



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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CONTENTS

PAGE NO.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

DTC, BANK BILLS BENEFIT ALL - BREMIDGE	1
POLICE FORCE (AMENDMENT) BILL PASSED	3
YOUTHS OFFERED WIDE RANGE OF FACILITIES	6
MESSAGE PLACES BILL SUPPORTED	8
UNOFFICIALS SUPPORT BAPTIST COLLEGE BILL	11
CRITERIA FOR TRANSLATING LAWS INTO CHINESE	12
PARENTS FREE TO CHOOSE: HAYE	13
ACCESS FOR DISABLED TO BUILDINGS STUDIED	14
SHARP WATCH FOR DOGS IN KOWLOON PARK	14
CHARGE ON PABX USERS EXPLAINED	15
NEW BILL MAKES PAWNBROKING EASIER	16
BIRTHS INCREASE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE POPULATION	16
EFFORT MADE TO IMPROVE SECURITY	17
BILL TO ENABLE KUK TO DISCHARGE DUTIES	18
NO AIDS REPORTED IN HONG KONG	19
WATCHMEN'S PARTICULARS CHECKED BY POLICE	19
POLICY ON HOODING OF SUSPECTS EXPLAINED	19

/EFFORTS CONSTANTLY



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

EFFORTS CONSTANTLY MADE TO IMPROVE ACCIDENT SERVICES	20
POLICY IS TO ASSIST SPORTS BODIES WITH FUNDS	21
ELEVEN BILLS PASSED	22
UNOFFICIALS PRAISED FOR LEGCO WORK	22
FREE MEDICAL CHECK-UP FOR OFFICE WORKERS	24
HONG KONG NOW +FERTILE LAND FOR ARTISTS+	24
NEW TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN KOWLOON AND NT	25
RCD MOVING TO HARBOUR CENTRE	26

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

DTC, BANK BILLS BENEFIT ALL - BREMRIDGE
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TWO BILLS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY WOULD PROVIDE IMPROVED LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES AND BANKS, TO THE INTERESTS OF DEPOSITORS AND THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE, SAID.

THE BILLS ARE THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983 AND THE BANKING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983.

ON MOVING THE SECOND READINGS OF THE BILLS, SIR JOHN SAID, +NO DOUBT AS THE YEARS GO BY WE SHALL FIND OTHER AREAS THAT REQUIRE IMPROVEMENT.+

A CAREFUL REVIEW OF THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ORDINANCE AND THE BANKING ORDINANCE HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT, AND PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THEM WERE CONTAINED IN THE BILLS, SIR JOHN POINTED OUT.

THESE AMENDMENTS INCLUDE SOME PROPOSALS WHICH ARISE PRINCIPALLY FROM EXPERIENCES AROUND THE TURN OF THIS YEAR, WHEN A SMALL NUMBER OF DTC'S FAILED.

+LET ME ADD EN PASSANT THAT DESPITE ALARMIST AND OFTEN IRRESPONSIBLE CRITICISM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE-TIERED BANKING SYSTEM HAS NOW BEEN COMPLETED AS PLANNED WITH LITTLE TROUBLE. OUR BANKING ARRANGEMENTS ARE SOUNDER AS A RESULT,+ HE SAID.

SIR JOHN THEN EXPLAINED THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE DTC ORDINANCE WHERE +THE NEED FOR ACTION WAS MOST CLEARLY IDENTIFIED+.

THE BILL PROVIDES FOR THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO SUSPEND A LICENCE IN THE SAME WAY AS THE COMMISSIONER OF DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES MAY ALREADY SUSPEND A REGISTRATION.

+I PROPOSE MOREOVER THAT ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH ARE GROUNDS FOR REVOCATION SHOULD ALSO BE GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION, WHETHER OF A REGISTRATION OR A LICENCE,+ HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THIS SHOULD AVOID A REPETITION OF AN AWKWARD SITUATION WHICH AROSE AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR, WHEN THE COMMISSIONER FOUND THAT HE COULD NOT SUSPEND A REGISTRATION DURING THE STATUTORY NOTICE PERIOD BEFORE REVOKING IT.

THE BILL ALSO AIMS TO CLARIFY AND TIGHTEN SOME OF THE RESTRICTIONS ON LENDING BY A DTC TO SINGLE CUSTOMERS OR GROUPINGS AND, PARTICULARLY IN THE CASE OF A REGISTERED DTC, TO DIRECTORS, THEIR RELATIVES AND CONNECTED ENTITIES.

IT CONTAINS A NEW PROVISION, GIVING THE COMMISSIONER DISCRETIONARY POWER TO LIMIT PLACEMENTS BY EITHER CATEGORY OF DTC'S WITH FOREIGN BANKS.

UNDER THE BILL, AN ENTIRELY NEW SECTION OF THE ORDINANCE IS PROPOSED, WHEREBY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY MAY APPOINT AN INSPECTOR TO INVESTIGATE THE AFFAIRS OF A DTC, OR A FORMER DTC, AND ITS DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED COMPANIES.

