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GOVERNOR TO STUDY MR LU PING'S STATEMENT

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, SAID THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON THAT HE WOULD STUDY CAREFULLY WHAT THE DIRECTOR OF HONG KONG AND MACAO OFFICE OF CHINA'S STATE COUNCIL, MR LU PING, HAD SAID BEFORE RESPONDING BECAUSE IT WAS OBVIOUSLY A STATEMENT WHICH DESERVED TO BE TREATED IN A SERIOUS WAY.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER VISITING THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT, THE GOVERNOR SAID HE HAD SAID AGAIN AND AGAIN THAT HONG KONG WOULD BE VERY HAPPY TO HAVE TALKS WITHOUT PRECONDITION AT ANY TIME.

"AND WE SAID THAT AGAIN BOTH IN A COMMUNICATION FROM ME AND IN A COMMUNICATION FROM THE BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY WHEN AT THE BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY, WE HANDED OVER TO CHINESE OFFICIALS A COPY OF THE BILL ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT WHICH HAS BEEN ENDORSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL," HE SAID.

"WE WERE VERY HAPPY WHEN IN RESPONSE TO THAT MESSAGE, WE HAD A MESSAGE IN REPLY, SAYING THE CHINESE SIDE WOULD NOW HAVE DISCUSSIONS.

"I AM SORRY THAT WE HAVEN'T MADE A PROGRESS IN STARTING THOSE DISCUSSIONS. WE AVOIDED, WE DELAYED GAZETTING THE BILL FOR FRIDAY AFTER FRIDAY.

"BUT, AT THE END OF LAST WEEK, RATHER THAN THE GAP BETWEEN THE SIDES NARROWING, THE GAP WAS GETTING BIGGER AND WAS GETTING BIGGER FOR ONE REASON WHICH IS, I THINK, WHOLLY NEW IN DISCUSSIONS CERTAINLY OVER THE LAST DECADE BETWEEN BRITAIN AND CHINA.

"WHAT WAS THE POINT WHICH MEANT THAT THE GAP WAS GETTING WIDER IS BEING MADE CLEAR, UNEQUIVOCALLY CLEAR, BY CHINESE OFFICIALS OVER THE LAST FEW DAYS.

"THE NCNA SAID CLEARLY THAT HONG KONG GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAD NO RIGHT TO A PLACE IN THE TEAM REPRESENTING BRITAIN AT TALKS. THE FOREIGN OFFICE SPOKESMAN OF CHINA SAID THAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG COULD NOT HAVE OFFICIALS AT THE TALKS TALKING."

THE GOVERNOR SAID THIS WAS A TOTALLY DIFFERENT BASIS FROM THE DISCUSSIONS THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS.

"I THINK THERE WILL BE MANY PEOPLE WHO WILL WANT TO ASK THE QUESTION WHY WAS THIS NEW PRECONDITION SUDDENLY INTRODUCED," HE SAID.

"IT DOESN'T APPLY IN THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP. IT HASN'T APPLIED IN DISCUSSIONS IN THE PAST ON THE JOINT DECLARATION.

"I SET OUT LAST FRIDAY THAT WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO TALK ON THE BASIS ARGUED FOR, INSISTED ON BY CHINA THAT THE TALKS SHOULD BE TO CONSIDER MATTERS ON THE BASIS OF THE JOINT DECLARATION, CONVERGENCE WITH THE BASIC LAW AND THE RELEVANT UNDERSTANDINGS AND AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES."

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THE GOVERNOR SAID HE STILL HAD TO HEAR WHAT WAS UNREASONABLE ABOUT THAT PROPOSAL WHICH WAS ENTIRELY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAY THAT THINGS WERE DISCUSSED IN THE LAST 10 YEARS.

"SO, THAT IS OUR POSITION. WE'LL START TALKS TOMORROW IF CHINESE OFFICIALS WOULD LIKE BUT, PERHAPS, THEY CAN LET US KNOW WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE BASIS WHICH I'VE JUST SET OUT," THE GOVERNOR ADDED.

WHEN ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE REMARK ABOUT SETTING UP A SHADOW GOVERNMENT, MR PATTEN SAID: "IF, BY THIS AFTERNOON'S STATEMENT, IT'S MEANT THAT WE ARE GOING TO HEAR CHINESE PROPOSALS ON THE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR DISTRICT BOARDS AND FOR THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND THAT WILL BE A VERY WELCOME BREAKTHROUGH.

"IT WILL BE QUITE HELPFUL IF WE COULD HAVE POSITIVE PROPOSALS WHICH THE COMMUNITY COULD THEN LOOK AT AND WHICH WE COULD THEN DISCUSS."

