



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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BUDGET DEFICIT \$131M BELOW ESTIMATE
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THE FINAL BUDGET DEFICIT FOR FISCAL 1984-85, AT \$559 MILLION, WAS \$131 MILLION BELOW THE ESTIMATED \$690 MILLION MENTIONED IN SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE'S CONCLUDING SPEECH IN THE BUDGET DEBATE LAST APRIL, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, SAID TODAY.

ACCOUNTS FINALISED BY THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING SERVICES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR SHOWED THAT ACTUAL REVENUE AMOUNTED TO \$36 343 MILLION AND TOTAL EXPENDITURE TO \$36 902 MILLION.

+AS MEMBERS WILL RECOLLECT, THE DEFICIT ORIGINALLY ENVISAGED IN THE 1984 BUDGET WAS \$2.1 BILLION,+ MR JACOBS SAID.

WHILE THE ACTUAL EXPENDITURE ON GENERAL REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE WHOLE OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR WAS \$431 MILLION LESS THAN THE TOTAL APPROVED ESTIMATE OF \$37 333 MILLION IN THE APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE 1984, THE EXPENDITURE CHARGED TO 51 HEADS WAS IN EXCESS OF THE SUM APPROPRIATED FOR THOSE HEADS BY THE ORDINANCE, HE SAID.

THIS WAS BECAUSE SUFFICIENT OFFSETTING SAVINGS COULD NOT BE FOUND WITHIN THE HEADS CONCERNED.

+IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 9 OF THE PUBLIC FINANCE ORDINANCE, THIS EXCESS HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (1984-85) BILL NOW BEFORE MEMBERS.

+THE BILL SEEKS TO GIVE FINAL LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY FOR THE AMOUNT OF SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION APPROVED IN RESPECT OF PARTICULAR HEADS OF EXPENDITURE BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OR UNDER POWERS DELEGATED BY IT,+ HE SAID.

THE TOTAL NET SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION REQUIRED IN RESPECT OF THE 51 HEADS OF EXPENDITURE WAS \$1 789 MILLION. THIS EXCESS WAS LARGELY ACCOUNTED FOR BY THE 1984 SALARIES REVISION FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE (\$758 MILLION) AND GOVERNMENT SUBVENTED ORGANISATIONS (\$410 MILLION) AND FOR THE PAYMENT OF PENSIONS, RETIRING ALLOWANCES AND GRATUITIES TO CONTRACT OFFICERS (\$81 MILLION).

OTHER MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTORS INCLUDED THE TRANSFER OF PROCEEDS FROM THE ISSUE OF GOVERNMENT BONDS TO THE CAPITAL WORKS RESERVE FUND (\$1 004 MILLION), AND THE PAYMENT TO THE MASS TRANSIT FUND TO ENABLE THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION TO PAY THE PREMIUM FOR THE PAK CHAI WAN DEPOT AND THE DEVELOPMENT ABOVE IT (\$248 MILLION), HE SAID.

+SAVINGS MADE IN OTHER SUBHEADS ARE DUE TO CONTINUED TIGHT CONTROL OVER PUBLIC EXPENDITURE, AND I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE CONTROLLING OFFICERS AND OTHERS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO RESTRAINT,+ HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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GREATER EFFICIENCY DELAYS PHONE CHARGES RISE
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GREATER OPERATING EFFICIENCY ON THE PART OF THE TELEPHONE COMPANY HAD DELAYED BY MORE THAN ONE YEAR THE NEED FOR INCREASES IN CHARGES, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON GERRY HIGGINSON, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MOVING THE MOTION TO AMEND THE SCHEDULE SETTING OUT THE NEW MAXIMUM CHARGES THAT MAY BE LEVIED, MR HIGGINSON SAID THAT CHARGES FOR LINE RENTALS AND INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS CHARGES HAD BEEN LAST INCREASED BY RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL, FROM JANUARY 1, 1983.

+AT THAT TIME, A WARNING WAS GIVEN THAT A FURTHER ROUND OF INCREASES, TO MEET RISING COSTS, WOULD PROBABLY BE REQUIRED IN EARLY 1984,+ HE SAID.

THE TELEPHONE COMPANY HAD SUBMITTED AN APPLICATION IN APRIL THIS YEAR TO INCREASE ITS TARIFFS BY AN AVERAGE OF TEN PER CENT TO COVER INCREASED OPERATING COSTS AND TO ENABLE IT TO MAINTAIN ITS HIGH STANDARD OF SERVICE.

THE APPLICATION HAD BEEN THOROUGHLY EXAMINED AND THE ITEMS IN THE RESOLUTION BEFORE THE COUNCIL WERE CONSIDERED TO BE JUSTIFIED, HE SAID.

MAJOR ITEMS INCLUDE INCREASED RENTALS FOR LEASED CIRCUITS AND PRIVATE PAYPHONES AND INCREASED CONNECTION AND REMOVAL CHARGES.

THE EFFECT ON ORDINARY BUSINESS AND RESIDENTIAL SUBSCRIBERS WAS MODEST: THE MONTHLY COST OF A SINGLE BUSINESS TELEPHONE WOULD BE INCREASED FROM \$64 TO \$71 AND FOR A SINGLE RESIDENTIAL TELEPHONE FROM \$43 TO \$48. THE CHARGES FOR PRIVATE AUTOMATIC BRANCH EXCHANGE EXTENSIONS AND INTERNAL EXTENSIONS WOULD BE REDUCED.

POINTING OUT THAT THE NEW CHARGES WOULD TAKE EFFECT FROM OCTOBER 1 THIS YEAR, MR HIGGINSON SAID THAT BASED ON CURRENT PROJECTIONS, THERE WAS UNLIKELY TO BE ANY NEED FOR FURTHER INCREASES UNTIL 1988.

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL.

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TIMELY FOR UNIFIED EXCHANGE TO HAVE CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP
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IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANT ROLE PLAYED BY CORPORATIONS AND BANKING INSTITUTIONS IN STOCK MARKETS, AND THE GROWING MATURITY OF THE SECURITIES INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG, IT WAS CONSIDERED DESIRABLE AND TIMELY TO ALLOW THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE TO INTRODUCE CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP.

STATING THIS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE STOCK EXCHANGES UNIFICATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON GERRY HIGGINSON, SAID THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE OF THE BILL WAS TO PROVIDE NEW MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA FOR THE UNIFIED STOCK EXCHANGE.

HE TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT AT PRESENT ONLY INDIVIDUALS WERE ELIGIBLE FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE.

+THE BILL ENABLES LOCALLY INCORPORATED BODY CORPORATES, INCLUDING SUBSIDIARIES OF BANKS AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES, TO BECOME ELIGIBLE TO APPLY TO THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE FOR CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP.

+APPLICATIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION AND RULES OF THE EXCHANGE COMPANY BUT THE PREREQUISITES ARE THAT THE CORPORATIONS MUST BE OF GOOD FINANCIAL STANDING AND INTEGRITY AND ALREADY BE REGISTERED AS DEALERS UNDER THE SECURITIES ORDINANCE,+ MR HIGGINSON SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE BILL ALSO REMOVED THE CURRENT DISQUALIFICATIONS AGAINST DIRECTORS AND EMPLOYEES OF BANK AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES, SOLICITORS AND PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS FROM BECOMING MEMBERS OF THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE.

IT ALSO PROVIDED FOR THE FORMATION OF PARTNERSHIPS, MR HIGGINSON SAID, NOTING THAT THE NEW MEMBERSHIP PROVISIONS WOULD MEET THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE FINANCIAL SECTOR AND FURTHER THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SECURITIES INDUSTRY.

HE ADDED THAT THESE PROVISIONS WOULD AT THE SAME TIME SERVE THE INTERESTS OF BOTH THE BROKING AND INVESTING COMMUNITIES.

AMONG OTHER PROVISIONS OF THE BILL WAS THE IMPOSITION OF A DUTY ON THE EXCHANGE COMPANY TO ENSURE ITS MEMBERS' COMPLIANCE WITH CERTAIN MINIMUM FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS SPECIFIED IN SECTION 65B OF THE SECURITIES ORDINANCE.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PARTICULAR PROVISION WAS TO ENHANCE THE EXCHANGE COMPANY'S ROLE IN MONITORING THE ACTIVITIES OF ITS MEMBERS, HE SAID.

+THE PROPOSALS REFLECTED IN THE BILL HAVE BEEN THE SUBJECT OF LENGTHY AND DETAILED DISCUSSION BY THE SECURITIES COMMISSION AND BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE AND HAVE THEIR SUPPORT,+ HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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BILL TO SAFEGUARD INVESTORS' INTERESTS
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TO SAFEGUARD FURTHER THE INTERESTS OF INVESTORS, THE SECURITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985 PROPOSED TO STRENGTHEN THE POWERS OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR SECURITIES IN MONITORING DEALERS' FINANCIAL VIABILITY.

STATING THIS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN MOVING THE BILL'S SECOND READING, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON GERRY HIGGINSON, SAID IT WAS ONE OF THE FOUR MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE BILL.

+ON BECOMING AWARE OF THEIR INABILITY TO COMPLY WITH THE SPECIFIED FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS, DEALERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO CEASE TRADING AND TO INFORM THE COMMISSIONER FOR SECURITIES, WHO MAY THEN REVOKE OR SUSPEND REGISTRATION.

+AUDITORS WHO, DURING THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES, DISCOVER THAT A DEALER HAS FAILED TO COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS, WILL HAVE TO SO NOTIFY THE COMMISSIONER.

+THE COMMISSIONER IS FURTHER EMPOWERED TO EXAMINE AT WILL THE ACCOUNTS AND BOOKS OF ANY DEALERS,+ HE SAID.

MR HIGGINSON POINTED OUT THAT THE BILL ALSO PROVIDED ADDITIONAL GROUNDS FOR THE COMMISSIONER TO REFUSE, REVOKE OR SUSPEND THE REGISTRATION OR RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION OF A DEALER OR AN INVESTMENT ADVISER AND TO INQUIRE INTO ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT.

+GIVEN THE DECISION TO PERMIT PARTNERSHIPS TO TRADE IN THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE, PROVISION FOR THE REGISTRATION OF PARTNERSHIPS, AS DEALING PARTNERSHIPS UNDER THE SECURITIES ORDINANCE, IS REQUIRED,+ HE SAID, MOVING ON TO ANOTHER BASIC OBJECTIVE OF THE BILL.

HE ADDED THAT THE BILL MADE SIMILAR PROVISION FOR THE REGISTRATION OF INVESTMENT ADVISERS' PARTNERSHIPS.

ONE FURTHER AIM OF THE BILL WAS TO REQUIRE NEW DEALERS TO HAVE CERTAIN QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE, HE SAID.

+IN VIEW OF THE NEED TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND STANDARD OF STOCKBROKING ACTIVITIES, THE BILL INTRODUCES NEW AND IMPORTANT EXPERIENCE, QUALIFICATION AND FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DEALERS.

+DEALERS WILL BE REQUIRED EITHER TO HAVE AT LEAST THREE YEARS' EXPERIENCE IN DEALING IN SECURITIES IN HONG KONG OR ON ANY RECOGNISED OVERSEAS STOCK MARKET, OR HAVE PASSED A PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION APPROVED BY THE SECURITIES COMMISSION,+ HE SAID.

/MR HIGGINSON

MR HIGGINSON NOTED THAT ALL DEALERS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH CERTAIN MINIMUM FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS, WHICH INCLUDED MAINTAINING IN THE STOCKBROKING BUSINESS A MINIMUM NET CAPITAL OF \$1 MILLION FOR INDIVIDUAL DEALERS AND \$5 MILLION FOR DEALING CORPORATIONS.

+FOR DEALING PARTNERSHIPS, THE MINIMUM NET CAPITAL REQUIREMENT WILL BE CALCULATED ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER AND TYPE OF REGISTERED DEALERS IN THE PARTNERSHIP,+ HE ADDED.

ANOTHER FINANCIAL REQUIREMENT WOULD BE TO MAINTAIN A MINIMUM LIQUIDITY MARGIN EQUAL TO 10 PER CENT OF THE MINIMUM NET CAPITAL REQUIREMENT.

+FINALLY, PROVISIONS PREVIOUSLY CONTAINED IN THE FIRST SCHEDULE TO THE STOCK EXCHANGES UNIFICATION ORDINANCE, TOGETHER WITH NECESSARY AMENDMENTS, ARE NOW RE-ENACTED IN PART III OF THE BILL,+ HE SAID.

MR HIGGINSON TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT THE PROVISIONS CONTAINED IN THE BILL HAD BEEN DRAWN UP IN CONSULTATION WITH AND HAD THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE SECURITIES COMMISSION AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE.

+IT IS PROPOSED THAT PART II OF THE BILL, WHICH DEALS PRINCIPALLY WITH REGISTRATION MATTERS, BE BROUGHT INTO OPERATION ONCE THE SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION ON SUCH MATTERS IS MADE. PART III OF THE BILL WILL THEN COME INTO FORCE WHEN THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE COMMENCE OPERATION IN EARLY 1986,+ HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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TRAVEL AGENTS BILL AIMS TO PROTECT CONSUMERS
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THE PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF THE TRAVEL AGENTS BILL 1985 IS TO PROTECT CONSUMERS, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON GERRY HIGGINSON, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE BILL DOES THIS BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SYSTEM OF LICENSING OF TRAVEL AGENTS WHO PROVIDE OUTBOUND TRAVEL SERVICES AND THE CREATION OF A RESERVE FUND FROM WHICH EX-GRATIA PAYMENTS MAY BE MADE TO CLIENTS IN THE EVENT THAT COURT JUDGMENTS AGAINST SUCH TRAVEL AGENTS CANNOT BE SATISFIED.

THE BILL ALSO AIMS TO PROVIDE THE BASIC FRAMEWORK ON WHICH THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY CAN DEVELOP ITS OWN STANDARDS AND SELF-REGULATION.

THE SPECIAL NATURE OF THE TRAVEL BUSINESS, MR HIGGINSON SAID, ESPECIALLY IN RESPECT OF OUTBOUND ACTIVITIES, MADE MEMBERS OF THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC VULNERABLE TO TRAVEL AGENTS WHO ABSCONDED OR WHO BECAME INSOLVENT. IN OFFERING A FUTURE SERVICE TO HIS CLIENTS IN AN OVERSEAS DESTINATION, A TRAVEL AGENT ASSUMED A POSITION OF TRUSTEE WHEN HE RECEIVED MONEY IN ADVANCE FROM HIS CLIENTS. SINCE THE LATE 1970'S, THERE HAD BEEN SERIOUS ABUSES OF TRUST BY A NUMBER OF TRAVEL AGENTS WHO ABSCONDED AFTER HAVING RECEIVED DEPOSITS AND PAYMENTS FROM CLIENTS, HE SAID.