IT WILL BE THE DUTY OF ANYONE WHO POSSESSES RELEVANT INFORMATION, TO COOPERATE WITH THE INVESTIGATION.

+THE SCOPE OF SUCH AN INVESTIGATION IS THUS CONSIDERABLY WIDER THAN THAT OF ANY EXAMINATION WHICH THE COMMISSIONER IS PERMITTED TO UNDERTAKE, SINCE THE COMMISSIONER IS CONFINED TO EXAMINING AN EXISTING DTC AND ONLY ITS PERSONNEL,+ SIR JOHN EXPLAINED.

AT THE SAME TIME, A +MODEST BUT IMPORTANT+ RELAXATION OF THE SECRECY PROVISION WAS BEING MADE TO PERMIT THE DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS OR PROCEEDINGS, OR TO THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IN PARTICULAR INSTANCES, SIR JOHN SAID.

+I MUST EMPHASISE THAT THIS RELAXATION IS LIMITED TO WHAT I CONSIDER TO BE ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL FOR THE PROPER INVESTIGATION OF OFFENCES AND THE EXECUTION OF OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO DEPOSITORS.

+IN GENERAL, DTC'S AND THEIR CUSTOMERS CAN REST ASSURED THAT THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THEIR DEALINGS WILL CONTINUE TO BE ZEALOUSLY SAFEGUARDED,+ HE STRESSED.

ANOTHER NEW PROPOSAL IS THAT AN AUDITOR SHOULD REPORT TO THE COMMISSIONER IF, IN THE COURSE OF HIS DUTIES AS AUDITOR, HE BECOMES AWARE OF ANYTHING WHICH MAY ADVERSELY AFFECT THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE DTC TO A MATERIAL EXTENT, OR IF HE DISCOVERS CONTRAVENTIONS OF CERTAIN AREAS OF THE ORDINANCE.

HE NOTED THAT HE WAS AWARE THE ACCOUNTANCY PROFESSION HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL.

+I WELL UNDERSTAND THEIR PREFERENCE FOR THEIR DUTY REMAINING SOLELY TO THE SHAREHOLDERS WHO APPOINT THEM.

+BUT I REALLY CANNOT ACCEPT THAT THIS MODEST REQUIREMENT, BASED ON EXISTING PRECEDENT AND AIMED AT ACHIEVING THE TIMELY REPORTING OF PROBLEMS, PARTICULARLY ONES THAT MAY HAVE ARISEN SINCE THE COMMISSIONER'S EXAMINERS WERE LAST LOOKING AT THE COMPANY, WILL IMPOSE A SIGNIFICANT BURDEN ON AN AUDITOR.

+MOREOVER, IT IS DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT THAT TIMELY REPORTING TO THE COMMISSIONER IS LIKELY TO BE CONTRARY TO THE INTERESTS OF THE MAJORITY OF SHAREHOLDER,+ SIR JOHN SAID.

THE PROVISION, HE ADDED, WAS +SURELY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE COMMUNITY+.

AS FOR THE BANKING (AMENDMENT) BILL, IT +MERELY INCORPORATES THOSE PROVISIONS OF THE DTC (AMENDMENT) BILL WHICH IT SEEMS APPROPRIATE TO APPLY ALSO TO BANKS+, SIR JOHN SAID.

THESE INCLUDED CLARIFICATION AND +MODEST TIGHTENING+ OF CERTAIN LIMITATIONS ON LENDING, THE PROVISION FOR AN INSPECTOR TO BE APPOINTED TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, +ESSENTIAL BUT VERY LIMITED+ EASING OF THE SECRECY RULES AND THE SAME PROPOSAL REGARDING AUDITORS, HE ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILLS WAS ADJOURNED TO OCTOBER 12.

POLICE FORCE (AMENDMENT) BILL PASSED
* * * *

THE CONVENER OF THE LEGISLATION SCRUTINY GROUP OF UNOFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS, THE HON PETER C. WONG, TODAY SUPPORTED THE POLICE FORCE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, SUBJECT TO THREE AMENDMENTS PROPOSED BY UNOFFICIALS.

THREE OTHER UNOFFICIALS, THE HON ANDREW SO, THE HON BILL BROWN AND THE HON MARIA TAM, SPOKE DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL.

MR BROWN AND MISS TAM ALSO SUPPORTED THE MOTION WHILE MR SO ABSTAINED FROM VOTING.

MR WONG SAID THAT UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS GENERALLY SUPPORTED THE BILL.

HE SAID THAT, HOWEVER, AFTER CONSULTATION, THE ADMINISTRATION HAD AGREED TO CERTAIN AMENDMENTS WHICH WERE MOVED BY MISS MARIA TAM AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE.

+MR ANDREW SO OPPOSES THE BILL IN PRINCIPLE,+ HE SAID.

MR WONG EXPLAINED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE BILL WAS TO FACILITATE THE INVESTIGATION OF INDICTABLE OFFENCES.