ASKED IF THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER HAD PROPOSED A SPECIAL ENVOY TO RE-START TALKS, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "THE POSITION OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WAS SET OUT BY DOUGLAS HURD IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN LONDON ON MONDAY. BOTH THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE FOREIGN SECRETARY HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT IN ANY BRITISH TEAM, THERE WILL BE OFFICIALS OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT."

"THE POSITION OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS EXACTLY THE SAME AS THE POSITION OF THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG."

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GOVERNOR PLANS TO VISIT U.S.

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ASKED ABOUT A REPORT CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S PLAN TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID:

"THE GOVERNOR IS PLANNING TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES IN LATE APRIL/EARLY MAY BUT DETAILS OF THE PROGRAMME ARE STILL TO BE FINALISED.

"THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WILL BE TO ARGUE THE CASE FOR UNCONDITIONAL RENEWAL OF CHINA'S MFN STATUS AND TO FURTHER ARGUE AGAINST LINKING TRADE AND POLITICAL ISSUES IN THE CONTEXT OF MFN RENEWAL."

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GOVERNOR TOURS CENTRAL AND WESTERN

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, VISITED THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE GOVERNOR FIRST INSPECTED A SECTION OF THE HILLSIDE ESCALATOR LINK PROJECT ALONG COCHRANE STREET AND WAS BRIEFED BY THE REGIONAL HIGHWAYS ENGINEER, MR W L WONG.

THE LINK, WITH A LENGTH OF ABOUT 800 METRES AND A HEIGHT OF ABOUT 135 METRES IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY AUTUMN THIS YEAR.

THE INNOVATIVE PROJECT IS INTENDED TO HELP RELIEVE TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN THE MID-LEVELS.

THE GOVERNOR THEN VISITED A NURSERY RUN BY THE CHIU YANG RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF HONG KONG WHERE HE WATCHED CHILDREN AT PLAY.

HE ALSO TOURED THE "HAM YUE LAAN" - SALT FISH ROW - WHICH IS LOCATED ALONG A SECTION OF DES VOEUX ROAD WEST.

BEFORE CONCLUDING HIS VISIT, MR PATTEN ATTENDED A COMMUNITY RECEPTION WHERE HE MET DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS.

THE GOVERNOR WAS ACCOMPANIED ON THE VISIT BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY (HONG KONG AND KOWLOON), MR PAUL WONG; CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICER, MR HERMAN CHO AND DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMAN, MR AMBROSE LAU.

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FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IS SECURE

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FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IS SECURE UNDER HONG KONG LAW, ACCORDING TO THE FINDINGS OF A REVIEW BY THE ADMINISTRATION.

THIS WAS STATED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN WHEN OUTLINING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REVIEW CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, HAD SAID IN HIS POLICY ADDRESS LAST OCTOBER THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD REVIEW LAWS WHICH MIGHT INFRINGE PRESS FREEDOM AND LOOK AGAIN AT WHAT MIGHT BE DONE TO EXTEND ACCESS TO OFFICIAL INFORMATION.

THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT THE REVIEW EXAMINED THOSE HONG KONG LAWS WHICH WERE ALLEGED TO THREATEN PRESS FREEDOM IN THE LIGHT OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS ORDINANCE. IT CONCLUDED THAT PRESS FREEDOM IS SECURE UNDER HONG KONG LAW.

/"HOWEVER, WE

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"HOWEVER, WE HAVE FOUND THAT A NUMBER OF PROVISIONS ARE EITHER OBSOLETE OR SEEM TO BE AT ODDS WITH THE BILL OF RIGHTS ORDINANCE AND WE WILL PROPOSE THAT THEY BE REPEALED OR AMENDED AS SOON AS THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME ALLOWS," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"FOR EXAMPLE, UNDER PRISON RULES OF THE PRISON ORDINANCE, CAP. 234, IT IS A DISCIPLINARY OFFENCE FOR A CORRECTIONAL SERVICES OFFICER TO COMMUNICATE TO THE PRESS WITHOUT PROPER AUTHORITY ANY INFORMATION. WE PROPOSE TO REPEAL THIS PROVISION BECAUSE IT IS CONSIDERED INAPPROPRIATE TO SINGLE OUT DISCLOSURE TO THE PRESS," THE SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED.

AS REGARDS ACCESS TO PERSONAL DATA, THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION'S PRIVACY SUB-COMMITTEE WAS LOOKING INTO A NUMBER OF MATTERS CONCERNING PRIVACY, INCLUDING QUESTIONS OF DATA PROTECTION AND ACCESS TO PERSONAL RECORDS AND THE SUB-COMMITTEE HAS ISSUED A CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION.