PARTS II AND III OF THE BILL REQUIRE A PERSON WHO WISHES TO CARRY ON OUTBOUND TRAVEL SERVICES IN HONG KONG TO OBTAIN A LICENCE AND SET OUT THE REGISTRAR'S POWERS IN RELATION TO LICENSEES.

+A PERSON WHO OPERATES AS A TRAVEL AGENT WITHOUT A LICENCE COMMITS AN OFFENCE PUNISHABLE BY A MAXIMUM FINE OF \$100 000 AND TWO YEARS' IMPRISONMENT.

+ONLY A 'FIT AND PROPER PERSON' MAY OBTAIN A LICENCE. FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS BILL, A PERSON IS NOT FIT AND PROPER IF, AMONG OTHER THINGS, HE HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF AN OFFENCE INVOLVING FRAUD, CORRUPTION OR DISHONESTY, OR IS INSOLVENT,+ HE SAID.

AN APPLICATION FOR A LICENCE MIGHT BE REFUSED IF THE PREMISES TO WHICH THE APPLICATION RELATED WAS NOT SUITABLE FOR THE OPERATION OF THE BUSINESS OF A TRAVEL AGENT.

+THE LICENSING CRITERIA TO BE APPLIED IS NOT OVER-STRINGENT: SOME MAY REGARD IT AS TOO LAX, BUT IT IS NOT THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO STIFLE HEALTHY COMPETITION,+ HE SAID.

THE BILL PROVIDES FOR A PERSON WHO PUBLISHES ADVERTISEMENTS FOR A TRAVEL SERVICE TO BE SATISFIED, BEFORE SO DOING, THAT THE AGENT IS LICENSED OR EXEMPT FROM LICENSING.

+THE AIM OF THIS MEASURE IS TO ELIMINATE ADVERTISEMENT FROM UNLICENSED AGENTS IN THE MEDIA. BEFORE PUBLISHING ADVERTISEMENTS FOR TRAVEL SERVICES, PUBLISHERS WILL BE ABLE TO CHECK WITH THE REGISTRAR'S OFFICE OR CONSULT THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE THAT THE AGENT IS LICENSED. THE COOPERATION OF THE MEDIA IN THIS MANNER WILL DO MUCH TO HELP THE ORDINARY CITIZEN,+ HE SAID.

LEGISLATION ALONE, HE SAID, COULD NOT PREVENT ABSCONDMENTS OR INSOLVENCY.

PART IV OF THE BILL, THEREFORE, PROVIDES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRAVEL AGENTS' RESERVE FUND TO BE FUNDED PRIMARILY BY A LEVY IMPOSED ON EACH LICENSEE.

+THIS WILL BE A FUND OF LAST RESORT.

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+AN EX-GRATIA PAYMENT CAN BE MADE FROM IT BY THE REGISTRAR UPON APPLICATION BY A PERSON WHO HAS OBTAINED A JUDGEMENT FOR A SUM OF MONEY AGAINST A LICENSEE OR WHO HAS LODGED A PROOF OF DEBT, EITHER OF WHICH IS UNSATISFIED.

+PAYMENTS IN RESPECT OF SUCH JUDGEMENTS OR PROOF OF DEBT ARE TO BE LIMITED TO THE PROVISION OF TRAVEL SERVICES PROVIDED BY A LICENSED TRAVEL AGENT,+ HE SAID.

SPEAKING OF THE LICENSING SCHEME AND THE RESERVE FUND, HE SAID, AN OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR FOR TRAVEL AGENTS WOULD BE ESTABLISHED.

THE REGISTRAR WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VETTING OF LICENCE APPLICATIONS, THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE FUND AND THE ENFORCEMENT OF THIS LEGISLATION.

THE OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR WAS EXPECTED TO BECOME OPERATIVE IN EARLY 1986.

+HOPEFULLY BEFORE THE LUNAR NEW YEAR WHEN SO MANY HONG KONG PEOPLE TRAVEL,+ HE SAID.

TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY GUIDELINES FOR THE EFFICIENT OPERATION OF THE BILL, CLAUSE 7 PROVIDES FOR AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRAVEL AGENTS TO BE ESTABLISHED.

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE WOULD EXAMINE SUCH MATTERS AS THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ORDINANCE AND WOULD HAVE REGARD TO THE INTERESTS OF BOTH TRAVEL AGENTS AND THEIR CUSTOMERS.

+IT IS IN THIS COMMITTEE THAT I FORESEE PROPOSALS BEING DEVELOPED FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS AND SELF-REGULATION IN THE INDUSTRY,+ HE ADDED.

THE PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN THE BILL HAD BEEN FORMULATED ON THE ADVICE OF THE WORKING PARTY ON TRAVEL AGENTS, AND HE WAS GRATEFUL TO ALL THE MEMBERS WHO HAD HAD TO SPEND SO MUCH TIME IN STRIKING THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN THE INTERESTS OF THE INDUSTRY AND OF THE PUBLIC.

IF THE BILL WERE ENACTED, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC SHOULD RECEIVE A DEGREE OF PROTECTION, HE SAID.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY ITSELF SHOULD HAVE A FORUM IN WHICH IT COULD BE ABLE TO GET TOGETHER TO BUILD A SELF-REGULATORY FRAMEWORK, WHICH HE BELIEVED WAS THE PROPER APPROACH TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED QUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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BILLS SIMPLIFY LAND OBJECTIONS, CLAIMS PROCEDURES

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THREE BILLS AIMED AT SIMPLIFYING OBJECTIONS AND CLAIMS PROCEDURES WHEN LAND IS RESUMED BY THE GOVERNMENT WERE INTRODUCED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE BILLS ARE THE FORESHORE AND SEA-BED (RECLAMATIONS) BILL 1985, THE CROWN LANDS RESUMPTION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985 AND THE LAND ACQUISITION (POSSESSORY TITLE) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE FORESHORE AND SEA-BED (RECLAMATIONS) BILL 1985, THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON NICKY CHAN, SAID THE BILL WAS INTENDED TO REPEAL AND REPLACE THE PUBLIC RECLAMATIONS AND WORKS ORDINANCE AND THE FORESHORES AND SEA-BED ORDINANCE.

HE SAID THAT APART FROM MINOR POINTS OF DIFFERENCE THE TWO ORDINANCES SERVED THE SAME PURPOSE. THE EXISTENCE OF TWO SIMILAR ORDINANCES HAD GIVEN RISE IN THE PAST TO DUPLICATION OF GAZETTING PROCEDURES.

CONSOLIDATION WOULD ELIMINATE THESE PROBLEMS WHILE RETAINING THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO BE INFORMED, TO OBJECT TO PROPOSED RECLAMATIONS AND TO BE COMPENSATED, HE SAID.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE CROWN LANDS RESUMPTION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, HE SAID THE PRINCIPAL OBJECT OF THE BILL WAS TO ALLOW PAYMENT OF INTEREST ON PROVISIONAL PAYMENTS.

SECTION 16A OF THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE ENABLED THE DIRECTOR OF LANDS TO MAKE PROVISIONAL PAYMENTS OF COMPENSATION PENDING THE DETERMINATION BY THE LANDS TRIBUNAL OF DISPUTED CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION FOR THE RESUMPTION OF LAND BY THE CROWN.

+AS THE LAW NOW STANDS, IF NO PROVISIONAL PAYMENT IS MADE, INTEREST WOULD BE PAID ON THE WHOLE AWARD WHEN DETERMINED BY THE LANDS TRIBUNAL.

+HOWEVER, WHEN A PROVISIONAL PAYMENT IS MADE THAT SUM WOULD NOT ATTRACT INTEREST BETWEEN THE DATE LIABILITY AROSE AND THE DATE THE PROVISIONAL PAYMENT IS MADE.

+THIS ARRANGEMENT IS CONSIDERED UNSATISFACTORY AND CLAUSE 2 OF THE BILL AMENDS THE SECTION SO AS TO ENABLE THE AUTHORITY TO PAY INTEREST ON SUCH PAYMENTS, CALCULATED HAVING REGARD TO THE LOWEST RATE PAYABLE FROM TIME TO TIME BY MEMBERS OF THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS ON TIME DEPOSITS,+ SAID MR CHAN.

THE PRINCIPAL OBJECT OF THE LAND ACQUISITION (POSSESSORY TITLE) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985 WAS TO ALLOW PAYMENT OF INTEREST ON PROVISIONAL PAYMENTS, MR CHAN SAID IN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL.

+SECTION 9 OF THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE ENABLES THE DIRECTOR OF LANDS TO MAKE PROVISIONAL PAYMENTS OF COMPENSATION PENDING THE DETERMINATION BY THE LANDS TRIBUNAL OF DISPUTE CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION IN RESPECT OF ANY ACQUISITION OF LAND, REQUIRED FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES THAT IS OR MAY BE HELD UNDER A POSSESSORY TITLE BY VIRTUE OF THE LIMITATION ORDINANCE.

+CLAUSE 2 OF THE BILL AMENDS THE SECTION TO ENABLE THE DIRECTOR TO PAY INTEREST ON SUCH PAYMENTS, CALCULATED HAVING REGARD TO THE LOWEST RATE PAYABLE FROM TIME TO TIME BY MEMBERS OF THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS ON TIME DEPOSITS,+ HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE THREE BILLS WAS ADJOURNED.

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NEED FOR REGULAR CHECKS ON PRIVATE CARS STRESSED

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THE OBJECT OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985 WAS TO ALLOW PRIVATE GARAGES TO CARRY OUT ANNUAL INSPECTIONS ON THE ROADWORTHINESS OF OLDER PRIVATE CARS, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON IAN MACPHERSON, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SAID REGULAR VEHICLE EXAMINATIONS WERE NECESSARY TO REDUCE THE LIKELIHOOD OF ACCIDENTS, AS IN 1984 MECHANICAL DEFECTS WERE IDENTIFIED AS A CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR IN ALMOST 2 000 TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS CAUSING INJURY, AMOUNTING TO 12 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS IN THE YEAR.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL MR MACPHERSON SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S OBJECTIVE IN RESPECT OF PRIVATE CARS WAS TO EXAMINE ANNUALLY ALL VEHICLES OVER SIX YEARS OLD.

THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, HE SAID, OPERATED FOUR VEHICLE EXAMINATION CENTRES AND THESE WERE FULLY COMMITTED TO THE INSPECTION OF ALL PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLES AND OLDER GOODS VEHICLES.

+THERE WERE PLANS TO CONSTRUCT FOUR MORE CENTRES, BUT SINCE THESE WERE REQUIRED FOR THE EXPANDING FLEET OF PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLES AND ALL GOODS VEHICLES, THERE WAS NO PROSPECT OF THE DEPARTMENT EXAMINING PRIVATE CARS IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.+

USING THE PRIVATE SECTOR WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR SIX-YEAR-OLD CARS TO BE EXAMINED ANNUALLY, AND WOULD OBTIATE THE NEED FOR NEW VEHICLE EXAMINATION CENTRES IN ADDITION TO THE FOUR ALREADY PLANNED, HE SAID.

MR MACPHERSON SAID THAT CAR TESTING CENTRES WOULD HAVE TO COMPLY WITH A CODE OF PRACTICE, THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ORDINANCE AND ANY CONDITIONS SPECIFIED IN THE DESIGNATION NOTICE.

THE CODE OF PRACTICE SPECIFIED THE INSPECTION PROCEDURES, WHICH WERE BASED ON THOSE USED IN THE GOVERNMENT'S OWN VEHICLE EXAMINATION CENTRES, AS WELL AS THE EQUIPMENT AND CHECKLISTS TO BE USED IN CONDUCTING EXAMINATIONS.

THIS SHOULD ENSURE THAT INSPECTIONS ARE FAIR AND THAT STANDARDS ARE CONSISTENT.

A CAR OWNER WHO IS DISSATISFIED WITH THE RESULT OF AN INSPECTION WOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO APPEAL TO THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT FOR A FRESH INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION.

GARAGE STAFF WOULD HAVE TO ATTEND A TRAINING COURSE AT A GOVERNMENT VEHICLE EXAMINATION CENTRE AND WOULD BE ASSESSED FOR COMPETENCE.

THOSE UP TO STANDARD WOULD BE APPOINTED AS APPROVED CAR TESTERS.

THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT WOULD CARRY OUT REGULAR VISITS TO CAR TESTING CENTRES TO MONITOR INSPECTIONS AND TO ENSURE THAT UNIFORMITY OF STANDARDS WAS MAINTAINED.

THE EXAMINATION FEE WOULD BE \$160, THE SAME AS THE FEE FOR CAR INSPECTIONS AT THE GOVERNMENT'S VEHICLE EXAMINATION CENTRES.

A RE-CHECK FEE OF \$50 WOULD BE CHARGED WHEN DEFECTS AT A FIRST INSPECTION WERE REMEDIED AND EXAMINED WITHIN 14 DAYS. IN THE CASE OF SPECIFIED MINOR FAULTS THE RE-CHECK WOULD BE FREE OF CHARGE, HE SAID.

A CERTIFICATE OF ROADWORTHINESS WOULD BE ISSUED BY THE CAR TESTING CENTRE WHEN A CAR PASSED AN EXAMINATION AND THE DETAILS WOULD BE PASSED TO THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT.

CARS OVER SIX YEARS OLD WOULD BE RE-LICENSED ONLY UPON PRESENTATION OF A VALID CERTIFICATE, MR MACPHERSON SAID.

THE TRANSPORT COMMISSIONER WOULD BE EMPOWERED TO REFUSE TO LICENSE A CAR THAT HAD NOT PASSED AN EXAMINATION AT A CAR TESTING CENTRE, HE ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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OVERSEAS WORKERS' CONTRACT LOOPHOLES TO BE PLUGGED
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LOOPHOLES IN THE CONTRACTS FOR OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE WOULD BE PLUGGED IN THE INTEREST OF WORKERS BY VIRTUE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS, DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE CONTRACTS FOR OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL, DR HO SAID HE WAS HAPPY TO NOTE THAT ONE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE OF THE BILL WAS TO INTRODUCE OFFENCES AND PENALTIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE WITH CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE ORDINANCE.

HE SAID IF THE BILL WAS PASSED, IT WOULD BECOME MANDATORY FOR WRITTEN CONTRACTS FOR EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE HONG KONG TO BE PRESENTED TO THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR FOR ATTESTATION BEFORE A WORKER LEFT HONG KONG TO TAKE UP EMPLOYMENT.

THIS PROCEDURE PROVIDED THE COMMISSIONER WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO SCRUTINISE THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE CONTRACT, THUS ENSURING THAT THEY WERE COMPARABLE TO, IF NOT BETTER THAN, THE GENERAL EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS IN HONG KONG AND THAT THEY WERE ADEQUATE TO PROTECT WORKERS' INTERESTS.

+IN THE EVENT OF THE CONTRACT BEING BREACHED, THE AGGRIEVED WORKER WILL BE ABLE TO GET COMPENSATION BY CLAIMING AGAINST THE LOCAL GUARANTOR OR FROM THE BANK BOND PUT UP EARLIER BY THE OVERSEAS EMPLOYER IN CASE A LOCAL GUARANTOR CANNOT BE FOUND,+ DR HO EXPLAINED.