MR WONG SAID: +VERY OFTEN PROCEEDS RESULTING FROM CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES ARE DEPOSITED IN BANKS OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES, AND STOLEN OR ILLEGAL GOODS ARE KEPT IN SAFETY DEPOSIT BOXES OR OTHERWISE HELD IN THE SAFE CUSTODY OF A BANK.

+THE BILL THEREFORE SEEKS TO CONFER POWER ON THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE TO REQUIRE BANKS AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES TO INFORM HIM WHETHER A SPECIFIED PERSON HAS OR HAD AN ACCOUNT WITH THE BANK OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY OR HAS PLACED A SAFETY DEPOSIT BOX OR OTHER THING WITH A BANK.+

MR WONG POINTED OUT THAT THE BILL DID NOT CONFER POWER ON THE COMMISSIONER TO ASK FOR INFORMATION REGARDING THE PRECISE NATURE OF THE ACCOUNTS, SAFETY DEPOSIT BOXES OR STORED ITEMS.

THESE WILL CONTINUE TO REQUIRE THE PRESENTATION OF A SEARCH WARRANT ISSUED BY A MAGISTRATE.

THE INFORMATION LAID BEFORE A MAGISTRATE FOR THE APPLICATION OF A WARRANT MUST BE PRECISE, AND HENCE IT IS ESSENTIAL TO KNOW WHETHER A SUSPECTED PERSON HAS OR HAD AN ACCOUNT WITH A PARTICULAR BANK OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY.

THE SAME PRECISE INFORMATION APPLIES TO APPLICATIONS FOR SEARCH WARRANTS RELATING TO SAFETY DEPOSIT BOXES AND OTHER STORED ITEMS, MR WONG SAID.

MR BROWN SAID THAT VIEWS WERE EXPRESSED THAT PROPOSALS IN THE POLICE FORCE (AMENDMENT) BILL WOULD HURT HONG KONG'S PRESTIGE AS A LEADING FINANCIAL CENTRE.

/IN ADDITION,

IN ADDITION, ARGUMENTS HAD BEEN ADVANCED THAT IT WOULD INFRINGE UPON THE RIGHTS AND THE FREEDOM OF THE CUSTOMERS OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN HONG KONG.

MR BROWN SAID: +DECLARING MY INTEREST AS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS, I CAN SAY THAT THE BANKING INDUSTRY DOES NOT SHARE THESE VIEWS, NOR DOES IT BELIEVE THE OTHER ARGUMENTS PUT FORWARD HAVE ANY SUBSTANCE.

+IN THE FIRST INSTANCE THE ONLY PERSONS WHO CAN BE AFFECTED BY THIS LEGISLATION ARE THOSE SUSPECTED OF HAVING COMMITTED AN INDICTABLE OFFENCE, AND EVEN THEN THE POLICE FORCE IS ONLY EMPOWERED TO ENQUIRE WHETHER A BANK OR A DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY MAINTAINS AN ACCOUNT OR HOLDS ARTICLES IN SAFE CUSTODY FOR THE SUSPECTED PERSON.+

HE POINTED OUT THAT SAFEGUARDS AGAINST ABUSE WERE BUILT INTO THE BILL INSOFAR THAT THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE MAY ONLY DELEGATE HIS POWERS TO OFFICERS OF THE RANK OF ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OR ABOVE.

IT IS ONLY WHEN OFFICERS OF THIS SENIOR RANK ARE SATISFIED THAT A SUSPECT HAS COMMITTED AN INDICTABLE OFFENCE THAT THEIR APPROVAL CAN BE GIVEN TO MAKE ENQUIRIES.

MR BROWN SAID: +IT SEEMS TO BE A COMMON BELIEF THAT PROCEEDS OF CRIMES ARE LAUNDERED THROUGH ACCOUNTS HELD IN BANKS AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES IN HONG KONG, ALTHOUGH THERE IS VERY LITTLE REAL EVIDENCE THAT THIS IS DONE ON ANY SIGNIFICANT SCALE.

+HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE SILLY TO SUGGEST THAT THIS DOES NOT HAPPEN IN SOME CASES, AND OUR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ARE MORE THAN HAPPY TO CO-OPERATE WITH THE POLICE FORCE IF IT ASSISTS IN THEIR FIGHT AGAINST CRIME.

+SHOULD THIS BILL RESULT IN CRIMINALS BEING LESS WILLING TO CONDUCT THEIR BUSINESS THROUGH HONG KONG, THEN THE ONLY BUSINESS WE WOULD LOSE IS BUSINESS WE WOULD RATHER NOT HAVE.+

MISS TAM SAID: +IN EXAMINING THE CONTENTS AND PROPOSALS IN THIS BILL, THE LEGISLATION SCRUTINY GROUP MEMBERS HAVE TAKEN PARTICULAR CARE TO ENSURE THAT THE POLICE IS NOT GIVEN EXCESSIVE POWER AND THAT ANY DANGER OF ABUSE SHOULD BE REDUCED TO THE MINIMUM.