AS AN INTERIM MEASURE NEW ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BE INTRODUCED NEXT MONTH TO ALLOW PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS TO CHECK PERSONAL DATA PROVIDED BY THEM AND HELD BY THE GOVERNMENT.

"CLEARLY WE WILL HAVE TO RETURN AGAIN TO THIS SUBJECT IN THE LIGHT OF PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE SUB-COMMITTEE'S PROPOSALS", THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

ON THE QUESTION AS TO WHETHER LEGISLATION WAS REQUIRED TO ENSURE THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION THE SPOKESMAN SAID IN CERAIN AREAS SUCH AS DATA PROTECTION AND ACCESS TO PERSONAL RECORDS THE LEGISLATIVE ROUTE MAY WELL BE FOLLOWED.

IN ADDITION IT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER LOCALISING THE EXISTING OFFICIAL SECRETS ACTS BEFORE 1997. BUT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT CONVINCED THAT AN ALL EMBRACING FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ORDINANCE WAS THE BEST WAY FORWARD.

"THE REVIEW HAS ALSO IDENTIFIED CERTAIN MEASURES WHICH MAY BE IMPLEMENTED TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO OFFICIAL INFORMATION. THESE MEASURES INCLUDE THE PUBLICATION OF A DIRECTORY ON THE ORGANISATION OF THE GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT AND ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED FILES OLDER THAN 30 YEARS", HE SAID.

INFORMATION ON GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES IS ALREADY AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC IN MANY FORMS.

TO ENHANCE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF HOW THE GOVERNMENT OPERATES, A DIRECTORY ON THE ORGANISATION OF BUSINESS IN THE GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC THROUGH THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION'S PUBLIC ENQUIRY COUNTERS.

MAJOR DEPARTMENTS WHICH HAVE FREQUENT CONTACT WITH THE PUBLIC WILL PROVIDE SIMILAR DIRECTORIES AT THEIR ENQUIRY OR RECEPTION COUNTERS.

/"THESE DEPARTMENTS

"THESE DEPARTMENTS WOULD ALSO BE ENCOURAGED TO PUBLISH ANNUAL REPORTS TO PROMOTE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND WORKING PROCEDURES", THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

ON ACCESS TO OLD RECORDS OF HISTORICAL VALUE KEPT BY THE PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE, THE PUBLIC ARE ALREADY ALLOWED ACCESS TO UNCLASSIFIED RECORDS OLDER THAN 30 YEARS.

THE REVIEW RECOMMENDED THAT ACCESS BE EXTENDED TO CLASSIFIED RECORDS AS WELL. INFORMATION WHICH IS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE, FOR EXAMPLE, INFORMATION WHICH IF RELEASED, WOULD AFFECT THE PERSONAL SAFETY OF INDIVIDUALS OR SECURITY MATTERS, WILL HOWEVER BE EXCLUDED.

"THIS WILL BRING US IN LINE WITH THE PRACTICE IN MOST OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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CLARIFICATION ON CIVIL SERVICE WASTAGE,
RETIREMENT AND PENSIONS

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IN RESPONSE TO PRESS ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE STATISTICS AND TRENDS IN RELATION TO CIVIL SERVICE WASTAGE, RETIREMENT AND PENSIONS, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN TODAY (WEDNESDAY) ISSUED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

(A) CIVIL SERVICE WASTAGE RATE

YEAR	% WASTAGE
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1988/89	5.9%
1989/90	5.8%
1990/91	5.2%
1991/92	4.8%
(1992/93 ESTIMATE	4.8%)

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE WASTAGE INCLUDED ALL OFFICERS LEAVING THE CIVIL SERVICE FOR WHATEVER REASON, BUT EXCLUDED THOSE LEAVING TO JOIN THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL.

"THE WASTAGE SO FAR IN 1992/93 IS ABOUT THE SAME AS IN 1991/92 (4.8 PER CENT), WHICH WAS A HISTORICALLY LOW FIGURE," HE SAID.

"ABOUT ONE QUARTER (26 PER CENT) OF THE LEAVERS HAD LESS THAN TWO YEARS SERVICE WITH THE GOVERNMENT WHICH IS CALLED 'INDUCTION WASTAGE' AND IS NORMAL IN EVERY LARGE ORGANISATION.

"THE WASTAGE AT THE DIRECTORATE AND SENIOR PROFESSIONALS LEVELS REMAINS LOW.

"THE MAJORITY OF THE LEAVERS ARE FROM THE LOWER AND MIDDLE LEVELS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE," HE ADDED.