UNDER THE PRESENT ORDINANCE, WHEN A CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT WAS TERMINATED AS A RESULT OF THE WORKER'S DEFAULT OR RESIGNATION, THE WORKER MIGHT RISK BEING DENIED A PAID PASSAGE HOME.

+THE AMENDMENT IN THIS BILL UNAMBIGUOUSLY PUTS THE OBLIGATION ON THE EMPLOYER TO REPATRIATE THE WORKER REGARDLESS OF HOW THE CONTRACT IS TERMINATED,+ HE SAID.

+NO DOUBT, AS A RESULT OF THE AMENDMENTS IN THIS BILL, THE ORDINANCE WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE BETTER PROTECTION TO OUR WORKERS TAKING UP EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

ON PUBLICISING THE EFFECTS OF THE LEGISLATION, DR HO REQUESTED THE ADMINISTRATION NOT TO CONFINE ITS PUBLICITY EFFORTS TO LABOUR ORGANISATIONS.

+SPECIAL EFFORT MUST BE MADE TO CONVEY THE MESSAGE TO THE GENERAL WORK-FORCE, THE MAJORITY OF WHOM MAY NOT BELONG TO ANY LABOUR ORGANISATION OR UNION,+ HE SAID.

THANKING DR HO FOR HIS SUPPORT OF THE BILL, THE ACTING COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, THE HON DARWIN CHEN SAID THAT THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HOPED TO HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE MASS MEDIA AS WELL AS RELEVANT ORGANISATIONS IN INFORMING WORKERS INTERESTED IN EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE HONG KONG OF THEIR RIGHTS UNDER THE AMENDED CONTRACTS FOR OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE.

HE SAID DR HO'S POINT THAT PUBLICITY ON THE AMENDMENTS SHOULD BE AIMED AT THE GENERAL WORKFORCE HAD BEEN WELL TAKEN.

WORKERS INTERESTED IN OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT SHOULD BE INFORMED, IN PARTICULAR, OF THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT THEIR CONTRACTS WERE ATTESTED BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT, HE SAID.

THE AMENDMENTS RETITLE THE ORDINANCE AS +CONTRACTS FOR EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE HONG KONG ORDINANCE+ AND REQUIRE ALL CONTRACTS FOR EMPLOYMENT OF LOCAL WORKERS OUTSIDE HONG KONG TO BE ATTESTED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR.

THE AMENDMENTS ALSO PROVIDE FOR A FINE OF \$50 000 FOR AN EMPLOYER OR HIS AGENT WHO FAILS TO COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ORDINANCE.

MR CHEN MOVED THE COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READINGS OF THE BILL.

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RIGHT TO ORDER REHEARING SUPPORTED

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THE AMENDMENT PROPOSED UNDER THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985 TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE GOVERNOR MAY ORDER REHEARING OF AN INVESTIGATION BY A MARINE COURT INTO THE CASUALTY AFFECTING A SHIP WAS BOTH +LOGICAL AND INDEED DESIRABLE+ AND SHOULD THEREFORE BE SUPPORTED.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE HON PETER WONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) DURING RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL.

+HOWEVER, CLAUSE 2(B) OF THE BILL STIPULATES THAT THE AMENDMENT SHALL APPLY IN RESPECT OF ANY INVESTIGATION WHETHER HELD BEFORE OR AFTER THE AMENDMENT TAKES EFFECT,+ HE SAID.

CLEARLY, HE ADDED, IT INTRODUCED A RETROSPECTIVE ELEMENT AND WAS OF DIRECT RELEVANCE TO THE OSPREY INQUIRY.

MR WONG RECALLED THAT DURING THE PASSAGE OF TYPHOON ELLEN ON SEPTEMBER 9 1983, THE BARQUENTINE OSPREY FOUNDERED AT SEA WITH THE LOSS OF EIGHT LIVES.

ON DECEMBER 29 1983, THE GOVERNOR APPOINTED A MARINE COURT, UNDER SECTION 52(1) OF THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ORDINANCE, TO INVESTIGATE THE CASUALTY.

SINCE THE REPORT WAS MADE ON JULY 30 1984, ACCORDING TO THE ADMINISTRATION, FRESH EVIDENCE HAD EMERGED WHICH TENDED TO CONTRADICT SEVERAL OF THE FINDINGS OF FACTS OF THE REPORT.

THE ADMINISTRATION WAS OF THE VIEW THAT THE NEW EVIDENCE SUGGESTED THAT A REHEARING SHOULD BE ORDERED, HE SAID.

MR WONG POINTED OUT THAT UNDER THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ORDINANCE A REHEARING MIGHT ONLY BE HELD UNDER SECTION 56(1) IN CASES IN WHICH +AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CONDUCT OF A HOLDER OF A CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY HAS BEEN HELD+.

THE WARRANT APPOINTING THE MARINE COURT IN THE CASE OF THE OSPREY RELATED ONLY TO THE COURT MAKING INVESTIGATION AS TO THE CASUALTY AFFECTING THE SHIP.

/+IT IS

+IT IS THEREFORE BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THAT, IN VIEW OF THE WORDING OF SECTION 56(1), A REHEARING CAN BE ORDERED BY THE GOVERNOR IN RESPECT OF THE OSPREY CASE EVEN THOUGH THERE WAS, IN FACT, AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CONDUCT OF A HOLDER OF A CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY DURING THE COURSE OF THE HEARING,+ HE SAID.

THE BILL BEFORE THE COUNCIL PROPOSED TO AMEND THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE GOVERNOR MAY ORDER THE REHEARING OF AN INVESTIGATION BY A MARINE COURT INTO THE CASUALTY AFFECTING A SHIP.

UMELCO HAD RECEIVED ONE WRITTEN REPRESENTATION REGARDING THE RETROSPECTIVE ASPECT OF THE BILL, WHICH MR WONG BELIEVED IN ANY EVENT DESERVED CAREFUL EXAMINATION.

THE UNOFFICIALS' GROUP STUDYING THE BILL MET THE ADMINISTRATION TWICE AND AFTER CAREFUL DELIBERATION THEY WERE OF THE VIEW THAT THERE WAS MERIT IN THE ARGUMENTS PUT FORWARD BY THE ADMINISTRATION IN RESPECT OF THE RETROSPECTIVE ELEMENT.

ELABORATING, MR WONG SAID: +THERE IS NO LEGAL IMPEDIMENT TO MAKING AN AMENDMENT APPLY TO PROCEEDINGS ALREADY COMMENCED OR COMPLETED.

+THE REAL ISSUE IS WHETHER IT IS REASONABLE TO DO SO.+

GENERALLY SPEAKING, HE SAID, RETROSPECTIVE LAWS OFFENDED AGAINST THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE THAT LEGISLATION INTENDED TO REGULATE HUMAN CONDUCT OUGHT TO DEAL WITH FUTURE ACTS AND OUGHT NOT TO CHANGE THE CHARACTER OF PAST TRANSACTIONS CARRIED ON UPON THE FAITH OF THE THEN EXISTING LAW.

AS REGARDS CRIMINAL OFFENCES, RETROSPECTIVE OPERATION WAS NEVER GIVEN TO A STATUTE, HE SAID.

+IT SHOCKS ONE'S SENSE OF JUSTICE THAT AN ACT LEGAL AT THE TIME OF DOING IT SHOULD BE MADE CRIMINAL BY A NEW ENACTMENT.

+LIKewise, IT IS EQUALLY UNJUST IF A NEW LAW CONVERTS AN ACT WRONGFULLY DONE AT THE TIME INTO A LEGAL ACT IN SUCH A WAY THAT A PERSON INJURED BY THAT ACT IS DEPRIVED OF HIS REMEDY,+ HE ADDED.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, IN THE FIELD OF CIVIL LAW, RETROSPECTIVE LAW WAS PERMISSIBLE AND SOMETIMES DESIRABLE, SUCH AS VALIDATING MARRIAGES WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE BE VOID OWING TO SOME DEFECT IN THE CEREMONY.

+FOR THE LEGISLATOR, IT IS A MATTER OF JUDGING WHAT IS REASONABLE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

+IF THE LEGISLATION IS INTENDED TO OPERATE RETROSPECTIVELY TO CONFER A BENEFIT ON PRIVATE PERSONS WITHOUT IMPOSING A CORRESPONDING OBLIGATION, THEN NO SUBSTANTIAL OBJECTION IS LIKELY TO ARISE,+ HE SAID.

MR WONG ADDED UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS IN GENERAL SHARED THE ADMINISTRATION'S VIEW THAT BASIC PRINCIPLES HAD NOT BEEN INFRINGED.

AN AMENDMENT TO ENABLE THE REOPENING OF MARINE INQUIRY PROCEEDINGS DID NOT CHANGE THE NATURE OR CHARACTER OF ANYTHING THAT HAD OCCURRED, NOR DID IT IMPAIR EXISTING RIGHTS OR OBLIGATIONS, HE OBSERVED.

NOTING THAT THE ESSENCE OF THE AMENDMENT WAS PROCEDURAL, HE SAID IT WAS TO CLARIFY WHAT WAS PERCEIVED TO BE A PRESENT ILLOGICAL DEFECT IN ESTABLISHED REHEARING PROVISIONS RELATING TO HONG KONG MARINE INQUIRIES.

+WE ACCEPT THAT THE APPLICATION OF THE AMENDMENT TO PAST AS WELL AS FUTURE HEARINGS IS, IN FACT, CONSISTENT WITH ANOTHER IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE, THAT JUSTICE SHOULD BE DONE BETWEEN THE PARTIES,+ HE SAID.

HE MENTIONED THAT SINCE CLAUSE 2(B) INVOLVED IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES OF LAW, THE ATTENTION OF BOTH THE BAR ASSOCIATION AND THE LAW SOCIETY HAD BEEN DRAWN TO THE RETROSPECTIVE ASPECT OF THE BILL.

MOVING THE COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING OF THE BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON GERRY HIGGINSON, SAID THAT THE ISSUES WHICH MR WONG HAD REFERRED TO HAD BEEN SUBJECT TO DETAILED DELIBERATION WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION AND BETWEEN THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE UMEICO GROUP CHAIRED BY MR WONG.

THANKING MR WONG AND HIS COLLEAGUES FOR THE TIME AND TROUBLE TAKEN TO EXAMINE THE LEGISLATION, AND FOR HIS SUPPORT FOR THE MOTION, MR HIGGINSON SAID THAT THESE DELIBERATIONS +HAVE FURTHER CONFIRMED OUR VIEW THAT THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION IS BOTH NECESSARY AND DESIRABLE+.

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BILL CONFIRMS POWERS OF THE COURTS
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THE SUPREME COURT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, WHICH SEEKS TO CONFIRM THE POWERS OF THE COURTS IN THE AREA OF THE LAW CONCERNED WITH JURISDICTION AND PROCEDURE, WAS READ THE SECOND TIME TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING ITS SECOND READING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, SAID THE BILL INCLUDED PROVISIONS ENABLING THE COURTS TO PREVENT THE DISAPPEARANCE OF ASSETS AND THE DESTRUCTION OF EVIDENCE.

THESE NEW FORMS OF JUDICIAL REMEDY WERE GIVEN STATUTORY RECOGNITION IN ENGLAND BY THE SUPREME COURT ACT 1981, HE SAID, CITING THE +MAREVA+ AND +ANTON PILLER+ CASES IN WHICH THE COURTS USED +IN A NOVEL WAY+ THE POWER TO PREVENT THE DESTRUCTION OF THE OBJECTS ABOUT WHICH PARTIES WERE CONTESTING.

/THE ATTORNEY

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL RECALLED THAT NEW REMEDIES WHICH ASSISTED LITIGANTS WERE DEVELOPED IN THE MID-SEVENTIES BY THE COURTS IN ENGLAND SO THAT THEIR ACTION IN COURT WOULD NOT BE FRUITLESS.

+SINCE OUR LAW IN MATTERS OF HIGH COURT JURISDICTION, PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE IS LARGELY BASED ON THE LAW IN ENGLAND, IT IS DESIRABLE THAT THOSE PROVISIONS IN THE 1981 ACT SHOULD BE FOLLOWED HERE, AS THIS BILL PROPOSES.

+THE EFFECT ON THE BILL WILL BE TO GIVE STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO THESE POWERS EVOLVED BY THE COURTS. IT SUBSTANTIALLY STATES THE EXISTING LAW AND PRACTICE,+ HE SAID.

MR MATHEWS POINTED OUT THAT THE BILL ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT AN ORDER TO PREVENT THE REMOVAL OF ASSETS MAY BE MADE AGAINST PERSONS WHETHER THEY WERE IN HONG KONG OR NOT.

+THE BAR ASSOCIATION, THE LAW SOCIETY, THE LAW DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG AND THE JUDICIARY HAVE ALL BEEN CONSULTED OVER THIS BILL AND IT HAS THEIR SUPPORT,+ HE NOTED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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MOVE TO BAN SALE OF HARMFUL LIVE POULTRY
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THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND URBAN SERVICES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1985 WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE OF THE NEED TO MAKE REGULATIONS TO PROHIBIT THE SALE BY RETAIL OF LIVE POULTRY CONTAINING HARMFUL HORMONE RESIDUES, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON CHAU TAK-HAY, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, MR CHAU SAID THAT UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND URBAN SERVICES ORDINANCE, THE DEFINITION OF +FOOD+ EXCLUDES LIVE ANIMALS, LIVE BIRDS OR LIVE FISH. IT WAS THEREFORE NOT POSSIBLE TO MAKE REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE COMPOSITION OF FOOD UNDER SECTION 55 OF THE ORDINANCE TO COVER LIVE ANIMALS, LIVE BIRDS OR LIVE FISH.

+IN SPITE OF THE DEFINITION OF 'FOOD', HOWEVER, SECTION 57 OF THE ORDINANCE PROVIDES THE NECESSARY ENABLING POWER FOR REGULATIONS RELATING TO FOOD HYGIENE TO BE MADE UNDER SECTION 56 TO COVER LIVE POULTRY, LIVE REPTILES AND LIVE FISH AS IF THEY WERE FOOD,+ HE SAID.

THE BILL SOUGHT TO EXTEND THE COVERAGE OF SECTION 57 SO THAT THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL MIGHT MAKE REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE COMPOSITION OF FOOD UNDER SECTION 55 TO COVER LIVE POULTRY, LIVE REPTILES AND LIVE FISH AS IF THEY WERE FOOD.

IF THE BILL WAS APPROVED, HE ADDED, IT WAS PROPOSED TO MAKE SUCH REGULATIONS SHORTLY.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 1985

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FIRST STEP TAKEN TO CONTROL OPTOMETRY
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A FIRST STEP TOWARDS PLACING THE OPTOMETRY PROFESSION UNDER LEGISLATIVE CONTROL WAS BEING TAKEN UNDER THE SUPPLEMENTARY MEDICAL PROFESSIONS, MIDWIVES REGISTRATION AND NURSES REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON CHAU TAK-HAY, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, MR CHAU SAID THAT IT WOULD OPEN THE WAY TO MAKE REGULATIONS PRESCRIBING THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR REGISTRATION AS AN OPTOMETRIST AND THE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES APPLICABLE TO MEMBERS OF THAT PROFESSION.