+ON THE OTHER HAND, CRIME DETECTION HAS TO BE BACKED UP BY PROPER AUTHORITY IN ORDER TO BE EFFECTIVE IN ITS OPERATION.+

THE SAFEGUARDS AGAINST ABUSE INCLUDE:

- * BEFORE THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE CAN ISSUE A NOTICE TO THE BANK OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY, THERE HAS TO BE EVIDENCE TO SHOW AN INDICTABLE AND THEREFORE SERIOUS OFFENCE (I.E. AN OFFENCE PUNISHABLE BY THREE YEARS IMPRISONMENT OR MORE ON CONVICTION) HAS BEEN COMMITTED.
- * THERE IS A PARTICULAR PERSON SUSPECTED OF HAVING COMMITTED THAT OFFENCE.

- * THE DISCLOSURE REQUIRED OF THE BANK OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY MUST RELATE TO THE SAME PERSON UNDER SUSPICION AND NO ONE ELSE.
- * BANK OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY NEEDS ONLY DISCLOSE WHETHER THAT SAME PERSON HAS ACCESS TO ANY SAFE DEPOSIT BOX OR ACCOUNT. THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DISCLOSE DETAILS.
- * THE COMMISSIONER MUST APPLY TO A MAGISTRATE FOR A WARRANT IF HE WISHES TO GET SUCH DETAILS FROM THE BANK OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY UNDER SECTION 50(7) OF THE POLICE FORCE ORDINANCE.
- * THE POWER GIVEN IN THIS BILL MUST BE EXERCISED BY A POLICE OFFICER OR AN OFFICER OF THE CUSTOM AND EXCISE SERVICE NOT BELOW THE RANK OF ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER WHO IS AUTHORISED IN WRITING BY HIS COMMISSIONER IN THAT BEHALF.

MISS TAM SAID: +HENCE THE POWER OF INVESTIGATION IS RESTRICTED TO A PARTICULAR PERSON'S INVOLVEMENT IN A PARTICULAR CRIME.+

SHE SAID THAT IN PART III OF THE PREVENTION OF BRIBERY ORDINANCE CAP 201, THERE WERE IN FACT FAR MORE EXTENSIVE POWER OF INVESTIGATION THAN WHAT WAS PROPOSED IN THIS BILL.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THIS BILL SUGGESTED BY MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATION SCRUTINY GROUP ARE:-

- * UNDER SECTION 67(1), THE PERIOD SPECIFIED FOR COMPLIANCE WITH A NOTICE FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE SHOULD BE MODIFIED FROM +WITHIN SUCH PERIOD AS MAY BE SO SPECIFIED+ TO ALLOW FOR A +REASONABLE+ PERIOD FOR COMPLIANCE;
- * UNDER SECTION 67(5)(I) AND (II), THE PENALTY FOR ANY BANK OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE IN FAILING TO COMPLY WITH THE NOTICE ISSUED UNDER SECTION 67(1) OR GIVING FALSE INFORMATION SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM THREE YEARS IMPRISONMENT TO ONE YEAR ON A CONVICTION ON INDICTMENT, AND FROM ONE YEAR TO SIX MONTHS IMPRISONMENT ON SUMMARY CONVICTION; AND
- * UNDER SECTION 67(6)(I) AND (II), THE PENALTY FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO WILFULLY CAUSES OR PROCURES THE BANK OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY NOT TO COMPLY WITH A SECTION 67(1) NOTICE IS ALSO REDUCED BY THE SAME SCALE AS (B) ABOVE.

MR SO SAID: +I CONSIDER IT UNWISE TO SACRIFICE THE STATUS OF HONG KONG AS AN INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE ONLY FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF CATCHING A FEW MORE VILLAINS AS MORE HARM THAN GOOD WOULD BE DONE.

+IT IS NOT BY SHEER GOOD LUCK THAT HONG KONG MANAGES TO ACHIEVE HER PRESENT STATUS AS AN INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE.

+THERE ARE MANY FACTORS ATTRIBUTABLE TO HER SUCCESS, AMONG WHICH ARE CONFIDENTIALITY IN BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS AND TRUST PLACED BY THE CLIENTELE.+

/HE SAID

HE SAID THAT WITH THE PROGRESS OF ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY, THERE WERE RAPID CHANGES IN THE WAY BANKS HANDLE BUSINESS OR KEEP THEIR DATA.

THE DAY OF 'DOING AWAY WITH CASH AND BILLS' WOULD COME SOONER THAN WAS EXPECTED, HE SAID.

THROUGH THE COMPUTER SYSTEM, NOT ONLY WOULD INTER-BANK CONNECTION BE STRENGTHENED, CREDIT COMPANIES, RETAILERS AND CONSUMERS WOULD ALSO BE LINKED UP IN AN EXTENSIVE INFORMATION NETWORK.

+CONFIDENTIALITY IN BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS AND TRUST OF THE CLIENTELE WILL HAVE TO BE MORE HIGHLY STRESSED,+ MR SO SAID.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON PATRICK WILLIAMSON, EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR THE SUPPORT GIVEN BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS TO THE BILL AND FOR THE AMENDMENTS SUGGESTED BY MISS MARIA TAM.