(B) RETIREMENT

	(NO. OF OFFICERS RETIRING IN EACH YEAR)		
	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92
	-----	-----	-----
"EARLY" RETIREMENT (AGE 45-54)	322	425	542
"NORMAL" RETIREMENT (AGE 55-60)	841	1015	1277
OTHER	109	486	448
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TOTAL	1272	1926	2267

THE SPOKESMAN NOTED THAT THE NUMBER OF RETIREMENTS HAD INCREASED MAINLY BECAUSE OF HISTORICAL INCREASES IN RECRUITMENT MANY YEARS AGO WHEN THE CIVIL SERVICE WAS EXPANDING RAPIDLY IN ORDER TO COPE WITH HONG KONG'S SURGING DEVELOPMENT.

AS REGARDS EARLY RETIREMENT, THE NUMBER HAS REMAINED STABLE AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL RETIREMENTS - 25 PER CENT IN 1989/90, 22 PER CENT IN 1990/91 AND 24 PER CENT IN 1991/92.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID: "WE EXPECT TOTAL RETIREMENTS TO CONTINUE TO INCREASE IN 1992/93 BASED ON FIGURES SO FAR THIS YEAR.

"THE PERCENTAGE OF EARLY RETIREMENTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE IN THE RANGE OF 20 TO 25 PER CENT."

IN RESPECT OF "OTHER" RETIREMENTS, THEY INCLUDE RETIREMENT ON ABOLITION OF OFFICE (E.G. DUE TO CLOSURE OF ABATTOIRS IN THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT IN 1990/91 AND 1991/92) AS WELL AS COMPULSORY RETIREMENTS.

THE FIGURES IN THE TABLE ABOVE EXCLUDE OFFICERS WHO RETIRED AND WERE SUBSEQUENTLY RE-EMPLOYED IN THE CIVIL SERVICE ON AGREEMENT.

(C) PENSIONS EXPENDITURE

EXPENDITURE ON PENSIONS AS REFLECTED IN THE ESTIMATES IS AS FOLLOWS:

1991/92 (ACTUAL EXPENDITURE)	\$3,390.9 MILLION
1992/93 (REVISED ESTIMATE)	\$4,457.0 MILLION
1993/94 (ESTIMATE)	\$4,877.3 MILLION

THE ABOVE FIGURES INCLUDE PRIMARILY CIVIL SERVICE PENSION BENEFITS, PAYMENTS UNDER THE DEPENDENT PENSION BENEFIT SCHEMES AND CONTRACT GRATUITIES.

THE FIGURES HAVE INCREASED FOR TWO MAIN REASONS:

- * ANNUAL PENSION INCREASES HAVE BEEN AWARDED IN RECENT YEARS IN LINE WITH INFLATION, WHICH HAS BEEN RELATIVELY HIGH; AND
- * THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE RETIRING DUE TO HISTORICAL TRENDS IN RECRUITMENT (SEE THE EXPLANATION GIVEN UNDER THE HEADING OF "RETIREMENT" ABOVE).

"TO OUR PROJECTIONS OF PENSIONS EXPENDITURE, THOUGH INCREASING IN CASH TERMS ANNUALLY, WILL REMAIN AT ABOUT 4-5 PER CENT OF ANNUAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE IN THE COMING YEARS UP TO 2003/4," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

(D) NEW PENSION SCHEME

ABOUT 47,600 SERVING OFFICERS REMAIN ELIGIBLE TO OPT FOR THE NEW PENSION SCHEME BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 1995.

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MORE TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS ON THE WAY

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THE PUBLIC CAN EXPECT FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES IN 1993/94, AS THE MAJOR TRANSPORT OPERATORS RAISE THE QUALITY OF SERVICES AND BECOME MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF THEIR CUSTOMERS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR MICHAEL LEUNG, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN HIS PRESENTATION OF THE DRAFT EXPENDITURE ESTIMATES IN THE TRANSPORT PROGRAMME AREA FOR 1993/94 TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

MR LEUNG SAID THE TRANSFER OF 26 ROUTES FROM CHINA MOTOR BUS (CMB) TO CITYBUS IN SEPTEMBER WOULD BE CLOSELY MONITORED TO ENSURE THAT THERE WAS NO DETERIORATION IN SERVICES AND THAT THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE TWO NEW FRANCHISES FOR CITYBUS AND CMB WERE FULLY MET.

"WE WILL ALSO SEE MORE BUS ROUTES INTRODUCED IN THE YEAR WITH 24 BY KOWLOON MOTOR BUS (KMB) AND SEVEN BY CMB. IN ADDITION, 10 OR MORE NEW RESIDENTIAL COACH SERVICES ARE LIKELY TO START," HE SAID.