THE BILL ALSO SEEKS TO EXPAND THE REGULATION-MAKING POWERS SET DOWN IN THE ORDINANCE.

THIS WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE THE SETS OF REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE PARA-MEDICAL PROFESSIONS WERE AT AN ADVANCED DRAFTING STAGE, AND WITHOUT SUCH AN AMENDMENT, SOME OF THE PROVISIONS OF THESE REGULATIONS WOULD BE ULTRA VIRÉS.

THE BILL ALSO REQUIRES AT LEAST ONE DIRECTOR OF A COMPANY CARRYING ON A PARA-MEDICAL BUSINESS TO BE PROFESSIONALLY QUALIFIED TO THE STANDARD REQUIRED TO PRACTISE THAT PROFESSION ON HIS OWN ACCOUNT.

MR CHAU POINTED OUT THAT SUCH A REQUIREMENT WAS CONSIDERED TO BE APPROPRIATE, HAVING REGARD TO A PROPOSAL IN THE REGULATIONS TO BE MADE UNDER THE ORDINANCE THAT A MEMBER OF A PARA-MEDICAL PROFESSION SHOULD BE DEBARRED FROM CARRYING ON THE BUSINESS OF PRACTISING HIS PROFESSION ON HIS OWN ACCOUNT, OR IN A PARTNERSHIP, UNLESS HE HAD THE ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE NECESSARY TO QUALIFY HIM FOR REGISTRATION TO SO PRACTISE.

THE OPPORTUNITY HAD ALSO BEEN TAKEN TO MAKE CERTAIN OTHER IMPROVEMENTS TO THE ORDINANCE AND, IN PARTICULAR, TO ALIGN SOME OF ITS PROVISIONS TO THOSE IN SIMILAR ORDINANCES, SUCH AS THE DENTISTS REGISTRATION ORDINANCE AND THE MEDICAL REGISTRATION ORDINANCE.

THE BILL ALSO SEEKS TO SIMPLIFY THE PROCEDURES FOR REGISTRATION UNDER THE SUPPLEMENTARY MEDICAL PROFESSIONS ORDINANCE, THE MIDWIVES REGISTRATION ORDINANCE AND THE NURSES REGISTRATION ORDINANCE - HENCE THE TITLE OF THIS BILL, HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 1985

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BILL CLARIFIES GOODS VEHICLE LOAD LIMIT
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A BILL TO ENABLE THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT TO ASSIGN A PERMITTED GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT TO AN INDIVIDUAL GOODS VEHICLE WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1985, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON IAN MACPHERSON EXPLAINED THAT THE MAXIMUM WEIGHT THAT COULD BE CARRIED SAFELY COULD BE DIFFERENT FOR INDIVIDUAL VEHICLES WITHIN THE SAME CLASS OF HEAVY, MEDIUM OR LIGHT GOODS VEHICLE.

FOR THIS REASON, IT HAD BEEN THE PRACTICE FOR THE COMMISSIONER TO ASSIGN A PERMITTED GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT TO AN INDIVIDUAL VEHICLE AFTER TAKING INTO ACCOUNT SUCH FACTORS AS THE MANUFACTURERS DESIGN CAPACITY AND ANY LOCAL ADAPTATIONS MADE TO THE VEHICLE BODY.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, DUE TO AN OVERSIGHT, THIS PROVISION HAD BEEN OMITTED FROM THE NEW ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE INTRODUCED ON AUGUST 25 LAST YEAR, WHICH ONLY ALLOWED THE COMMISSIONER TO PRESCRIBE DIFFERENT GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHTS FOR VARIOUS CLASSES OF VEHICLE RATHER THAN FOR INDIVIDUAL VEHICLES.

+THE BILL OVERCOMES THIS PROBLEM BY AMENDING THE DEFINITION OF PERMITTED GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT SO THAT IT MEANS THE MAXIMUM GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT ASSIGNED OR DETERMINED BY THE COMMISSIONER AS OPPOSED TO THE MAXIMUM GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT PRESCRIBED FOR A CLASS OF VEHICLE.

+IT ALSO VALIDATES INDIVIDUAL PERMITTED GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHTS ASSIGNED BY THE COMMISSIONER SINCE AUGUST 25, 1984,+ MR MACPHERSON SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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AMENDMENTS TO BANK BILL WILL REMOVE DOUBTS
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THE SENIOR UNOFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SIR ROGER LOBO, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) MOVED SEVERAL AMENDMENTS TO THE ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND BILL TO REMOVE +ANY POSSIBLE DOUBTS+ THAT ITS PROVISIONS MAY HAVE UNINTENDED EXTRA-TERRITORIAL APPLICATION.

SPEAKING DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SIR ROGER SAID SUBSEQUENT TO INTRODUCTION OF THE BILL ON JUNE 26 IT HAD BEEN SUGGESTED THAT THE PROVISIONS OF THE BILL MAY HAVE UNINTENDED EXTRA-TERRITORIAL APPLICATION.

+AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, I HAVE DECIDED THAT IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE TO REMOVE FROM THE BILL ANY POSSIBLE DOUBTS IN THIS AREA.

/+ACCORDINGLY,

+ACCORDINGLY, I SHALL MOVE AMENDMENTS TO ACHIEVE THAT PURPOSE IN THE COMMITTEE STAGE,+ HE SAID.

SIR ROGER ADDED THAT ALTHOUGH THERE WERE SEVERAL AMENDMENTS NEEDED, THE EFFECT OF THE REVISED BILL CONTINUED TO BE THE TRANSFER OF THE EXISTING ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND'S HONG KONG BUSINESS TO A NEW BANK AS PART OF THE WORLDWIDE MERGER OF THE BANKING BUSINESSES OF WILLIAMS AND GLYN'S BANK AND THE ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND.

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MEASURE TO PROTECT SMALL DEPOSITOR
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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A REQUIREMENT DESIGNED TO PROTECT THE SMALL DEPOSITOR BY DEBARRING HIM FROM DEPOSITING WITH A REGISTERED DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY HAD CLEARLY BEEN ERODED BY THE PASSAGE OF TIME.

AN INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT OF THE MINIMUM DEPOSIT FROM \$50 000 TO \$100 000 WAS NEEDED, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, MR JACOBS SAID THE MINIMUM DEPOSIT REQUIREMENT WHICH APPLIED TO REGISTERED DTCS WAS FIRST INTRODUCED IN 1976.

HE POINTED OUT THAT EARLIER THIS YEAR, SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE HAD ANNOUNCED THE INTENTION TO REVISE SUCH MINIMUM DEPOSIT REQUIREMENT AND THERE HAD BEEN NO DISCERNIBLE PUBLIC REACTION SINCE.

+NOR HAS ANY REPRESENTATION BEEN RECEIVED FROM REGISTERED DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES,+ HE SAID.

IF THE BILL PASSES INTO LAW, THE NEW LIMIT OF \$100 000 WILL TAKE EFFECT ON MARCH 1, 1986.

MR JACOBS ADDED THAT IT WAS PROVIDED IN THE BILL THAT DEPOSITS TAKEN BEFORE BUT MATURING AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF ANY NEW LIMIT COULD RUN TO MATURITY.

HE SAID THE SECOND PURPOSE OF THE BILL WAS TO REMOVE A TECHNICAL ANOMALY ARISING FROM SECTION 27 OF THE ORDINANCE WHICH PROHIBITED THE ISSUE OF AN ADVERTISEMENT OR INVITATION SOLICITING THE DEPOSIT OF MONEYS.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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PLAN TO MAKE LICENSING RENEWAL EASIER

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A BILL SEEKING TO CHANGE THE EXISTING 'CUMBERSOME' PROCEDURE FOR IMPOSING NEW CONDITIONS OR FOR VARYING EXISTING ONES UPON THE RENEWAL OF ANY REGISTRATION, LICENCE OR PERMIT GRANTED UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND URBAN SERVICES ORDINANCE, WAS INTRODUCED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON CHAU TAK-HAY IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND URBAN SERVICES (AMENDMENT)(NO. 3) BILL 1985, MR CHAU SAID THAT IT PROPOSED TO EMPOWER THE LICENSING AUTHORITY, THAT IS THE URBAN COUNCIL IN THE URBAN AREAS AND THE DIRECTOR OF REGIONAL SERVICES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, TO IMPOSE ADDITIONAL OR ALTERNATIVE CONDITIONS UPON RENEWAL OF ANY REGISTRATION, LICENCE AND PERMIT. NINETY DAYS NOTICE WOULD, HOWEVER, BE GIVEN BEFORE THE EXPIRY OF SUCH REGISTRATION, LICENCE OR PERMIT.

HE EXPLAINED THAT FOR REASONS OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HYGIENE, IT WAS SOMETIMES NECESSARY FOR THE LICENSING AUTHORITY TO IMPOSE NEW CONDITIONS OR TO VARY EXISTING ONES UPON THE RENEWAL OF ANY REGISTRATION, LICENCE OR PERMIT.

THE BILL ALSO SOUGHT TO EXTEND THE PERIOD ALLOWED FOR AN APPLICATION FOR REVIEW OF A DECISION OF THE LICENSING AUTHORITY FROM SEVEN TO 14 DAYS.

THE CONTENTS OF THE BILL HAD BEEN ENDORSED IN PRINCIPLE BY THE URBAN COUNCIL AND THE PROVISIONAL REGIONAL COUNCIL, HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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MORE ACTIVE ROLE FOR PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL

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THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL HAD SINCE 1980 BEEN ASSUMING A MORE ACTIVE APPROACH IN THE PROVISION OF DIRECT INDUSTRIAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND FACILITIES TO INDUSTRY, THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, THE HON HARNAM GREWAL, SAID TODAY.

THIS FOLLOWED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VARIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS ON INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DIVERSIFICATION OF THE HONG KONG ECONOMY, HE SAID.

MR GREWAL WAS MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL.

THE BILL WOULD ENABLE THE COUNCIL TO CARRY OUT ITS FUNCTIONS WITH GREATER FLEXIBILITY, HE TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

+ IN THE LIGHT OF THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE COUNCIL, A REVIEW WAS UNDERTAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER THE AMENDMENTS REQUIRED TO ITS LEGISLATIVE AND FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK TO ENABLE IT TO FURTHER DISCHARGE ITS BROADENED RANGE OF RESPONSIBILITIES, + HE EXPLAINED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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BETTER WAY TO PAY FOR LOTTERIES SERVICE FEE

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A BILL PROVIDING FOR A MORE SATISFACTORY BASIS FOR THE LOTTERIES BOARD TO PAY THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB FOR CONDUCTING MARK VI LOTTERIES WAS INTRODUCED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BETTING DUTY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND INFORMATION, THE HON ADOLF HSU, SAID THE PURPOSE OF THE BILL WAS TO AMEND THE BETTING DUTY ORDINANCE SO THAT THE JOCKEY CLUB COULD BE REIMBURSED THE EXACT EXPENSES FOR PROVIDING FACILITIES FOR THE HONG KONG LOTTERIES BOARD TO CONDUCT THE MARK VI LOTTERIES.

SECTION 4C(2) OF THE ORDINANCE PROVIDES FOR THE LOTTERIES BOARD TO PAY TO THE JOCKEY CLUB SUCH PERCENTAGE OF THE PROCEEDS OF A LOTTERY AS THE BOARD MAY FROM TIME TO TIME DETERMINE IN DISCHARGE OF ALL OPERATING COSTS INCURRED OR CHARGED BY THE CLUB FOR RUNNING THE GOVERNMENT'S MARK VI LOTTERIES.

MR HSU SAID THAT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS HAD ADVISED THAT ON A PROPER CONSTRUCTION, SECTION 4C(2) REQUIRED THAT THE PERCENTAGE OF THE PROCEEDS OF A LOTTERY PAYABLE TO THE JOCKEY CLUB BE PRE-DETERMINED.

+THERE IS NO PROVISION UNDER EXISTING LAWS TO REIMBURSE THE CLUB SHOULD THE PRE-DETERMINED PERCENTAGE IN RESPECT OF ITS BUDGETED PERCENTAGE SHARE PROVE INADEQUATE TO MEET ALL ACTUAL EXPENSES WHEN THE ACCOUNTS ARE FINALISED AND AUDITED.

+NOR IS THERE PROVISION TO REQUIRE THE CLUB TO PAY INTO THE LOTTERIES FUND ANY EXCESS OF ITS PRE-DETERMINED PERCENTAGE SHARE, + MR HSU SAID.

IN THE PAST, MR HSU SAID, THE CLUB HAD ON ITS OWN INITIATIVE, UNDERTAKEN TO PLACE ANY SUCH SURPLUSES FROM ITS PERCENTAGE SHARE, THROUGH THE LOTTERIES BOARD, TO THE LOTTERIES FUND, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS NO LEGAL REQUIREMENT FOR THE CLUB TO DO SO.

+IN A RECENT REVIEW, THE PRINCIPLE THAT PAYMENT TO THE CLUB SHOULD BE NO MORE OR LESS THAN THE ACTUAL OPERATING EXPENSES WAS AGREED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE LOTTERIES BOARD, + MR HSU SAID.

THE PRESENT BILL STIPULATED THAT THE CLUB WAS REQUIRED TO PAY ANY SURPLUS IN EXCESS OF ITS ACTUAL EXPENSES FROM THE PERCENTAGE SHARE INTO THE LOTTERIES FUND, HE SAID.

IT ALSO AUTHORISED PAYMENT TO BE MADE OUT OF THE LOTTERIES FUND WHEN THE CLUB'S ACTUAL OPERATING EXPENSES EXCEEDED THE AMOUNT OF THE PERCENTAGE SHARE PAID TO IT.

/+SEPARATELY,

+SEPARATELY, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE IS EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF THIS BILL ON THE FINANCING OF SOCIAL WELFARE PROJECTS BY THE LOTTERIES FUND, AS IS THE CLUB IN CONSIDERING WAYS AND MEANS OF IMPROVING THE OVERALL TURNOVER OF MARK VI LOTTERIES, WHICH WILL, AS A CONSEQUENCE, INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF FUNDS AVAILABLE EACH YEAR FOR SOCIAL WELFARE PROJECTS, MR HSU SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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FIRE PRECAUTION REGULATIONS SIMPLIFIED
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) APPROVED A MOTION TO AMEND THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (FIRE PRECAUTIONS IN REGISTRABLE WORKPLACES) REGULATIONS TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR FACTORY PROPRIETORS TO COMPLY WITH THEM AND FOR THE FACTORY INSPECTORATE TO ENFORCE THEM.