+WHILE APPRECIATING THE WHOLLY COMMENDABLE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY MR ANDREW SO THAT WE SHOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH THE CONFIDENTIALITY THAT IS A NECESSARY PART OF LEGITIMATE BUSINESS, I FULLY ENDORSE THE CONVICTION EXPRESSED BY MR BROWN THAT THE BILL WILL NOT JEOPARDISE THIS CONFIDENTIALITY: IT WILL ONLY PUT AT RISK THOSE WHOSE BUSINESS IS CRIME,+ MR WILLIAMSON SAID.

THE BILL, INCORPORATING THE AMENDMENTS, WAS MOVED BY MR WILLIAMSON THROUGH THE COMMITTEE STAGE AND THE FINAL READING.

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YOUTHS OFFERED WIDE RANGE OF FACILITIES

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A WIDE RANGE OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IS AVAILABLE TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN COUNTRY PARKS, THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, DR THE HON JOHN RIDDELL-SWAN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THESE FACILITIES CATERED FOR ALL NEEDS, FROM THE SEDENTARY TO THE VERY ACTIVE, AND TOOK INTO ACCOUNT THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF THE HANDICAPPED, HE ADDED.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HENRY HU ON WHAT RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WERE AVAILABLE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRY PARKS, DR RIDDELL-SWAN ALSO SAID BASIC FACILITIES SUCH AS BARBECUE PITS AND PICNIC BENCHES — AND THERE ARE MORE THAN 2 600 OF EACH — ARE SITED THROUGHOUT THE PARKS.

+THESE ARE BY FAR THE MOST POPULAR FACILITIES WITH THE EIGHT MILLION PEOPLE WHO VISIT THE PARKS EACH YEAR. MANY OF THE BIGGER PICNIC AND BARBECUE SITES HAVE RAIN SHELTERS, TOILETS AND RECREATIONAL AREAS FOR CHILDREN,+ HE SAID.

/A NUMBER

A NUMBER OF THESE FACILITIES HAD BEEN SO DESIGNED THAT THEY COULD BE ENJOYED BY THE HANDICAPPED AND THE ABLE-BODIED ALIKE.

DR RIDDELL-SWAN SAID CAMPING WAS BECOMING AN INCREASING POPULAR RECREATION AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE AND 31 PERMANENT CAMP SITES COMPLETE WITH TOILETS, AND IN SOME CASES SHOWERS, AND PICNIC FACILITIES WERE SITUATED IN SUITABLE AREAS WITHIN THE PARKS.

TO CATER FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN HILL-WALKING, THERE WAS A NETWORK OF 130 KILOMETRES OF FOOTPATHS, MOSTLY WAY-POSTED AND INCLUDING THE POPULAR MACLEHOSE TRAIL. THERE WERE ALSO NATURE TRAILS, EDUCATIONAL WALKS, FITNESS TRAILS AND JOGGING TRAILS PROVIDED FOR VISITORS WITH SPECIAL INTERESTS.

SOME 2 000 YOUNG PEOPLE TAKE PART IN FORESTRY WORK CAMPS ORGANISED EACH YEAR BY THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. AT THESE CAMPS THE YOUNG PEOPLE SPEND A WEEK OR SO ENJOYING THE COUNTRYSIDE WHILE LEARNING ABOUT IT AND CONTRIBUTING TO ITS CARE.

ON THE FUTURE, DR RIDDELL-SWAN SAID, +THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL FACILITIES IN COUNTRY PARKS IS A CONTINUING, ONGOING PROCEDURE AND ON THIS, I RECEIVE VALUABLE ADVICE FROM THE COUNTRY PARKS BOARD.+

HE SAID 21 NEW RANGER POSTS, THREE LARGE PUBLIC TOILETS -- TWO OF WHICH HAVE BEEN SPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR THE HANDICAPPED -- AND THE FIRST MAJOR PURPOSE BUILT VISITOR CENTRE WERE UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

ADDITIONAL CAMP SITES, PICNIC PLACES, BARBECUE PITS AND PLAY FACILITIES WERE BEING PROVIDED AND EXISTING WORN-OUT AREAS AND OVER-USED FACILITIES WERE BEING REGULARLY REDEVELOPED AND REFURBISHED.

DR RIDDELL-SWAN SAID TWO LONG DISTANCE HIKING TRAILS -- ONE AROUND HONG KONG ISLAND AND THE OTHER AROUND LANTAU ISLAND -- WERE AT AN ADVANCED STAGE OF PLANNING.

HE ADDED THAT CONSIDERATION WAS BEING GIVEN, TOGETHER WITH THE COMMISSIONER FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF SPECIAL CYCLING TRACKS AND DISCUSSION WAS BEING HELD WITH THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB ABOUT PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR HORSE RIDING.