"FERRY SERVICES WILL ALSO BE ENHANCED WITH TWO NEW HIGH SPEED FERRIES DEPLOYED ON THE TUEN MUN - CENTRAL ROUTE THIS SEPTEMBER. A NEW ROUTE FROM SO KWUN WAT TO KOWLOON WILL BE INTRODUCED BY JUNE."

/HE SAID

HE SAID PUBLIC TRANSPORT COMMUTERS COULD ALSO EXPECT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE QUALITY OF SERVICE AS A RESULT OF THE PERFORMANCE PLEDGES TO BE MADE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BETTER PASSENGER LIAISON MACHINERY.

MR LEUNG SAID MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION (MTRC) HAD MADE PERFORMANCE PLEDGES ON TRAIN, TICKET AND ESCALATOR RELIABILITY AND KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION (KCRC) WOULD INTRODUCE SIMILAR PLEDGES IN MID-1993. BOTH RAILWAY CORPORATIONS WOULD FURTHER IMPROVE THEIR PASSENGER LIAISON NETWORKS IN THE COMING YEAR.

"KMB IS NOW SETTING UP PASSENGER LIAISON GROUPS AND WILL BE INTRODUCING PERFORMANCE PLEDGES LATER IN THE YEAR. BOTH FERRY COMPANIES ARE IMPROVING THEIR PASSENGER LIAISON CHANNELS AND CMB IS REQUIRED TO ESTABLISH SUCH CHANNELS UNDER THE NEW FRANCHISE IN SEPTEMBER," HE SAID.

MORE FARE CONCESSIONS FOR THE ELDERLY WOULD BE INTRODUCED ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT AS A RESULT OF THE BUDGET PROPOSALS ON WAIVING ANNUAL LICENCE FEES AND RENTALS FOR BUS AND FERRY COMPANIES.

IN HIS PRESENTATION, MR LEUNG SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SPEND ABOUT \$7 BILLION ON TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR, INCLUDING \$5.8 BILLION ON AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME PROJECTS.

"THIS REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF \$3 BILLION, OR 75% OVER THE REVISED EXPENDITURE IN THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR. THESE FIGURES EXCLUDE THE BUDGET PROPOSALS OF \$1 BILLION TO BE SPENT ON THE PROVISION OF EXTRA CLIMBING LANES ON TUEN MUN ROAD AND GOVERNMENT'S POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF \$4 BILLION TOWARDS THE ROUTE 3 (COUNTRY PARK SECTION)," HE SAID.

WORK IS DUE TO COMMENCE THIS FINANCIAL YEAR ON THE WEST KOWLOON EXPRESSWAY (NORTHERN SECTION) AT A COST OF \$1.7 BILLION, THE RAMBLER CHANNEL BRIDGE (\$0.9 BILLION), THE WEST KOWLOON CORRIDOR (YAUMATEI SECTION) (\$0.5 BILLION) AND AN EXTENSION OF ROUTE 5 FROM SHEK WAI KOK TO CHAI WAN KOK (\$0.5 BILLION).

PROJECTS DUE FOR COMPLETION IN THE YEAR INCLUDED THE MID-LEVELS ESCALATOR LINKING MID-LEVELS AND CENTRAL; AND THE YUEN LONG/TUEN MUN EASTERN CORRIDOR.

ON TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT, MR LEUNG SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO CONDUCT DETAILED TRANSPORT STUDIES AND TO INTRODUCE MODERN TECHNOLOGY TO MAXIMISE THE USE OF AVAILABLE ROAD SPACE.

"THE AREA TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM IS BEING UPGRADED AND EXTENDED, WITH THE SYSTEM IN KOWLOON TO BE REPLACED BY 1995 AT A COST OF \$130 MILLION.

"A NEW SYSTEM COSTING \$65 MILLION WILL BE INSTALLED AT TSUEN WAN BY THE END OF THIS YEAR, WHILE PLANNING IS ALSO IN HAND FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A SIMILAR SYSTEM IN SHA TIN," HE SAID.

EQUAL IMPORTANCE WILL BE GIVEN TO PROMOTING ROAD SAFETY IN 1993.

FROM JUNE 1, ALL LIGHT GOODS VEHICLES WILL BE EXAMINED ANNUALLY, WHILE THE ANNUAL INSPECTION PROGRAMME FOR MEDIUM AND HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES WILL BE STRENGTHENED TO COVER VEHICLES OF FIVE YEARS OLD INSTEAD OF SEVEN YEARS. BY 1994 ALL GOODS VEHICLES WILL BE INSPECTED ANNUALLY.