MOVING THE MOTION, THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, THE HON DARWIN CHEN, SAID THAT SINCE THE REGULATIONS CAME INTO OPERATION IN 1981, EXPERIENCE HAD SHOWN THAT SOME OF THE PROVISIONS WERE UNCLEAR AND DIFFICULT TO INTERPRET.

MR CHEN POINTED OUT THAT EXISTING REGULATION 4(1)(D) REQUIRED EVERY DOOR LEADING OUT OF A REGISTRABLE WORKPLACE TO HAVE A FIRE RESISTING PERIOD OF AT LEAST HALF AN HOUR.

+IN CASES WHERE THE MATERIAL OF THE DOOR NEEDS TO BE TESTED TO DETERMINE ITS FIRE RESISTING PERIOD, DIFFICULTIES HAVE ARISEN,+ HE SAID.

THE AMENDED REGULATIONS, HE CONTINUED, SPECIFIES THE TYPES OF DOORS WHICH ARE ACCEPTABLE BY REFERENCE TO MATERIAL, THICKNESS AND STANDARD OF CONSTRUCTION, BUT DOES NOT ALTER THE FIRE RESISTANCE STANDARD REQUIRED.

MR CHEN SAID THE REGULATION WAS ALSO AMENDED TO MAKE CLEAR THAT EVERY DOOR LEADING OUT OF A REGISTRABLE WORKPLACE, OTHER THAN A SLIDING DOOR, MUST OPEN OUTWARDS WITHOUT REDUCING THE EFFECTIVE WIDTH OF ANY MEANS OF ESCAPE, IRRESPECTIVE OF THE SIZE OF THE WORKFORCE.

OTHER AMENDMENT, HE ADDED, PROVIDES THAT A PROPRIETOR MAY BE PROSECUTED IF HE ALLOWS ANY UNAUTHORISED ALTERATION OR ADDITION WHICH SERIOUSLY AFFECTS THE FIRE SAFETY OF HIS WORKPLACE TO CONTINUE.

UNDER THE EXISTING WORDING OF THE REGULATIONS, THE PROPRIETOR COULD NOT BE PROSECUTED IF THE ALTERATION OR ADDITION WAS CARRIED OUT MORE THAN SIX MONTHS BEFORE DISCOVERY, HE SAID.

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LAWS ADEQUATE TO DETER FRAUDULENT FUND-RAISING
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THERE WERE VERY FEW CASES OF FRAUDULENT FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES, AND THE LAWS AGAINST SUCH OFFENCES WERE ADEQUATE TO PROVIDE A DETERRENT EFFECT, THE SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND INFORMATION, THE HON ADOLF HSU, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP, MR HSU SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT, THEREFORE, DID NOT CONSIDER IT NECESSARY, AT THIS STAGE, TO IMPOSE AN ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM TO SUPERVISE EACH AND EVERY PROJECT BEFORE AND AFTER THE EVENT.

+AFTER ALL, DONATIONS ARE MADE ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS, AND THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE SEEN TO BE DISCOURAGING BONA FIDE CHARITABLE BODIES FROM SEEKING PUBLIC DONATIONS,+ HE SAID.

ANY ORGANISATION WHICH TRIED TO RAISE FUNDS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER THE GUISE OF CHARITY COMMITTED AN OFFENCE UNDER SECTIONS 17 AND 18 OF THE THEFT ORDINANCE, CAP. 210 AND THE POLICE WOULD ACT ON ANY RESPONSIBLE COMPLAINT, HE SAID.

ANY PERSON FOUND GUILTY OF THIS OFFENCE WAS LIABLE ON CONVICTION UPON INDICTMENT TO IMPRISONMENT FOR 10 YEARS.

IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, HE ADDED, THE POLICE HAD DEALT WITH VERY FEW CASES RELATING TO FRAUDULENT FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES.

GIVING DETAILS OF SOME OF THE CONTROLS EXERCISED OVER VARIOUS TYPES OF FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES, MR HSU SAID THAT THE SAFEGUARDS WERE, HOWEVER, NOT FOOL-PROOF AGAINST FRAUDULENCE, WHICH COULD TAKE A VARIETY OF FORMS.

+IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, IT IS STILL LEFT TO INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO BE ON THEIR GUARD WHEN BEING APPROACHED BY DOUBTFUL AGENCIES, HE SAID.

A LIST OF APPROVED CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS WAS PUBLISHED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE FOR TAX EXEMPTION PURPOSES, AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MIGHT REFER TO IT, AND CHECK OUT THE CHARACTER OF A PARTICULAR ORGANISATION SEEKING DONATIONS, HE SAID.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, HE ADDED, SHOULD REPORT TO THE POLICE ON DETECTION OF ANY SIGN OF FRAUD AND DECEIT.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 1985

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PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN ICAC HIGH

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OF THE CORRUPTION REPORTS RECEIVED BY THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION (ICAC) IN 1984, 63 PER CENT OF COMPLAINANTS IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES, THE HON SIR ROGER LOBO SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

+THIS IS A CONTINUING INDICATION OF THE HIGH LEVEL OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION,+ HE SAID, WHEN TABLING THE ICAC REPORT FOR LAST YEAR.

HE NOTED THE COMMISSIONER OF THE ICAC, IN HIS REVIEW OF THE REPORT, NOT ONLY LOOKED BACK ON THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION IN THE PAST YEAR BUT ALSO LOOKED AHEAD AND HAD CONFIDENCE THAT THE COMMISSION WOULD CONTINUE TO PLAY A VITAL PART IN SUSTAINING HONG KONG'S WELL-BEING AND STABILITY.

THE REPORT SHOWED THAT THERE HAD BEEN LITTLE CHANGE IN THE PATTERN OF CORRUPT ACTIVITY DURING 1984.

+THERE WAS A MARGINAL RISE IN CORRUPTION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR= THE COMMISSIONER BELIEVES THAT THIS MAY WELL HAVE BEEN DUE TO ECONOMIC PROBLEMS COMPELLING MANAGEMENT TO REPORT SUSPECTED IRREGULARITIES IN SUCH A WAY WHICH WAS NOT PRACTISED IN EARLIER YEARS WHEN MARKET CONDITIONS WERE MORE FAVOURABLE,+ SIR ROGER SAID.

THE REVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT SUMMARISED THE MORE INTERESTING CASES INVESTIGATED AND PROSECUTED IN 1984 AND IT INCLUDED BANK FRAUD CASES INVOLVING ENQUIRIES INTO LARGE-SCALE FRAUD IN MORE THAN 10 LOCAL BANKS AND CREDIT COMPANIES.

THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS DEPARTMENT CONTINUED TO EXERCISE AN INFLUENCE ON THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE IN EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ON THE EVILS OF CORRUPTION.

ONE OF THE MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT IN 1984 WAS THE LAUNCHING OF A SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL GROUPS IN THE FORM OF A +CONFERENCE ON BUSINESS ETHICS+ WHICH WAS HELD JOINTLY WITH THE HONG KONG MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION.

SIR ROGER SAID AMONG THE MAJOR PUBLICITY PROGRAMMES WERE A 13-PART ICAC SPOT SERIES SHOWN IN THE TWO CHINESE TELEVISION STATIONS AND A NEW TELEVISION DRAMA SERIES SHOWN IN MAY AND JUNE THIS YEAR.

ON THE PUBLIC EDUCATION FRONT, A TEACHING PROGRAMME ENTITLED +THE WAY AHEAD+ WAS PUBLISHED AND TARGETTED TO SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS.

ANOTHER TEACHING PROGRAMME ENTITLED +LET'S TALK JUSTICE+ WAS IN THE FINAL STAGE OF PREPARATION WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF PROMOTING THE CONCEPT OF JUSTICE IN JUNIOR FORMS.

+TEACHING MATERIALS OF A SIMILAR NATURE HAVE BEEN WELL RECEIVED BY PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE PAST YEAR,+ HE SAID.

IN THE CORRUPTION PREVENTION FIELD, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT HAD BEEN THE FORMATION OF CORRUPTION PREVENTION GROUPS WITHIN DEPARTMENTS.

+THE OBJECTIVE WAS TO INVOLVE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS MORE DIRECTLY IN IDENTIFYING AREAS OF THEIR OWN ACTIVITIES WHICH MAY PROVE WHERE CORRUPTION OPPORTUNITIES MAY OCCUR.

+ASSOCIATED WITH THE SETTING UP OF THESE GROUPS IS A TREND THAT MORE AND MORE ASSIGNMENT WORK HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT AT THE SPECIFIC REQUEST OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND PUBLIC BODIES,+ SIR ROGER SAID.

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BANK TRYING HARD TO RECOVER MONEY
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THE ULTIMATE COST OF THE ACQUISITION OF THE HANG LUNG BANK WILL DEPEND ON THE PRICE WHICH THE GOVERNMENT IS ABLE TO OBTAIN WHEN THE BANK IS RETURNED TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

+THIS PRICE WILL IN TURN DEPEND TO A SUBSTANTIAL DEGREE ON THE SUCCESS OF THE BANK IN RECOVERING MONEY OWED TO IT,+ HE SAID.
+THE BANK IS STRENUOUSLY CONTINUING ITS EFFORTS IN THIS AREA.+

MR JACOBS WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LYDIA DUNN.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S PLANS FOR THE BANK WAS STILL TO RETURN IT TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

+AS TO THE CAUSES OF THE BANK'S TROUBLES, ALL I CAN SAFELY SAY THIS AFTERNOON IS THAT THERE WAS A LARGE ELEMENT OF MISMANAGEMENT IN THAT THE BANK LENT IMPRUDENTLY.

+THE LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE HANG LUNG EXERCISE FORM PART OF THE INPUT TO THE CURRENT REVIEW OF PRUDENTIAL SUPERVISION.

+WE HOPE TO PRESENT THE RESULTS OF THAT REVIEW TO THE BANKING AND DEPOSIT-TAKING ADVISORY COMMITTEES IN EARLY SEPTEMBER. DEPENDING UPON THE ADVICE OF THE TWO COMMITTEES, WE EXPECT BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR TO BE IN A POSITION TO DEVELOP FURTHER THE FUTURE SHAPE AND SCALE OF OUR REGULATORY SYSTEM,+ HE SAID.

MR JACOBS ALSO THANKED THE PRESENT HANG LUNG BANK BOARD, ITS MANAGEMENT AND STAFF FOR ALL THEY HAD DONE TO IMPROVE THE PROSPECTS OF THE BANK, THEREBY ADVANCING THE DATE WHEN THE BANK COULD BE RETURNED TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

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USE OF CANTONESE BEING ENCOURAGED

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THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ENCOURAGE CANTONESE-SPEAKING OFFICIAL MEMBERS TO REPLY IN CANTONESE, WHENEVER APPROPRIATE AND IF THEY SO WISHED, TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS IN CANTONESE.

THIS WAS STATED TODAY BY THE SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND INFORMATION, THE HON ADOLF HSU, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON WONG LAM.

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BUILDING PLANS FOR ESF SCHOOLS OUTLINED

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BUILDING PLANS TO MEET THE PROJECTED DEMAND FOR ENGLISH-SPEAKING SCHOOL PLACES IN THE TERRITORY WERE OUTLINED BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

RESPONDING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG ON THE PLANNING AND PROGRESS OF ENGLISH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION SCHOOLS IN SAI KUNG AND OTHER PARTS OF THE TERRITORY, MR LEUNG SAID THAT HAVING REVIEWED THE CURRENT PROVISION AND THE PROJECTED DEMAND FOR SUCH PLACES IT HAD BEEN DECIDED TO BUILD A NEW 18-CLASSROOM PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE SAI KUNG AREA TO REPROVISION THE EXISTING BOUNDARY JUNIOR SCHOOL IN KOWLOON.

AT THE SAME TIME, SHA TIN JUNIOR SCHOOL WILL BE REDUCED IN SIZE FROM 24 TO 18 CLASSROOMS WHILE GLENEALY JUNIOR SCHOOL WILL BE REPROVISIONED AS A 12-CLASSROOM SCHOOL INSTEAD OF 18.

THE ENGLISH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION HAD BEEN INFORMED AND NECESSARY ACTION HAD BEEN TAKEN BY ALL PARTIES CONCERNED, MR LEUNG SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THERE WERE TWO OTHER ESF PROJECTS IN THE PIPE-LINE -- THE SHA TIN SECONDARY SCHOOL IN AREA 41A, SHA TIN, AND THE SANDY BAY JUNIOR SCHOOL AT POKFULAM, HONG KONG.

+THE SECONDARY SCHOOL IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED AND OPERATIONAL BY SEPTEMBER 1985 WHILE THE JUNIOR SCHOOL IS CURRENTLY AT THE DESIGN STAGE, SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION IN 1987-88,+ MR LEUNG SAID.

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SAI KUNG ROAD LINK MAY BE READY EARLIER

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THE PLANNED ROAD LINK FROM NAI CHUNG TO MA ON SHAN MAY BE COMPLETED BY MID-1988 INSTEAD OF THE END OF THAT YEAR AS SCHEDULED, THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON NICKY CHAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG ON THE PROVISION OF AN ALTERNATIVE ACCESS TO SAI KUNG IN VIEW OF EXISTING CONGESTION ALONG HIRAM'S HIGHWAY.

/+A ROAD

+A ROAD LINK FROM NAI CHUNG TO MA ON SHAN COMPRISING A 7.3-METRE WIDE SINGLE CARRIAGEWAY HAS BEEN PLANNED, WITH CONSTRUCTION EXPECTED TO COMMENCE TOWARDS THE END OF 1986 AND TO BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF 1988,+ MR CHAN SAID.

+HOWEVER,+ HE CONTINUED,+AFTER A DETAILED REVIEW OF THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME FOR THIS PROJECT, IT IS NOW CONSIDERED THAT THIS ROAD LINK COULD POSSIBLY BE BROUGHT FORWARD FOR COMPLETION IN MID-1988.+

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LEAVE RELIEF POOL FOR NURSES ADEQUATE
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THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT HAD CREATED 642 NURSING POSTS AS LEAVE RELIEF TO REPLACE NURSES WHO GO ON LEAVE, INCLUDING MATERNITY LEAVE, THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR THE HON RUDY KHOO, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

ANSWERING A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP WHETHER GOVERNMENT WOULD CONSIDER CREATING A LEAVE RELIEF POOL TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY REPLACEMENTS FOR NURSES ON MATERNITY LEAVE, DR KHOO SAID THAT THE 642 POSTS REPRESENTED 7.3 PER CENT OF THE PRESENT ESTABLISHMENT OF 9 423 NURSES IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.

LAST YEAR, HE SAID, 423 NURSES TOOK MATERNITY LEAVE WHICH REQUIRED 110 NURSES FOR THEIR RELIEF.

+EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT THE LEAVE RELIEF POOL IS ADEQUATE TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY COVERAGE FOR SUCH LEAVE, ALTHOUGH THE MAJOR PART OF THE POOL PROVIDES FOR THE RELIEF OF NURSES TAKING OTHER FORMS OF LEAVE SUCH AS VACATION LEAVE,+ DR KHOO SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS KEEPING THE SITUATION UNDER REGULAR REVIEW, AND EFFORTS WERE BEING MADE CONTINUOUSLY WITH A VIEW TO ENSURE THAT THE LEAVE RELIEF REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCH A LARGE WORK FORCE WERE ADEQUATELY MET WITHIN AVAILABLE RESOURCES.

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WAN CHAI DEPOT WILL BE MOVED
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THE WATERWORKS FACILITIES LOCATED AT BULLOCK LANE IN WAN CHAI WILL BE RELOCATED AND THIS WOULD INVOLVE THE REPROVISIONING OF A CENTRALISED WORKSHOP AND THE OPERATIONAL AND SERVICE CENTRE FOR HONG KONG ISLAND, THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON NICKY CHAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON YEUNG PO-KWAN ON PLANS BEING TAKEN TO RELOCATE THE DEPOT AND THE TIMING OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION, MR CHAN SAID +DESIGN WORKS FOR THE NEW CENTRALISED WORKSHOP AT LUNG CHEUNG ROAD ARE CURRENTLY IN HAND AND CONSTRUCTION IS SCHEDULED TO BE COMPLETED IN EARLY 1988.+

/HE ADDED

HE ADDED THAT DETAILED DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW OPERATIONAL AND SERVICE CENTRE WOULD TAKE ABOUT THREE YEARS TO COMPLETE, FOLLOWING RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING ISSUES.

+ON COMPLETION OF THE REPLACEMENT PROJECTS, THE BULLOCK LANE SITE CAN BE RELEASED,+ HE SAID.

REPLYING TO ANOTHER QUESTION BY MR YEUNG ON THE FOOTBRIDGE LINKING O'BRIEN ROAD WITH THE WAN CHAI RECLAMATION, MR CHAN SAID WORK ON THE PROJECT HAD STARTED AND WAS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY THE MIDDLE OF NEXT YEAR.

HE CONFIRMED THAT FOUR ESCALATORS WOULD BE PROVIDED AT THE NORTH OF HENNESSY ROAD, WAN CHAI NORTH MTR STATION, JAFFE ROAD AND GLOUCESTER ROAD RESPECTIVELY.

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EIGHT BILLS PASSED

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EIGHT BILLS, INCLUDING ONE UNOFFICIAL MEMBER'S BILL, WERE PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THEY ARE THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES (JOINT LIAISON GROUP) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE BUILDINGS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE MOTOR VEHICLES INSURANCE (THIRD PARTY RISKS)(AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE CONTRACTS FOR OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1985, THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, AND THE ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND BILL 1985.

SIXTEEN BILLS WERE INTRODUCED AND READ A SECOND TIME AND DEBATE ON THEM WAS ADJOURNED.

THEY ARE THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (1984-85) BILL 1985, THE SUPREME COURT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE CROWN LANDS RESUMPTION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE FORESHORE AND SEA-BED (RECLAMATION) BILL 1985, THE LAND ACQUISITION (POSSESSORY TITLE)(AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE BETTING DUTY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1985, THE SECURITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE STOCK EXCHANGE UNIFICATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE TRAVEL AGENTS BILL 1985, THE SUPPLEMENTARY MEDICAL PROFESSIONS, MIDWIVES REGISTRATION AND NURSES REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND URBAN SERVICES (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1985 AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND URBAN SERVICES (AMENDMENT)(NO. 3) BILL 1985.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED TO AUGUST 7.

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STIPEND FOR LEGCO MEMBERS APPROVED

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UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WOULD IN FUTURE BE ABLE TO CLAIM A MONTHLY STIPEND OF UP TO \$8 500 - AND THE GOVERNMENT HOPED THIS WOULD ENCOURAGE SUITABLY QUALIFIED PEOPLE, WHO MIGHT NOT OTHERWISE BE IN A FINANCIAL POSITION TO DO SO, TO SEEK ELECTION.

UMELCO MEMBERS WOULD ALSO BE ABLE TO CLAIM IN FUTURE MORE REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES INCURRED. THE MAXIMUM MONTHLY ALLOWANCE OF \$9 500 HAD BEEN INCREASED TO \$10 200.

BOTH GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS WERE APPROVED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE TODAY (WEDNESDAY), AND WOULD TAKE EFFECT ON OCTOBER 1.

IN AGREEING TO THE INTRODUCTION OF THE STIPEND AND TO THE INCREASED EXPENSES CEILING THE FINANCE COMMITTEE APPROVED A SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION OF FUNDS AMOUNTING TO \$3 530 000.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED THAT THE REIMBURSEMENT ALLOWANCE WAS NOT NEW; IT WAS INTRODUCED IN 1976.

+THE OBJECT OF THE ALLOWANCE IS TO REIMBURSE MEMBERS FOR EXPENSES INCURRED IN CARRYING OUT THEIR DUTIES,+ SAID THE SPOKESMAN. +NATURALLY, IT HAS HAD TO BE CHANGED REGULARLY AS COSTS HAVE RISEN, BUT IN NO WAY DOES IT TAKE ACCOUNT OF MEMBERS' LIVING COSTS.+

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ALSO TOOK NOTE OF THE FACT THAT THE SENIOR UNOFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBER - BY VIRTUE OF HIS HIGHER POST-INCURRED MORE EXPENSES THAN THE ORDINARY MEMBERS.

+THE SENIOR UNOFFICIAL MEMBER WILL BE ABLE,+ EXPLAINED THE SPOKESMAN, +TO CLAIM REIMBURSEMENT TO A CEILING DOUBLE THAT OF AN ORDINARY MEMBER.+

WITH REGARD TO THE STIPEND, THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT IN THE WHITE PAPER ON THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN HONG KONG IT WAS PROPOSED THAT UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SHOULD BE ELIGIBLE FOR +A STANDARD RATE OF REMUNERATION.+

HE STRESSED: +THE INTENTION IS THAT NOBODY SHOULD BE DEBARRED FROM SERVING ON THE COUNCIL BECAUSE OF FINANCIAL HARDSHIP. AT THE SAME TIME THE SUM SHOULD NOT BE SO GENEROUS THAT A PERSON WOULD STAND FOR ELECTION SIMPLY FOR THE MONEY.+

BUT AT THE SAME TIME, HE SAID, THE STIPEND HAD TO BE SUFFICIENT TO PROVIDE AN ASSURED INCOME TO SUPPORT MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES SO THAT IT WOULD NOT DETER PERSONS OF ABILITY FROM STANDING.

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WARNING OF NEW PROTECTIONIST MEASURES

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THE FIERCE BATTLE AGAINST U.S. TRADE PROTECTIONISM WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE FOR SOME TIME, AND A NEW WAVE OF PROTECTIONIST MEASURES MAY EMERGE IN OTHER MARKETS FOR HONG KONG'S EXPORTS, THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF TRADE, MR DONALD TSANG, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE GAVE THESE WARNINGS WHEN HE SPOKE AT A LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE ROTARY CLUB, KOWLOON WEST, AND ADDING THAT THE MULTI-FIBRE ARRANGEMENT (MFA) RENEGOTIATION STARTED YESTERDAY WOULD BE A TWELVE-MONTH TASK.

+WE HAVE MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS AHEAD,+ HE STRESSED.

MR TSANG SAID THE TRADE DEPARTMENT WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE TRADE AND TEXTILE ADVISORY BOARDS WHICH WERE FULLY INFORMED OF ALL TRADE DEVELOPMENTS AND ISSUES.

+AS THE SUBJECTS OF CONSULTATION OFTEN RELATE TO SENSITIVE TRADE INTELLIGENCE AND DETAILED NEGOTIATING POSITION, THE DELIBERATIONS OF THESE BOARDS HAVE TO BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL.

+ALL THIS EXPLAINS, FOR EXAMPLE, WHY WE DID NOT PUBLICLY DISCUSS THE JENKINS BILL UNTIL RECENTLY, ALTHOUGH WE HAD BEEN WORKING BEHIND THE SCENE AND CONSULTING CLOSELY WITH TEXTILES ADVISORY BOARD SINCE FEBRUARY THIS YEAR.+

+THIS EXPLAINS WHY, IN THE PUBLIC EYES, THE TRADE DEPARTMENT DOES NOT ALWAYS SEEM TO ACT SWIFTLY, DECISIVELY AND ACCORDING TO PUBLIC PERCEIVED INTERESTS.+

AS REGARDS THE JENKINS BILL, MR TSANG SAID HONG KONG KNEW ABOUT IT SIX WEEKS BEFORE IT WAS PUBLISHED.

+LET THERE BE NO DOUBT THAT WE WERE THE FIRST TEXTILE TRADING TERRITORY IN THE WORLD TO IDENTIFY THE DANGERS OF THE BILL AND TO ACT AGAINST IT.+

THE DIRECTOR SAID THE DEPARTMENT'S MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES WERE TO CONDUCT HONG KONG'S EXTERNAL COMMERCIAL RELATIONS= TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS WITH THE OBJECT OF FACILITATING TRADE= AND TO ADMINISTER TRADE CONTROLS - SUCH AS TEXTILE QUOTAS - WHICH FLEW FROM OUR OBLIGATIONS UNDER THOSE AGREEMENTS.

+IT IS A DEPARTMENT WHICH DEALS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS ON TRADE. IT IS NOT IN THE BUSINESS OF TRADE PROMOTION.

+THUS, THE TRADE DEPARTMENT'S JOB IS NEVER GLAMOUROUS OR HIGH PROFILE. THE TASK IS TO SOLVE PROBLEMS MOSTLY CREATED BY OTHER COUNTRIES,+ HE SAID.

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+DEVELOPING EXPORTERS FAVOUR LIBERALISATION+

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+THE DEVELOPING EXPORTERS' POSITION IS CLEAR - WE FAVOUR LIBERALISATION,+ THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE, MR HAMISH MACLEOD, SAID BEFORE THE GATT TEXTILES COMMITTEE IN GENEVA.

HE TOLD THE COMMITTEE THAT IF OTHERS SAW THE NEED FOR ANY VARIATION OF THIS THEME, THEN IT WAS FOR THEM TO EXPLAIN IT AND JUSTIFY IT.

+AFTER ALL, THIS DIALOGUE COMMENCED AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THE COMMITMENTS TO LIBERALISE TRADE IN TEXTILES AND CLOTHING MADE IN THE NOVEMBER 1982 MINISTERIAL DECLARATION. HOW AND WHEN CAN THESE COMMITMENTS BE HONOURED?+ HE QUERIED.

HE SAID IF IMPORTING COUNTRIES STILL REGARD ANY FORM OF PROTECTION AS NECESSARY, ALBEIT LIBERALISED, AND DESPITE THE LENGTHY PERIOD OF PROTECTION THEY HAD ALREADY +ENJOYED+ - AT THE COST OF THEIR CONSUMERS AND TAXPAYERS, AND THE EFFICIENCY OF THEIR INDUSTRY - THEN IT IS FOR THEM TO STATE A CASE WHICH CAN THEN BE DISCUSSED RATIONALLY.

ON JENKINS BILL, MR MACLEOD SAID IT GAVE NO ENCOURAGEMENT TO THOSE WHO WERE INTERESTED IN RATIONAL ANALYSIS AND EXCHANGES.

+IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND HOW A PROTECTIONIST, UNILATERAL MEASURE LIKE THIS BILL CAN BE AS WELL RECEIVED IN THE U.S. CONGRESS AS IT REPORTEDLY HAS BEEN, WHEN THE U.S. STATISTICS SHOW THAT THINGS ARE NOT NEARLY AS BAD AS THE PROPONENTS OF THE BILL WOULD HAVE US BELIEVED.+

+FOR EXAMPLE, STATISTICS SHOW THAT EMPLOYMENT IN BOTH THE TEXTILE AND APPAREL SECTIONS IN THE USA WENT UP IN 1984 OVER 1983 AND SO DID THE VALUE OF US TEXTILE AND APPAREL SHIPMENTS IN REAL TERMS,+ HE SAID.

THIS WAS THE FIRST FORMAL MEETING OF THE TEXTILE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE EXISTING MFA WHICH EXPIRES IN JULY 1986 AND IT WAS ATTENDED BY MOST MAJOR TEXTILE TRADING NATIONS.

THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES CAME OUT STRONGLY IN FAVOUR OF AN EXTENSION OF THE MFA BUT THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT ON THE NEED FOR LIBERALISATION.

AT THE MEETING MR MACLEOD SAID THAT HONG KONG SUPPORTED THE JOINT STATEMENT MADE BY THE KOREAN REPRESENTATIVE ON BEHALF OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WHICH ASKED THE TEXTILE COMMITTEE TO FOCUS ON THREE QUESTIONS : 1, WHETHER CONTINUED PROTECTION TO DEVELOPED COUNTRY TEXTILES AND CLOTHING INDUSTRIES IS JUSTIFIED; 2, WHETHER THESE INDUSTRIES CAN CONTINUE TO CLAIM SPECIAL TREATMENT IN THE FORM OF A DEROGATION FROM GATT RULES; 3, WHETHER A CONVINCING CASE CAN BE MADE TO JUSTIFY PERSISTENT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

+THE ATMOSPHERE WAS PRAGMATIC AND RATIONAL,+ SAID MR MACLEOD. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE NEXT FORMAL MEETING WOULD TAKE PLACE IN DECEMBER PROBABLY WITH INFORMAL MEETINGS BEFORE THEN.

'INSOLVENCY RATE STILL RISING'
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A TOTAL OF 2 096 INSOLVENCIES WAS BEING HANDLED BY THE OFFICIAL RECEIVER'S OFFICE BY THE END OF JUNE THIS YEAR, ACCORDING TO STATISTICS RELEASED TODAY BY THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, FOR THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THIS YEAR.

THESE INVOLVED 1 294 COMPANY LIQUIDATIONS AND 802 PERSONAL BANKRUPTCIES, AN INCREASE OF 37 PER CENT OVER THE FIGURES AT THE END OF JUNE LAST YEAR, WHEN THERE WERE 1 530 INSOLVENCIES -- 1 005 COMPANY LIQUIDATIONS AND 525 PERSONAL BANKRUPTCIES.

IN THE FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR, THE OFFICIAL RECEIVER WAS ALSO APPOINTED LIQUIDATOR IN 189 NEW COMPANY LIQUIDATIONS AND TRUSTEE IN 208 NEW PERSONAL BANKRUPTCIES.

THIS REPRESENTED A COMBINED INCREASE OF 69.7 PER CENT IN THE NUMBER OF NEW INSOLVENCIES OVER THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR, WHICH SAW 155 NEW COMPANY LIQUIDATIONS AND 79 NEW PERSONAL BANKRUPTCIES.

THE OVERALL INCREASE, THEREFORE, WAS ATTRIBUTABLE MAINLY TO A SHARP INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PERSONAL BANKRUPTCIES.