+IT IS HOPED THAT OVER THE NEXT FOUR TO FIVE YEARS, FOUR NEW VISITOR CENTRES WILL BE PROVIDED AND BASIC RECREATIONAL FACILITIES INTRODUCED TO TWO NEW AREAS AT MA ON SHAN AND NORTHERN TAI LAM CHUNG,+ SAID DR RIDDELL-SWAN.

DETAILS OF ALL FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN THE COUNTRY PARKS ARE PROVIDED IN A WIDE SELECTION OF LEAFLETS OBTAINABLE FREE OF CHARGE FROM THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES OUTLETS AND FROM THE VISITOR CENTRES AND RANGER POSTS IN THE COUNTRY PARKS.

MESSAGE PLACES BILL SUPPORTED

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THE MESSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS BILL WAS DEFINITELY A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, UNOFFICIAL MEMBER THE HON PETER C WONG SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR WONG, CONVENER OF THE LEGISLATION SCRUTINY GROUP OF UNOFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS, WAS SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING.

TWO OTHER UNOFFICIALS, REV THE HON JOYCE M BENNETT AND THE HON MRS SELINA CHOW ALSO SPOKE IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION.

MR WONG PRAISED THE WORKING PARTY OF THE HOME AFFAIRS BRANCH FOR +SOME POSITIVE AND CLEAR THINKING+.

AT PRESENT, MESSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS COME UNDER THE MISCELLANEOUS LICENCES ORDINANCE, ENACTED 50 YEARS AGO.

MR WONG SAID: +OBVIOUSLY, THIS ORDINANCE AND THE REGULATIONS MADE THEREUNDER, THOUGH REVISED AND UP-DATED ON NO LESS THAN 14 AND 31 OCCASIONS RESPECTIVELY, ARE HOPELESSLY OUT OF DATE AND BADLY IN NEED OF REPLACEMENT.

+CIRCUMSTANCES TO-DAY REQUIRE A MORE SOPHISTICATED SYSTEM OF LICENSING AND CONTROL, AND THIS IS WHAT THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION SEEKS TO ESTABLISH.+

HE SAID THE LEGISLATION SCRUTINY GROUP OF THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS WERE IN GENERAL AGREEMENT WITH THE NEW PROPOSAL.

+DETAILED CONSULTATIONS WITH THE ADMINISTRATION RESULTED IN FIVE AGREED AMENDMENTS, MOST OF WHICH ARE OF A TECHNICAL NATURE,+ HE SAID.

MR WONG POINTED OUT THAT THE ADVANTAGES OF THE NEW SYSTEM WERE MANY. AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION WILL:-

- * PROVIDE MORE EFFECTIVE AND FLEXIBLE CONTROL OF MESSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS.
- * MAKE IT EASIER TO PROSECUTE UNLICENSED MESSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS AND PROVIDE HEAVIER PENALTIES FOR REPEATED OFFENCES.
- * ALLOW FOR FLEXIBILITY REGARDING HOURS OF OPERATION. THE LICENSING AUTHORITY, HOWEVER, WILL ONLY FIX THE HOURS OF OPERATION AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE DISTRICT OFFICERS THROUGH THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION. GOVERNMENT HAS AGREED TO GIVE AN UNDERTAKING TO THIS EFFECT.
- * DISALLOW FUTURE APPLICATIONS FOR LICENCES IN RESPECT OF MESSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS LOCATED IN DOMESTIC PREMISES. THE FEW LICENSED ESTABLISHMENTS ALREADY IN SUCH PREMISES WILL BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN BUT THEY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO BENEFIT FROM THE NEW RULES.

/* IMPOSE

- * IMPOSE DUTIES OF PERSONAL SUPERVISION ON LICENSEES.
- * PROVIDE FOR APPEAL TO THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL BY ANY PERSON AGGRIEVED BY A DECISION OF THE LICENSING AUTHORITY.
- * ALLOW THE ADMINISTRATION OF MASSAGE BY MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITE SEX.

ON THE LAST POINT, MR WONG SAID THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY HAD RIGHTLY STRESSED THAT CLIENTS SHOULD BE GIVEN THE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE AND THAT IF IT WAS USED AS A COVER FOR VICE, POLICE WOULD TAKE ACTION UNDER THE CRIMES ORDINANCE.

+CAREFUL CONSIDERATION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THIS NEW RULE AND THE CONSENSUS IS THAT SINCE MASSAGE PER SE BY MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITE SEX IS SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE IN MOST PARTS OF THE WORLD, THERE IS NO REASON WHY IT SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED IN HONG KONG.

+IT IS NOT THOUGHT THAT THE RELAXATION WOULD GIVE RISE TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR VICE OR CORRUPTION,+ HE SAID.

MR WONG SAID THAT TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF THE NEW SYSTEM, THE LICENSING AUTHORITY MUST ADMINISTER IT IN SUCH A MANNER THAT IT WILL REFLECT THE SPIRIT OF THE NEW LEGISLATION.

+WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF MORE REALISTIC RULES, IT IS ENVISAGED THAT BONA FIDE MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS, WHICH AT THE MOMENT ARE NOT LICENSED, WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO COME FORWARD AND APPLY FOR A LICENCE UNDER THE NEW LEGISLATION,+ SAID MR WONG.

MISS BENNETT SAID SHE WAS GLAD THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONTINUING TO TIGHTEN CONTROL OVER SUCH ESTABLISHMENTS WHICH IN THE PAST HAD TOO EASILY BECOME COVERS FOR VICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

+HOWEVER WE MUST REMAIN DETERMINED TO STAMP OUT ALL UNDESIRABLE UNLAWFUL ESTABLISHMENTS, WHICH HAVE LURED MEN AND WOMEN INTO LIVES THAT ARE UNWHOLESOME AND BY LAW OF THIS TERRITORY TERMED ILLEGAL.

+I AM DELIGHTED TO SEE THAT THIS BILL WILL MAKE IT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE LICENSEE TO SHAKE OFF RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT GOES ON AT THE PREMISES OF WHICH HE IS THE LICENSEE,+ SHE SAID.

MISS BENNETT NOTED THAT THE LEVEL OF FINES WAS TO BE INCREASED, SO THAT THE PAYMENT OF THE FINE COULD NOT BE REGARDED BY THE PROPRIETOR AS A REGULAR OVERHEAD OF THE BUSINESS.

+I BELIEVE CLAUSE 8 WILL PROVIDE THE LICENSING AUTHORITY SUFFICIENT POWER TO REVOKE, SUSPEND OR REFUSE TO RENEW THE LICENCE OF ANY ESTABLISHMENT RUN CONTRARY TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST,+ SHE SAID.

MISS BENNETT DESCRIBED AS +GOOD NEWS+ THAT FUTURE APPLICATIONS FOR LICENCE WOULD NOT BE GRANTED IN RESPECT OF MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS LOCATED IN DOMESTIC PREMISES. +BUT IT ALSO REVEALS HOW LAX HAS BEEN OUR CONTROL OF THE USES TO WHICH DOMESTIC PREMISES ARE FREQUENTLY PUT.

/+THIS IS

+THIS IS A MATTER OF CONCERN AS THE SMALL AND POWERLESS TENANTS OF OTHER FLATS IN THE SAME BUILDING OFTEN FIND THEMSELVES POWERLESS TO PREVENT FLATS IN THEIR BLOCK BEING USED IN BREACH OF THE CONDITIONS OF THE GRANT OF THE SITE.

+I WOULD LIKE TO PLACE ON RECORD THE NEED FOR FURTHER WORK TO BE DONE TO CLEAN UP OTHER DOMESTIC PREMISES.

+I THINK WE SHOULD ALSO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK A NUMBER OF DISTRICT BOARDS FOR TAKING ACTION IN THESE MATTERS AND TO ENCOURAGE OTHER DISTRICT BOARDS ALSO TO CLEAR VICE ESTABLISHMENTS FROM OUR TERRITORY,+ MISS BENNETT SAID.

MRS CHOW SAID THE BILL +REDEFINES IN LEGAL TERMS THE OPERATION OF MASSAGE PARLOURS AND RENDERS THE CONTROL OF SUCH ESTABLISHMENTS MUCH MORE REALISTIC AND ENFORCEABLE+.

INITIALLY, SHE HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT CERTAIN OF THE POINTS CONTAINED IN THIS BILL, STEMMING MAINLY FROM THE DISCRETIONARY POWER THAT THE BILL PROVIDED FOR THE LICENSING AUTHORITY TO IMPOSE OPTIONAL LICENSING CONDITIONS.

+THE ADMINISTRATION HAS SINCE EXPLAINED THAT THE IMPOSITION OF SUCH CONDITIONS NEED TO BE GIVEN FLEXIBILITY TO COVER VARYING CIRCUMSTANCES.

+WE HAVE ALSO BEEN INFORMED THAT THE DISTRICT OFFICERS CONCERNED WILL ALSO BE CONSULTED FROM TIME TO TIME WHEN IMPOSITION OF OPTIONAL CONDITIONS IS BEING CONSIDERED.

+HOWEVER AS THERE IS NO LEGAL PROVISION TO NECESSITATE SUCH CONSULTATION, THE ADMINISTRATION HAS AGREED TO UPDATE MEMBERS ON OPTIONAL CONDITIONS AS AND WHEN THEY ARE ADDED ONTO THE LIST.

+THIS HAS GONE SOME WAY TOWARDS ALLAYING MY WORRIES, BUT I WOULD URGE THE ADMINISTRATION TO BE EXTREMELY CAUTIOUS TO PREVENT ABUSE AS WELL AS INCONSISTENCY,+ MRS CHOW SAID.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON PATRICK WILLIAMSON, THANKED THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF THE BILL AND FOR THE CARE WITH WHICH THEY HAD SCRUTINISED ITS PROVISION.