FOR LONG-TERM STRATEGIC TRANSPORT PLANNING, MR LEUNG SAID THE SECOND COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORT STUDY UPDATE HAD BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLETED, A PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISE ON THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STUDY WAS ABOUT TO BEGIN AND THE FREIGHT TRANSPORT STUDY SHOULD BE COMPLETED IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

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SWD BUDGET ON RISE

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THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT PLANS TO SPEND A TOTAL OF \$7,633 MILLION, INCLUDING \$224 MILLION FROM THE LOTTERIES FUND THIS YEAR.

THIS REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF \$578 MILLION OR 8.2 PER CENT OVER THE PROVISION FOR 1992/93.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR IAN STRACHAN TODAY (WEDNESDAY) AFTER ATTENDING A SPECIAL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON THE 1993/94 DRAFT ESTIMATES.

BOTH THE QUANTITY AND THE QUALITY OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES WOULD BE IMPROVED, MR STRACHAN STRESSED.

"THE SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN FINANCIAL PROVISION IN THE SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMME AREA REFLECTS THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG. IN PARTICULAR, THOSE IN NEED," HE ADDED.

MR STRACHAN SAID ADDITIONAL RESOURCES WOULD BE USED TO MEET THREE MAJOR POLICY TARGETS.

THESE INCLUDE THE KEY TARGETS SET BY THE WHITE PAPER ON SOCIAL WELFARE AS WELL AS THE GREEN PAPER ON REHABILITATION.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE SCHEME WILL ALSO TAKE UP A SIGNIFICANT EXPENDITURE BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT.

HE SAID THE MOST SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN THE WELFARE FRONT WAS THE INTRODUCTION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE SCHEME, WHICH WOULD BE INTRODUCED ON JULY 1.

"THE MONTHLY PAYMENT RECEIVED BY THE CLIENTS WILL BE IMPROVED IN REAL TERMS BY BETWEEN FOUR PER CENT AND 32 PER CENT AND WILL BE OVER AND ABOVE THE REGULAR ADJUSTMENT FOR INFLATION," HE SAID, ADDING THAT MORE THAN 100,000 OF THE MORE VULNERABLE MEMBERS WILL BENEFIT FROM THE SCHEME.

/HE ALSO

HE ALSO NOTED THAT A VERY LARGE SHARE OF THE TOTAL BUDGET FOR SOCIAL WELFARE WILL BE SPENT ON SOCIAL SECURITY, WHICH AMOUNTS TO \$4.9 BILLION, AN INCREASE OF SEVEN PER CENT OVER 1992/93 PROVISION.

THIS HAS NOT YET TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THE EXTRA \$92.7 MILLION FOR IMPROVEMENT OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE BASIC RATE JUST APPROVED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO TAKE EFFECT ON APRIL 1.

MR STRACHAN REITERATED THE POINT EXPRESSED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE IN THE MEETING THAT THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME MET THE BASIC NEEDS OF THE MOST VULNERABLE.

"THE SCHEME IS SUFFICIENTLY FLEXIBLE SO THE GREATER THE NEED, THE GREATER IS THE SUPPORT FROM THE GOVERNMENT," HE SAID.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT THIS CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED IN THE FACT THAT WITH EFFECT FROM JULY 1, ALTHOUGH THE ESTIMATED AVERAGE MONTHLY ASSISTANCE WOULD BE \$5,880 UNDER THE COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE SCHEME FOR A FOUR-PERSON HOUSEHOLD, 37 PER CENT COULD RECEIVE MORE THAN \$6,000.

"INDEED A SMALL NUMBER OF A FOUR-PERSON HOUSEHOLD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS WILL RECEIVE MORE THAN \$8,000 PER MONTH FROM JULY 1," HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME WAS MORE THAN DOUBLE THE INCREASE IN THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX A (CPI(A)) RATE OVER THE SAME PERIOD.

"THERE HAVE BEEN REAL IMPROVEMENTS IN PUBLIC ASSISTANCE LEVEL," HE SAID.

ALTHOUGH THE DRAFT ESTIMATES FOR 1993/94 SHOWED THAT SOCIAL SECURITY WOULD INCREASE BY \$328 MILLION OVER LAST YEAR'S EXPENDITURE, THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ON MARCH 5, APPROVED A FURTHER INCREASE OF \$373 MILLION TO MEET THE COST OF ADJUSTING THE SOCIAL SECURITY RATES OF PAYMENTS TO MAINTAIN ITS PURCHASING POWER IN 1993.

ON THE PROVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES, \$556.7 MILLION WILL BE SPENT NEXT YEAR.

"THE KEY TARGETS ON THE REHABILITATION FRONT ARE 3,930 ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL PLACES AND 3,760 ADDITIONAL DAY SERVICE PLACES TO BE PROVIDED OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, AS OUTLINED IN THE GOVERNOR'S POLICY ADDRESS," HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THESE KEY TARGETS WOULD START IN 1993/94. THERE IS AN INCREASE OF 15.7 PER CENT (\$75 MILLION) EARMARKED IN THE BUDGET FOR THE EXPANSION OF SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED IN THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR.