BY COMPARISON THERE WAS A 8.8 PER CENT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF NEW INSOLVENCIES IN THE FIRST HALF OF 1984 OVER THE SAME PERIOD IN 1983.

+IT COULD BE SEEN, THEREFORE, THAT THE RATE OF NEW INSOLVENCIES WAS STILL INCREASING,+ THE REGISTRAR GENERAL, MR NOEL GLEESON, SAID.

FUNDS HELD BY THE OFFICIAL RECEIVER AT THE END OF JUNE THIS YEAR TOTALLED \$678 MILLION, AN INCREASE OF OVER 105 PER CENT AS AGAINST \$329 MILLION AT THE END OF JUNE LAST YEAR.

TOTAL DIVIDENDS PAID BY THE OFFICIAL RECEIVER DURING THE FIRST SIX MONTHS IN 1985 AMOUNTED TO \$11.2 MILLION IN 77 INSOLVENCIES, AS AGAINST \$5.2 MILLION IN 55 INSOLVENCIES IN THE SAME PERIOD IN 1984.

NOTABLE COMPANY FAILURES DURING THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THIS YEAR INCLUDED THE TIME PROCESSOR HOLDING LIMITED= THE CMF GROUP OF COMPANIES= PIONEER INTERNATIONAL BUYING AGENCIES (HK) LIMITED AND DOMINICAN FINANCE LIMITED.

MR GLEESON PRAISED THE PROFESSIONAL AND OTHER STAFF OF THE OFFICIAL RECEIVER'S OFFICE WHO WERE COPING +AS BEST THEY COULD WITH A VERY DIFFICULT SITUATION+.

STAFF HAD BEEN REDEPLOYED FROM OTHER DIVISIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT BUT THIS FELL FAR SHORT OF WHAT WAS REQUIRED TO DEAL WITH THE PRESENT VOLUME OF INSOLVENCIES, HE SAID.

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CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES FOR JUNE
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THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A) ROSE BY 2.8 PER CENT AND THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (B) BY 3.2 PER CENT BETWEEN JUNE 1984 AND JUNE 1985, ACCORDING TO FIGURES PUBLISHED TODAY BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

THE CPI(A) AND CPI(B) FOR JUNE 1985 WERE 159.8 AND 160.1 RESPECTIVELY, OR 4.3 POINTS AND 4.9 POINTS RESPECTIVELY HIGHER THAN THOSE FOR JUNE 1984. COMPARED WITH MAY 1985 AND BEARING IN MIND THAT THIS COMPARISON IS AFFECTED BY SEASONAL FACTORS, CPI(A) INCREASED BY 0.8 POINT OR 0.5 PER CENT AND CPI(B), BY 0.7 POINT OR 0.4 PER CENT.

THE AVERAGE CPI(A) AND AVERAGE CPI(B) FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDED JUNE 1985, BOTH AT 157.5, WERE 4.8 PER CENT AND 5.2 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGES FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDED JUNE 1984.

DURING THE THREE-MONTH PERIOD ENDED JUNE 1985, THE SEASONALLY ADJUSTED CPI(A) AND CPI(B) BOTH INCREASED AT AN AVERAGE RATE OF 0.2 PER CENT EACH MONTH.

DURING JUNE, RETAIL PRICES OF FRESH VEGETABLES, SALT-WATER FISH AND LIVE POULTRY, AND MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY FARES WERE HIGHER. ON THE OTHER HAND, RETAIL PRICES OF FRESH FRUIT, KEROSENE AND LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS DECREASED.

THE CPI(A) AND CPI(B) ARE BASED ON THE EXPENDITURE PATTERNS OF 50 PER CENT AND 30 PER CENT, RESPECTIVELY, OF URBAN HOUSEHOLDS IN HONG KONG, WHICH WERE DERIVED FROM THE 1979-80 HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE SURVEY. THE CPI(A) REFERS TO HOUSEHOLDS SPENDING BETWEEN \$1 000 AND \$3 499 A MONTH, AND THE CPI(B) TO HOUSEHOLDS SPENDING BETWEEN \$3 500 AND \$6 499 A MONTH AT THAT TIME.

THE INDEXES FOR JUNE 1985 IN RESPECT OF THE NINE COMMODITY/SERVICE SECTIONS IN THE TWO CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES ARE GIVEN BELOW, TOGETHER WITH THOSE FOR MAY 1985 AND JUNE 1984.

(OCTOBER 1979 TO SEPTEMBER 1980 AVERAGE = 100)

SECTION	CPI(A)			CPI(B)		
	JUN. 84	MAY 85	JUN. 85	JUN. 84	MAY 85	JUN. 85
FOODSTUFFS	157.4	154.5	156.2	157.8	155.6	157.1
HOUSING	143.8	154.8	155.1	144.1	154.2	154.5
FUEL AND LIGHT	148.7	146.8	145.8	148.4	146.7	145.9

/ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

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ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AND TOBACCO (FOR HOME CONSUMPTION)	208.4	233.5	233.7	201.2	223.9	224.0
CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR	156.5	170.4	170.3	158.0	172.4	172.0
DURABLE GOODS	125.6	123.5	123.2	129.4	128.2	128.1
MISCELLANEOUS GOODS	150.9	151.6	151.3	148.2	148.6	148.4
TRANSPORT AND VEHICLES	170.2	181.8	182.4	172.9	182.4	182.9
SERVICES	167.6	181.6	182.2	165.9	177.4	178.1
ALL ITEMS	155.5	159.0	159.8	155.2	159.4	160.1

COMPARED WITH MAY 1985, THE INDEX FOR FOODSTUFFS INCREASED BY 1.7 POINTS IN CPI(A) AND 1.5 POINTS IN CPI(B). THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICE OF FRESH VEGETABLES INCREASED DUE TO ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS DURING THE MONTH WHILE THAT OF SALT-WATER FISH ROSE DUE TO INADEQUATE SUPPLY.

THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICE OF LIVE POULTRY ALSO WENT UP AS A RESULT OF INCREASED DEMAND AROUND THE DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICE OF FRESH FRUIT DECREASED DUE TO LOWER PRICES FOR SEASONAL FRUITS, NAMELY, WATER MELONS AND PEARS. THE EFFECT OF MOVEMENTS IN THE RETAIL PRICES OF OTHER FOOD ITEMS ON THE INDEX FOR FOODSTUFFS WAS INSIGNIFICANT.

THE INDEX FOR FUEL AND LIGHT DECREASED BY 1.0 POINT IN CPI(A) AND 0.8 POINT IN CPI(B) DUE TO LOWER PRICES OF KEROSENE AND LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS.

THE INDEX FOR TRANSPORT AND VEHICLES INCREASED BY 0.6 POINT IN CPI(A) AND 0.5 POINT IN CPI(B) BECAUSE OF HIGHER MTR AND PUBLIC LIGHT BUS FARES.

HIGHER CHARGES FOR ADMISSION TO SWIMMING POOLS AND AMUSEMENT PARKS PUSHED UP THE INDEX FOR SERVICES BY 0.6 POINT IN CPI(A) AND 0.7 POINT IN CPI(B).

PRICE MOVEMENTS IN OTHER SECTIONS WERE INSIGNIFICANT.

(FIGURES REFER TO CPI SERIES NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED. ALL PERCENTAGE CHANGES ARE DERIVED FROM CPI FIGURES TO 2 DECIMAL PLACES.)

/DETAILS OF

DETAILS OF THESE PRICE MOVEMENTS ARE GIVEN IN THE +CONSUMER PRICE INDEX REPORT+ FOR JUNE 1985, WHICH IS AVAILABLE AT \$3 PER COPY FROM THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, GROUND FLOOR, CONNAUGHT PLACE, HONG KONG OR FROM THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT, ROOM 1904, 19TH FLOOR, KAI TAK COMMERCIAL BUILDING, 317 DES VOEUX ROAD CENTRAL, HONG KONG- OR FROM THE DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION SERVICES, INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT, BASKERVILLE HOUSE, DUDELL STREET, HONG KONG FOR LOCAL AND OVERSEAS MAILINGS.

FOR ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES, PLEASE CONTACT THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT AT TELEPHONE NO. 3-7216512.

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ALL BEACHES ON HONG KONG ISLAND OPEN

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TURTLE COVE BEACH WAS RE-OPENED BY THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AT 2 P.M. TODAY AFTER ALMOST FIVE DAYS' OF CLEANING-UP AND MOPPING-UP WORK BY BEACH STAFF FOLLOWING SATURDAY'S OIL-POLLUTION INCIDENT.

AT THE HEIGHT OF THE OIL POLLUTION SITUATION, 11 OF THE 12 BEACHES ON HONG KONG ISLAND HAD TO BE CLOSED.

WITH THIS AFTERNOON'S RE-OPENING OF TURTLE COVE, ALL 12 BEACHES ARE NOW OPEN FOR PUBLIC USE.

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LIQUOR LICENSING BOARD REFUSES TWO APPLICATIONS

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THE URBAN COUNCIL'S LIQUOR LICENSING BOARD TODAY REFUSED TWO APPLICATIONS FOR CLUB LIQUOR LICENCES.

THE POLICE HAD STRONGLY OBJECTED TO THE APPLICATION FOR A CLUB LIQUOR LICENCE FROM THE KA WO RECREATIONAL GENERAL ASSOCIATION LIMITED IN JAFFE ROAD, WAN CHAI, ON THE GROUND THAT IT WAS SUSPECTED OF OPERATING IN AN UNDESIRABLE MANNER WITH KNOWN TRIAD INFLUENCE.

THE POLICE HAD ALSO OBJECTED TO THE OTHER APPLICATION, FOR A CLUB LIQUOR LICENCE FROM THE WOOD AND LAKE CLUB LTD AT QUEEN'S ROAD, CENTRAL. THE POLICE SUBMITTED THAT KNOWN AND CONVICTED TRIAD OR CRIMINAL ELEMENTS WERE INVOLVED IN THE OPERATION OF THE CLUB. ADDITIONALLY, THEY SAID, THERE HAD BEEN COMPLAINTS FROM OTHER TENANTS OF THE BUILDING ABOUT THE NUISANCE CAUSED BY MEMBERS OF THE CLUB.

/IN OTHER

IN OTHER CASES, THE BOARD APPROVED THE ISSUE OF A 12-MONTH LIQUOR LICENCE TO THE SCHOONER PUB IN HILLWOOD ROAD, TSIM SHA TSUI, THE DA DA DEPARTMENT STORE IN ELECTRIC ROAD, NORTH POINT, ON CONDITION THAT NO LIQUOR BE SOLD AFTER MIDNIGHT, THE HAPPY VALLEY FAST FOOD SHOP IN TAT CHEE AVENUE, YAU YAT CHUEN, FOR SELLING BEER ONLY, AND TO THE SHANGHAI NIGHT CLUB IN TAK HING STREET, TSIM SHA TSUI, WITH A RIDER THAT ITS EMPLOYEES MUST BE VETTED BY THE BOARD.

THE MEETING WAS PRESIDED OVER BY THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, MR KWAN LIM-HO, AND WAS ATTENDED BY COUNCILLORS MISS CECILIA YEUNG, MR SAMUEL WONG AND MRS MARGARET LI.

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RSD'S MULTI-STOREY GARAGE OPENS

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THE GOVERNMENT'S FIRST MULTI-STOREY PURPOSE-BUILT GARAGE WAS OPENED IN KWAI CHUNG TODAY (WEDNESDAY) TO SERVICE ABOUT 130 OF THE REGIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT'S FLEET OF VEHICLES.

THE DIRECTOR OF REGIONAL SERVICES, MR TONY HAMMOND, SAID THE DEPOT +REPRESENTS THE FIRST STEP IN THE DEPARTMENT'S STRATEGY TO PROVIDE SERVICING AND GARAGING FACILITIES FOR THE WHOLE OF ITS VEHICLE FLEET.+

THE SIX-STOREY DEPOT, BUILT AT A COST OF \$50 MILLION, IS EQUIPPED WITH A COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF MODERN FACILITIES TO PROVIDE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES AND PARKING SPACES FOR SOME 130 VEHICLES. ONE OF ITS MANY UNIQUE FEATURES IS THAT IT HAS A FLOOR-LOADING CAPACITY OF 1.2 TONNES PER SQUARE METRE, MAKING IT CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING 25-TONNE VEHICLES.

MR HAMMOND SAID SIMILAR GARAGE FACILITIES WERE PLANNED FOR SAI KUNG, SHA TIN, TAI PO AND YUEN LONG, ALTHOUGH IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT A MULTI-STOREY GARAGE WOULD BE REQUIRED IN THOSE PLACES WHICH PROBABLY DID NOT HAVE TO CONTEND WITH THE PROBLEM OF LAND CONSTRAINTS AS IN THE CASE OF KWAI CHUNG.

+THE PROVISION OF THESE GARAGES WILL ENSURE THAT HIGH LEVELS OF VEHICLE AVAILABILITY CAN BE MAINTAINED, WHICH WILL, IN TURN, MEAN THAT THE NUMBER OF RESERVE VEHICLES CAN BE KEPT TO THE MINIMUM.

+THIS COMBINED WITH IMPROVED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS, INCLUDING COMPUTERISATION OF THE VEHICLE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM, IMPROVED OPERATING SYSTEMS, AND MORE TRAINING FOR DRIVERS AND MANAGEMENT STAFF, SHOULD ENSURE THAT WE GAIN THE MAXIMUM VALUE FOR MONEY FROM ALL OUR VEHICLE RESOURCES,+ MR HAMMOND SAID.

/IN ADDITION

IN ADDITION TO THE GARAGING AND SERVICING FUNCTIONS, THE DEPOT WOULD ALSO PROVIDE TRAINING FACILITIES ON THE OPERATION AND DAILY MAINTENANCE OF THE RSD'S FLEET OF VEHICLES, WHICH INCLUDED MANY MUNICIPAL SERVICE SPECIALIST VEHICLES SUCH AS GULLY CESSPIT EMPTIERS AND REFUSE COLLECTION VEHICLES, SOME OF WHICH COST UP TO \$600 000 EACH.

MR HAMMOND SAID THAT THE RSD WAS HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON THESE VEHICLES FOR THE SUCCESSFUL EXECUTION OF MOST OF ITS FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

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RESIDENT GROUPS URGED TO BE MORE ACTIVE
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RESIDENT AND COMMUNITY GROUPS SHOULD BE MORE ACTIVE IN PROMOTING DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION WHICH AIMS AT PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, MR ALBERT LAM, SAID THIS (WEDNESDAY) EVENING.

+THE OBJECTIVES OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION ARE TO PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN DISTRICT AFFAIRS AND TO LISTEN TO PUBLIC OPINION ON VARIOUS MATTERS,+ MR LAM SAID.

+IN THIS WAY, THE GOVERNMENT WILL BETTER UNDERSTAND THE VIEWS OF THE DISTRICT, AND WHENEVER POSSIBLE, TAKE EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS,+ HE ADDED.

