY," HE ADDED.

TODAY'S PRIZE PRESENTATION CEREMONY WAS PART OF A PUBLICITY PROGRAMME ON SUMMER JOB SAFETY ORGANISED JOINTLY BY THE LABOUR AND THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS AND THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF CAREERS MASTERS AND GUIDANCE MASTERS.

RECEIVING PRIZES AT THE CEREMONY WERE THE WINNER AU SIU-MAN (16) OF KWUN TONG GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOL, THE FIRST RUNNER-UP WONG KWOK-LEI (19) OF CMA CHOI CHEUNG KOK PREVOCAIONAL SCHOOL AND THE SECOND RUNNER-UP CHAN WAI-HONG (19) OF KWUN TONG VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE.

BOOKMARKS USING THE CHAMPION'S DESIGN HAVE BEEN PRINTED FOR DISTRIBUTION TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

ALSO OFFICIATING AT THE CEREMONY WERE THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (SERVICES), MRS GRACE YUNG; CHAIRMAN OF THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF CAREERS MASTERS AND GUIDANCE MASTERS, MR CHAN JOE-CHAK; AND CHAIRMAN OF THE SAFETY PROMOTION COMMITTEE, MR K.Y. TONGSON.

COMPREHENSIVE CLEARANCE OF UBW'S IN WAN CHAI

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A COMPREHENSIVE CLEARANCE OPERATION OF UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS (UBW'S) IN FIVE WAN CHAI BUILDINGS HAS RESULTED IN MORE THAN 90 PER CENT OF THE REMOVAL ORDERS ISSUED BY THE BUILDING AUTHORITY HAVING BEEN VOLUNTARILY COMPLIED WITH BY THE OWNERS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT TODAY (WEDNESDAY) SAID: "THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE RESIDENTS WILL BE IMPROVED FOLLOWING THE REMOVAL OF THE UBW'S AND REPAIR WORKS TO THE UNDERGROUND DRAINAGE SYSTEM IN THE REAR LANES AND YARDS.

"THE PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN MARCH NEXT YEAR."

HE SAID THE DEPARTMENT CARRIED OUT THE OPERATION IN FIVE BUILDINGS AT 10 CANAL ROAD WEST, 11-12 CANAL ROAD WEST, 13 CANAL ROAD WEST, 2-16 BOWRINGTON ROAD AND 418-430 HENNESSY ROAD.

A TOTAL OF 268 ORDERS FOR THE REMOVAL OF UBW'S WERE ISSUED.

"THE OWNERS ARE REQUIRED TO REMOVE THE UBW'S AND REPAIR THE DETERIORATED PARTS OF THE BUILDINGS AND THE DEFECTIVE DRAINS," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"THEY ARE ALSO REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT OTHER WORKS TO ENSURE THAT THE BUILDINGS COMPLY WITH THE MINIMUM STANDARDS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY AS LAID DOWN IN THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE."

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OPERATION IS DIVIDED INTO TWO PHASES, PHASE I BEING ON 10 CANAL ROAD WEST AND THE REAR LANE SYSTEM TO THE FIVE BUILDINGS, AND PHASE II BEING ON THE REMAINING FOUR BUILDINGS.

A TOTAL OF 88 REMOVAL ORDERS WERE ISSUED IN NOVEMBER LAST YEAR IN THE PHASE I OPERATION AND A TOTAL OF 180 REMOVAL ORDERS ISSUED IN FEBRUARY IN THE PHASE II OPERATION.

"REPAIR WORKS TO THE UNDERGROUND DRAINAGE SYSTEM IN THE REAR LANES AND YARDS WILL BE CARRIED OUT IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURES IN THE LANES AND YARDS HAVE BEEN REMOVED," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

IN CONNECTION WITH THE DEMOLITION AND REPAIR ORDERS ISSUED IN THIS OPERATION, IT IS THE OPINION OF THE BUILDING AUTHORITY THAT THE UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURES AT THE FLAT ROOF ADJOINING FLAT B1, THIRD FLOOR, 10 CANAL ROAD WEST SHOULD BE CLOSED IN ORDER THAT THEY CAN BE DEMOLISHED WITHOUT DANGER TO THE OCCUPANTS AND TO THE PUBLIC.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO APPLY FOR A CLOSURE ORDER FROM THE HONG KONG DISTRICT COURT, AT 9.30 AM ON AUGUST 8 WAS POSTED ON THE PREMISES TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

DEMOLITION WORK IS EXPECTED TO START ONCE THE CLOSURE ORDER IS GRANTED.

UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURE IN MONG KOK TO BE CLOSED

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THE BUILDING AUTHORITY IS SEEKING TO CLOSE AN UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURE AT LOK HING MANSION, 240-242 TUNG CHOI STREET, MONG KOK, SO THAT IT CAN BE DEMOLISHED WITHOUT DANGER TO THE OCCUPIERS AND THE PUBLIC.

THE STRUCTURE IS ON THE FLAT ROOF ADJOINING FLAT A ON THE FIRST FLOOR OF THE BUILDING.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO APPLY FOR A CLOSURE ORDER UNDER THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE FROM THE HONG KONG DISTRICT COURT ON JULY 9 WAS POSTED ON THE PREMISES TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

DEMOLITION WORK IS EXPECTED TO START ONCE THE CLOSURE ORDER IS ISSUED.

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TWO GOVT LOTS FOR LET BY TENDER

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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 SITE, MEASURING ABOUT 4,125 SQUARE METRES, IS LOCATED AT CHA KWO LING ROAD, YAU TONG IN KOWLOON.

IT IS FOR OPEN STORAGE OF NON-DANGEROUS GOODS.

THE TENANCY IS FOR ONE YEAR AND QUARTERLY AFTERWARDS.

FORM OF TENDER, TENDER NOTICE AND CONDITIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM AND TENDER PLAN INSPECTED AT, THE KOWLOON EAST DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, 10TH FLOOR, YAU MA TEI CARPARK BUILDING, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, KOWLOON AND THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG.

THE SECOND SITE IS IN AREA 56C, KAU TO, SHA TIN, NEW TERRITORIES.

WITH AN AREA ABOUT 6,350 SQUARE METRES, THE SITE IS INTENDED FOR STORAGE OF GOODS, EXCLUDING DANGEROUS GOODS, CONTAINER VEHICLES AND TRAILERS WITH OR WITHOUT CONTAINERS, BUT INCLUDING MAINTENANCE OF PLANT BELONGING TO THE TENANT.

THE TENANCY IS FOR THREE YEARS AND QUARTERLY AFTERWARDS.

FORM OF TENDER, TENDER NOTICE AND CONDITIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM AND TENDER PLAN INSPECTED AT, THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, THE SHA TIN DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, 2 TUNG LO WAN HILL ROAD, SHA TIN, AND THE KOWLOON DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES, 10TH FLOOR, YAU MA TEI CARPARK BUILDING, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, KOWLOON.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF TENDERS FOR BOTH SITES IS NOON ON MAY 24.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 1991

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND  
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS  
\* \* \* \* \*

HKEF

	DATE -----	\$ MILLION -----
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT ON	7.5.91	480
EFFECT OF FORWARDS TO BE SETTLED ON	8.5.91	+219
EFFECT OF OPERATIONS THIS MORNING		-219
EFFECT OF OPERATIONS THIS AFTERNOON		NEUTRAL
TRADE WEIGHTED INDEX 112.3 *-0.2* 8.5.91		

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND  
91-DAY EXCHANGE FUND BILLS

HKEI

ISSUE NUMBER -----	MATURING ON -----	OUTSTANDING \$ MILLION -----	
Q115	10.7.91	350	+130
Q116	17.7.91	350	+130
Q117	24.7.91	378.5	+101.5
Q118	31.7.91	430	+50
Q119	7.8.91	400	+80
Q107	15.5.91	431	+49
Q108	22.5.91	440	+40
Q109	29.5.91	530	-50
Q110	5.6.91	410	+70
Q111	12.6.91	454	+26
Q112	19.6.91	610	-130
Q113	26.6.91	460	+20
Q114	3.7.91	480	+0

/HONG KONG .....

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND  
182-DAY EXCHANGE FUND BILLS

HKEJ

ISSUE NUMBER	MATURING ON	OUTSTANDING \$ MILLION	
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H002	15.5.91	227.5	+32.5
H003	29.5.91	210	+50
H004	12.6.91	250	+10
H005	26.6.91	230	+30
H101	10.7.91	143	+117
H156	24.7.91	150	+110
H157	7.8.91	209.5	+50.5
H158	21.8.91	150	+110
H159	4.9.91	170	+90
H160	18.9.91	140	+120
H161	2.10.91	110	+150
H162	17.10.91	94	+166
H163	30.10.91	177.5	+82.5

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND  
364-DAY EXCHANGE FUND BILLS

HKEK

ISSUE NUMBER	MATURING ON	OUTSTANDING \$ MILLION	
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Y187	26.2.92	230	+30
Y188	25.3.92	180	+80
Y189	22.4.92	190	+70

AVERAGE DAILY TRANSFER FOR WEEK ENDING 3.5.91 WAS 5,080 MN