"THESE EXTRA PLACES REPRESENT AN INCREASE OF 17 PER CENT OVER THE EXISTING PROVISION. WE WILL MEET THE KEY TARGETS AS QUICKLY AS WE PRACTICALLY CAN," HE ADDED.

THERE WILL ALSO BE MAJOR EXPANSION IN COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND RESIDENTIAL SERVICES FOR OLD PEOPLE. 1993/94 PROVISION WILL INCREASE BY 15 PER CENT, BRINGING TOTAL PROVISION TO \$538 MILLION.

"SPENDING ON FAMILY AND CHILD CARE WILL ALSO GO UP 10.4 PER CENT," MR STRACHAN ADDED.

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VIEWS SOUGHT ON PROPOSALS FOR PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA

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THE PRIVACY SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION HAS PROPOSED THAT THE COLLECTION AND USE OF INFORMATION ABOUT INDIVIDUALS BE LEGALLY CONTROLLED.

THE SUB-COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESS CONCERN OVER THE INCREASING EXTENT TO WHICH PERSONAL INFORMATION IS RECORDED AND PASSED ON. THERE IS ALSO A WORLDWIDE TREND TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATIVE PROTECTION IN THIS AREA.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS, WHICH ARE CONTAINED IN A DOCUMENT PUBLISHED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) FOR A THREE-MONTH CONSULTATION, INCLUDE:

- * LEGAL REGULATION SHOULD BE INTRODUCED IN BOTH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS OF ALL DATA RELATING TO THE INDIVIDUAL, WHETHER FACTUAL OR JUDGMENTAL, TRUE OR FALSE, AND REGARDLESS OF HOW IT IS STORED. BOTH AUTOMATED AND NON-AUTOMATED DATA WILL BE COVERED, PROVIDED THAT THE DATA IS REASONABLY READILY RETRIEVABLE.
- * ONLY PERSONAL DATA THAT IS NECESSARY FOR OR DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE FUNCTIONS OF THE DATA COLLECTOR SHOULD BE COLLECTED. TO ENSURE THAT THE COLLECTION PROCESS IS FAIR, THE INDIVIDUAL SHOULD USUALLY BE INFORMED AT THE TIME OF THE USE TO BE MADE OF THE DATA AND THE CLASSES OF PERSONS TO WHOM THE DATA WILL BE DISCLOSED.
- * PERSONAL DATA SHOULD NOT BE USED OR DISCLOSED BY ORGANISATIONS FOR PURPOSES OTHER THAN THOSE SPECIFIED IN A WRITTEN DECLARATION LODGED WITH A CENTRAL AGENCY, EXCEPT WITH THE INDIVIDUAL'S CONSENT OR WHERE A STATUTORY EXCEPTION IS STIPULATED.
- * LEGAL APPROVAL SHOULD BE REQUIRED FOR MATCHING DATA ON THE SAME INDIVIDUAL FROM DIFFERENT DATABASES TO IDENTIFY DISCREPANCIES.
- * AN INDIVIDUAL SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO OBTAIN COPIES OF, AND CORRECT, PERSONAL DATA ABOUT HIM. IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN HE HAS SUFFERED DAMAGE HE MAY BE ENTITLED TO COMPENSATION.

* PERSONAL DATA USED FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES SHOULD BE EXEMPT FROM SOME OR ALL OF THESE REQUIREMENTS. A TOTAL EXEMPTION IS RECOMMENDED FOR PERSONAL DATA USED BY AN INDIVIDUAL SOLELY FOR PERSONAL OR DOMESTIC PURPOSES. PARTIAL EXEMPTIONS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR DATA PURPOSES SUCH AS NATIONAL SECURITY, THE DETECTION OF CRIME AND PUBLIC SAFETY.

* A REGULATORY AGENCY SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO ENSURE THAT DATA USERS COMPLY WITH THE NEW LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PERSONAL DATA. ITS FUNDING WOULD BE PROVIDED BY LEVYING ORGANISATIONS SEEKING BUSINESS REGISTRATION AN ANNUAL FEE NOT EXCEEDING \$100.