MR LAM WAS SPEAKING AT A SEMINAR, JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE TAI HANG AND SO KON PO AREA COMMITTEE AND THE WAN CHAI DISTRICT OFFICE, AIMED AT ENHANCING A SENSE OF BELONGING AMONG RESIDENTS.

DISTRICT OFFICER, MR ROGER GARCIA, TOLD THE MEETING THAT AS MOST BUILDINGS IN WAN CHAI ARE PRIVATE THERE MAY BE MANY PROBLEMS INVOLVING BUILDING MANAGEMENT.

EMPHASISING THE NEED TO OVERCOME SUCH PROBLEMS, MR GARCIA SAID RESIDENT AND COMMUNITY GROUPS SHOULD SEIZE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE VIEWS AND SHARE EXPERIENCES ON MATTERS THAT AFFECT THEM AND ON BUILDING MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS.

+SEMINARS SUCH AS THIS ONE ARE GOOD OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK TOWARDS FINDING SOLUTIONS,+ HE SAID.

ABOUT 70 REPRESENTATIVES FROM AREA COMMITTEES, OWNERS CORPORATIONS AND MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES IN THE TAI HANG AND SO KON PO AREA ATTENDED THE SEMINAR.

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UC ANNUAL FOOD HYGIENE CAMPAIGN OPENS
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THE FOOD HYGIENE CAMPAIGN IS AN ANNUAL HEALTH EDUCATION FUNCTION ORGANISED BY THE URBAN COUNCIL AND THE MUNICIPAL SERVICES BRANCH EVERY SUMMER TO EDUCATE MANAGERIAL AND SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL OF LICENSED FOOD PREMISES, COOKED FOOD STALLS, CANTEENS AND CLUBS WITH CATERING SERVICE ON THE PRINCIPLES OF FOOD HYGIENE BY MEANS OF SEMINARS, FILM AND SLIDE PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION. THIS YEAR, THE CAMPAIGN WILL BE EXTENDED TO COVER THE NEW TERRITORIES, WITH THE HEALTH EDUCATION UNIT OF THE MUNICIPAL SERVICES BRANCH BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS LAUNCHING.

THE THEME FOR THIS YEAR'S CAMPAIGN IS 'FOOD POISONING AND ITS PREVENTION'. THE CAMPAIGN WILL COMMENCE AS FROM TODAY (JULY 24) AND LAST UNTIL THE END OF AUGUST. A SERIES OF 30 FOOD HYGIENE SEMINARS WILL BE ORGANISED AND CONDUCTED AT 17 CONVENIENTLY LOCATED CENTRES ALL OVER THE URBAN AREA AND THE NEW TERRITORIES.

MANAGERIAL AND SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL OF LICENSED FOOD PREMISES, COOKED FOOD STALLS, CANTEENS AND CLUBS WITH CATERING SERVICE WILL ALL BE INVITED TO ATTEND SEMINARS CONDUCTED BY DISTRICT CHIEF HEALTH INSPECTORS. SPECIALLY-TAILORED SLIDE AND FILM PRESENTATION WILL BE FEATURED TO SUPPLEMENT THE INFORMATION GIVEN AT THE SEMINARS. OPEN DISCUSSION WILL BE INTRODUCED TO ENABLE THE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, AND HANDOUTS WILL BE PROVIDED TO THE PARTICIPANTS FOR REFERENCE.

WITH THE CHANGE OF EATING HABITS AND THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW FOOD ITEMS, MORE COMPLICATED METHODS OF FOOD HANDLING AND COOKING ARE INVOLVED. THIS WOULD INDIRECTLY MEAN THAT THERE IS GREATER RISK FOR FOOD TO BE CONTAMINATED.

DURING THE HOT AND HUMID SUMMER, FOOD-BORNE DISEASES SUCH AS CHOLERA, TYPHOID FEVER, DYSENTERY, VIRAL HEPATITIS AND FOOD POISONING ARE EASILY TRANSMITTED THROUGH CONSUMPTION OF UNCLEAN FOOD.

AMONG THE FOOD-BORNE DISEASES, FOOD POISONING IS THE COMMONEST THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. FOOD POISONING IN ITS BROADEST SENSE MEANS THOSE ACUTE DISEASES WITH SUDDEN ONSET OF GASTRO-INTESTINAL DISTURBANCE FOLLOWING THE CONSUMPTION OF FOOD. IT INCLUDES THE ILL EFFECTS CAUSED BY THE CONSUMPTION OF NATURAL POISONOUS FOODS SUCH AS PUFFER FISH OR SOME POISONOUS FUNGI RESEMBLING MUSHROOMS.

/DURING THE

DURING THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THIS YEAR, THERE WERE 49 CASES OF FOOD POISONING INVOLVING MORE THAN 150 PEOPLE. THIS COMPARED WITH 41 CASES AFFECTING SOME 309 PEOPLE IN THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD LAST YEAR. OF THE POISONING CASES REPORTED THIS YEAR, 13 EACH TOOK PLACE IN LICENSED PREMISES/ RESTAURANTS AND DOMESTIC PREMISES, 15 IN HAWKER STALLS AND THE REST IN CANTEENS, ILLEGAL FOOD CATERING OUTLETS AND STORES.

PREVENTION OF FOOD POISONING IS ELEMENTARY. THE PRIMARY PREVENTIVE MEASURE IS STRICT OBSERVANCE OF ALL THE RULES OF FOOD HYGIENE WHILE IMMUNIZATION IS ONLY OF SECONDARY SIGNIFICANCE. PAYING ATTENTION TO PERSONAL HYGIENE, FOOD HYGIENE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE REMAIN TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT METHODS OF PREVENTION.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE USD SAID TODAY: +IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER TO WASH OUR HANDS EVERY TIME BEFORE WE TOUCH FOOD AND AFTER VISITING THE TOILET. IT IS MOST DESIRABLE TO MAKE WASHING HANDS A HABIT.

+MAKE PROPER USE OF THE REFRIGERATOR BY PUTTING ALL FOOD ITEMS INSIDE UNLESS THEY ARE REQUIRED FOR USE. COOK FOOD THOROUGHLY AND SERVE IT HOT. KEEP COLD DISHES UNDER REFRIGERATION UNTIL THEY ARE SERVED.

+DISCARD ALL FOOD REMNANTS. ALL REFUSE SHOULD BE PUT IN PROPER DUSTBINS LINED WITH STRONG PLASTIC BAGS BEFORE DISPOSAL. ALWAYS KEEP THE PLACE CLEAN AND AVOID INFESTATION BY PESTS AND RODENTS.+

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5-STAR BADGES FOR 42 STUDENTS

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UNOFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MRS RITA FAN, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) PRESENTED STAR BADGES TO 42 STUDENTS OF THE HOI PING CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SCHOOL FOR THEIR GOOD PERFORMANCE IN A PHYSICAL FITNESS AWARD SCHEME.

THE 5-STAR AWARD SCHEME, PART OF THIS YEAR'S SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMME, IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE HONG KONG AMATEUR ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION TO DEVELOP THE BASIC MOTOR ABILITIES IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN.

THE TESTS INCLUDE SUCH ITEMS AS STANDING LONG JUMP, SIT AND REACH, SHUTTLE RUN, SIT-UPS, STANDING BASKETBALL THROW AND 800-METRE RUN-WALK.

ONE OF THE TWO SESSIONS TO MEASURE THE ABILITY OF PARTICIPANTS WAS HELD TODAY (WEDNESDAY) AT THE LAI CHI KOK PARK INDOOR GAMES HALL. FIFTY STUDENTS OF THE HOI PING CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRIMARY SCHOOL WERE THE FIRST TO TAKE PART.

/PARTICIPANTS WHOSE

PARTICIPANTS WHOSE TOTAL SCORES IN THE TEST ITEMS REACHED THE PHYSICAL FITNESS NORMS SET BY THE ORGANISERS WERE PRESENTED WITH AWARDS.

DURING THE MEASUREMENT SESSION, MRS FAN WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE PHYSICAL FITNESS STANDARD OF HONG KONG YOUNGSTERS.

ACCOMPANYING MRS FAN WERE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMME CENTRAL CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE, MRS FANNY LAW- THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS), DR Y.F. KONG- AND PRINCIPAL INSPECTOR (PHYSICAL EDUCATION), MRS S.H. CHIU.

ALSO TAKING PART IN TODAY'S SESSION WERE THE TACK CHING PRIMARY SCHOOL, PO LEUNG KUK NO. 4 PRIMARY SCHOOL, TAI KOK TSUI CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, TUNG KUN FONG SHU CHUEN SCHOOL AND HEEP WOH PRIMARY SCHOOL.

THE SECOND MEASUREMENT SESSION WILL BE HELD ON JULY 30 AT THE OSMAN RAMJU SADICK MEMORIAL INDOOR GAMES HALL, TSUEN WAN.

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ILLEGAL STRUCTURES DEMOLISHED

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A TOTAL OF 23 ILLEGAL STRUCTURES IN CAUSEWAY BAY WERE TODAY (WEDNESDAY) DEMOLISHED AS PART OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT BOARD'S PROGRAMME TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE DISTRICT.

WORKERS FROM THE LANDS DEPARTMENT CARRIED OUT THE CLEARANCE OPERATION IN WUN SHA STREET AND LILY STREET. THE STRUCTURES WERE USED FOR STORAGE, COMMERCIAL AND DOMESTIC PURPOSES.

THE WORK WAS CARRIED OUT IN CO-ORDINATION WITH THE POLICE, THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE DISTRICT OFFICE.

THE OPERATION, WHICH IS CARRIED OUT EVERY THREE MONTHS, WAS PART OF A CONTINUOUS CLEARANCE PROGRAMME INITIATED BY THE DISTRICT BOARD.

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SPECIAL CAR NUMBERS OFFERED

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT WILL HOLD ANOTHER AUCTION OF SPECIAL CAR REGISTRATION NUMBERS ON SATURDAY (JULY 27) AT 10 AM IN THE CITY HALL RECITAL HALL.

THIRTY-EIGHT SPECIAL CAR NUMBERS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR BIDDING. THEY ARE:

DF1368	DE9902	DD22	AU8555	CT281
XX1608	HK1608	DF822	DF1668	DF1622
DE6186	DE3338	AU33	AW8555	DF1689
DF1500	DC99	BD8555	HK3388	AB7
DE4928	AX8555	CR18	BB8555	DF2888
DD9	DF281	DE8188	DF865	BM3096
AL8555	AT872	AP7700	AA2828	DE9668
AL173	BB731	CW33		

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID PAYMENT MUST BE MADE IN CASH OR BY CHEQUE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE BIDDING.

HE ALSO REMINDED BIDDERS THAT THE VEHICLE REGISTRATION NUMBER WOULD BE ASSIGNED ONLY TO A VEHICLE REGISTERED IN THE NAME OF THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER, WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF THE AUCTION.

PROCEEDS OF THE AUCTION WILL AS USUAL GO TO THE GOVERNMENT LOTTERIES FUND.

THE COMING AUCTION WILL BE THE 98TH ORGANISED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SINCE MAY 1973.

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22 PROTECTED BIRDS RELEASED

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THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT TODAY (WEDNESDAY) RELEASED 22 BIRDS OF THE PROTECTED SPECIES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THESE BIRDS INCLUDED 11 SPOTTED DOVES, NINE NIGHT HERONS, ONE WARBLER AND AN OWL.

MOST OF THE BIRDS WERE SEIZED DURING ROUTINE OPERATIONS BY THE POLICE AND HAWKER CONTROL OFFICERS EARLIER THIS MONTH WHILE THE OWL WAS INTERCEPTED BY CUSTOMS OFFICERS AT THE BORDER RECENTLY.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT REMINDED THE PUBLIC THAT ALL WILD BIRDS IN HONG KONG WERE PROTECTED UNDER THE WILD ANIMALS PROTECTION ORDINANCE.

+IT IS ILLEGAL TO HUNT, TRAP, POSSESS OR SELL PROTECTED BIRDS AND ANIMALS. VIOLATIONS MAY LEAD TO A MAXIMUM FINE OF \$5 000,+ HE WARNED.

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CENTRAL, WAN CHAI TRAFFIC CHANGES

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NO VEHICLES EXCEEDING 5.5 TONNES GROSS WILL BE ALLOWED TO ENTER ABERDEEN STREET BETWEEN GOUGH STREET AND WELLINGTON STREET IN CENTRAL FROM 1 PM ON SATURDAY (JULY 27) TO 6 AM ON MONDAY (JULY 29) TO FACILITATE ROAD WORK.

THE SAME MEASURE WILL BE REPEATED FROM 1 PM ON AUGUST 3 TO 6 AM ON AUGUST 5 AND FROM 1 PM ON AUGUST 10 TO 6 AM ON AUGUST 12.

DURING THE PERIOD, VEHICLES EXCEEDING 5.5 TONNES GROSS WILL BE DIVERTED TO GOUGH STREET, SHING WONG STREET AND HOLLYWOOD ROAD.

IN WAN CHAI, TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED TO FACILITATE DRAINAGE WORK.

THE SOUTHBOUND SLIP ROAD OF FLEMING ROAD BETWEEN GLOUCESTER ROAD AND LOCKHART ROAD WILL BE CLOSED FOR SIX CONSECUTIVE NIGHTS FROM FRIDAY (JULY 26), BETWEEN 10 PM AND 6 AM THE FOLLOWING DAY.

DURING THE CLOSURE, VEHICLES ON INNER GLOUCESTER ROAD WILL BE DIVERTED VIA STEWART ROAD AND LOCKHART ROAD TO REJOIN FLEMING ROAD SOUTHBOUND- WHILE JAFFE ROAD BETWEEN STEWART ROAD AND FLEMING ROAD WILL BE REROUTED TWO-WAYS.

THE NORTHBOUND SLIP ROAD OF FLEMING ROAD BETWEEN GLOUCESTER ROAD AND LOCKHART ROAD WILL BE CLOSED FOR SEVEN CONSECUTIVE NIGHTS FROM AUGUST 1, BETWEEN 10 PM AND 6 AM THE FOLLOWING DAY.

DURING THE CLOSURE, VEHICLES ON NORTHBOUND FLEMING ROAD WILL BE DIVERTED VIA LOCKHART ROAD AND LUARD ROAD TO REJOIN INNER GLOUCESTER ROAD- WHILE JAFFE ROAD BETWEEN O'BRIEN ROAD AND FLEMING ROAD WILL BE REROUTED TWO-WAYS.

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TAI PO ROAD SECTION CLOSED

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THE KOWLOON BOUND TAI PO ROAD (FANLING SECTION) WILL BE CLOSED ON JULY 27 AND 28 AND AUGUST 4 TO FACILITATE ROAD WORKS.

MOTORISTS HEADING FOR TAI PO OR KOWLOON ARE ADVISED TO USE JOCKEY CLUB ROAD.

KMB ROUTE 78K PLYING BETWEEN SHEUNG SHUI AND SHA TAU KOK WILL ALSO BE REROUTED TO JOCKEY CLUB ROAD.

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