WHILE LOCAL FIGURES ARE LACKING, IN THE UNITED STATES THERE ARE ABOUT 17 SEPARATE RECORDS ON EVERY INDIVIDUAL. DECISIONS ARE MADE ON THE BASIS OF THIS RECORDED INFORMATION AND THOSE DECISIONS MAY ADVERSELY AFFECT THE INDIVIDUAL, SUCH AS REFUSAL OF A LOAN OR EVEN UNJUSTIFIED CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE, MR JUSTICE MORTIMER, POINTED OUT THAT OVERSEAS STUDIES INDICATED THAT MANY OF THE RECORDS OF PERSONAL DATA WERE INACCURATE. THE CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS OF ONE STATE IN THE U.S. WERE FOUND TO BE ACCURATE AND COMPLETE IN ONLY 20 PER CENT OF CASES.

MR JUSTICE MORTIMER SAID THE SUB-COMMITTEE ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN AT MISUSE OF DATA, AND POINTED OUT THAT AN AUSTRALIAN INVESTIGATION REVEALED THE ILLICIT SALE OF COMMERCIALY VALUABLE CONFIDENTIAL PERSONAL DATA ON A MASSIVE SCALE.

THE SUB-COMMITTEE BELIEVED THAT THERE WAS NO REASON TO SUPPOSE THAT THOSE PROBLEMS DID NOT EXIST IN HONG KONG AS THEY WOULD BE COMMON TO ALL COUNTRIES WITH ADVANCED COMPUTER AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS.

TO COUNTER THESE PROBLEMS, INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES SUCH AS THE ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES COMMISSION HAVE FORMULATED A SET OF STANDARDS TO PROTECT PERSONAL DATA.

IN ESSENCE, THESE STANDARDS AMOUNT TO A CODE OF FAIR INFORMATION PRACTICES INTENDED TO ENSURE THAT THE RIGHT INFORMATION IS PROVIDED TO THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THE RIGHT PURPOSE.

ALREADY 25 COUNTRIES HAVE ENACTED LEGISLATION TO LEGALLY ENFORCE THESE STANDARDS.

THE SUB-COMMITTEE HAS RECOMMENDED THAT HONG KONG JOIN THEIR RANKS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IN ORDER TO PROVIDE INDIVIDUALS WITH ADEQUATE LEGAL PROTECTION IN RELATION TO COLLECTION AND USE OF DATA ABOUT THEM, AND TO ENSURE THAT HONG KONG IS NOT SHUT OUT OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE OF PERSONAL DATA.

EXISTING LEGAL CONTROLS ARE LIMITED. THE HONG KONG BILL OF RIGHTS ORDINANCE PROVIDES SOME PROTECTION AGAINST PUBLIC SECTOR INFRINGEMENTS AND SOME ORDINANCES CONTAIN SECRECY PROVISIONS. SOME PROTECTION IS ALSO PROVIDED BY THE COMMON LAW DUTY OF CONFIDENCE, BUT THERE IS AT PRESENT NO COMPREHENSIVE LEGAL PROTECTION.

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT HAS AGREED THAT FROM 1994, ITS MEMBER STATES MUST CONTROL THE TRANSFER OF PERSONAL DATA TO COUNTRIES LACKING ADEQUATE LEGAL PROTECTION ON ITS USE. IF HONG KONG DOES NOT INTRODUCE THE NECESSARY LEGISLATION, THE TERRITORY'S STATUS AS AN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTRE COULD BE AFFECTED.

THE SUB-COMMITTEE IS INVITING PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSALS BEFORE FINALISING ITS RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION. WRITTEN COMMENTS SHOULD BE SENT BY JUNE 16 THIS YEAR TO MR MARK BERTHOLD, SECRETARY OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON PRIVACY OF THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION, FIRST FLOOR, QUEENSWAY GOVERNMENT OFFICES, HIGH BLOCK, CENTRAL.

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ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PRIVACY SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION, MR JUSTICE MORTIMER, WILL BE AVAILABLE TO EXPLAIN THE PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NEWS MEDIA AT 3 PM TODAY (WEDNESDAY) ON THE FOURTH FLOOR, QUEENSWAY GOVERNMENT OFFICES, HIGH BLOCK, CENTRAL. COPIES OF THE REPORT AND THE SUMMARY HAVE BEEN BOXED FOR COLLECTION.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION

OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,340
REVERSAL OF LAF	+810
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	2,150
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-720
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,430
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	TWI 113.9 * -0.2* 17.3.93

/HONG KONG

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 1993

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS		HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS				
TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.73 PCT	14 MONTHS	2405	5.50	102.07	3.71
1 MONTH	2.90 PCT	17 MONTHS	2408	5.50	100.93	3.73
3 MONTHS	2.97 PCT	20 MONTHS	2411	4.375	101.14	3.95
6 MONTHS	3.22 PCT	23 MONTHS	2502	4.625	101.15	4.16
12 MONTHS	3.51 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 22,102MN

CLOSED 17 MARCH 1993

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