HE SAID THE AMENDMENTS TO THE BILL MENTIONED BY MR PETER WONG HAD HIS FULL SUPPORT, THEY INCLUDED ONE SIGNIFICANT CHANGE: THAT PROVIDED FOR THE MANDATORY REVOCATION OF A LICENCE HELD BY A LICNSEE WHO HAD BEEN CONVICTED OF AN OFFENCE RELATING TO VICE ESTABLISHMENTS UNDER THE CRIMES ORDINANCE.

+THIS IS A NEW PROVISION WHICH REFLECTS OUR RESOLVE TO STOP THE USE OF MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS AS COVERS FOR VICE ACTIVITIES,+ HE ADDED.

NOTING THAT BOTH MRS CHOW AND MR PETER WONG HAD DRAWN ATTENTION TO THE NEED FOR THE LICENSING AUTHORITY TO CONSULT THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION WHEN FIXING THE CONDITIONS TO BE APPLIED TO ANY PARTICULAR LICENCE, MR WILLIAMSON TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO REASSURE MEMBERS THAT THIS WOULD INVARIABLY BE DONE.

HE WAS PLEASED THAT MRS CHOW ALSO SUPPORTED THE BILL, HE SAID.

+OPTIONAL CONDITIONS ARE INDEED NECESSARY TO MEET PARTICULAR REQUIREMENTS. I CONFIRM THAT THE LICENSING AUTHORITY WILL REGULARLY PASS TO UMELCO LISTS OF THE OPTIONAL CONDITIONS THAT HAVE BEEN IMPOSED.+

HE SAID ALSO THAT, IN ENDORSING THE BILL, MISS BENNETT DREW ATTENTION TO THE MORE GENERAL QUESTION OF LEASE ENFORCEMENT IN DOMESTIC BUILDINGS. +I WILL ENSURE THAT HER VIEWS ARE DRAWN TO THE ATTENTION OF THE APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENTS, +HE SAID.

THE BILL, WHEN AMENDED WOULD REPRESENT A SMALL BUT VERY SENSIBLE IMPROVEMENT IN THE CONTINUED EFFORTS TO BRING HONG KONG'S LAWS UP TO DATE, HE SAID.

+FOR THIS REASON ALONE IT MERITS SUPPORT,+ MR WILLIAMSON SAID.

THE BILL WAS APPROVED WITH AMENDMENTS.

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UNOFFICIALS SUPPORT BAPTIST COLLEGE BILL
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INSTITUTIONS THAT WERE OFFERED MORE GOVERNMENT AID BUT REFUSED IT ON GROUNDS OF INCREASED GOVERNMENT CONTROL WERE DEPRIVING THEIR STUDENTS OF BETTER FACILITIES AND OF BETTER EDUCATION, AN UNOFFICIAL MEMBER, THE REV THE HON JOYCE BENNETT, SAID TODAY.

SHE WAS SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE HONG KONG BAPTIST COLLEGE BILL 1983 AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING.

ANOTHER UNOFFICIAL, DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI, ALSO SPOKE IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION.

MISS BENNETT PRAISED THE BAPTIST COLLEGE FOR TAKING A LEAD IN ALLOWING ITSELF TO SUBMIT TO THE NEW BILL.

+I AM SURE THE COLLEGE AND ITS STUDENTS WILL BENEFIT FROM IT.

+I URGE OTHER CAPUT SCHOOLS TO FOLLOW THEIR EXAMPLE AND TO TAKE UP THE FULL AID WHICH IS STILL OPEN TO THEM,+ SHE SAID.

MISS BENNETT STRESSED THAT THE BILL WOULD NOT REDUCE THE COLLEGE'S CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE AND ITS CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY OF THE EDUCATION OF THE WHOLE MAN.

+I WISH TO PLACE ON RECORD MY BELIEF THAT IN THIS FREE AND OPEN SOCIETY WHICH WE ENJOY IN HONG KONG TODAY CHRISTIAN OR OTHER RELIGIOUS BODIES DO NOT NEED TO WORRY WHEN THEIR INSTITUTIONS RECEIVE MORE GOVERNMENT AID AND FIND THEMSELVES CONTROLLED BY CODES OF AID.

/+ALL RELIGIOUS

+ALL RELIGIOUS BODIES IN HONG KONG HAVE TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITIES TO INFLUENCE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THEIR GOOD.

+REGULATIONS AND CODES OF AID ARE INTRODUCED TO ENSURE THAT PUBLIC MONEY IS NOT USED WASTEFULLY, UNMORALLY OR ILLEGALLY.

+CLEARLY BAPTIST COLLEGE AND THE OTHER INSTITUTIONS TO WHICH I HAVE REFERRED DO NOT WISH TO MISUSE PUBLIC MONEY- THEY DESIRE THE GOOD OF THEIR STUDENTS,+ SHE SAID.

MISS BENNETT SAID THAT BAPTIST COLLEGE DESERVED TO BE UPGRADED AND PLACED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE.

DR HO KAM-FAI SAID THAT THE BILL WOULD LEAD TO THE PROVISION OF A BETTER TRAINED MANPOWER TO HONG KONG'S COMMUNITY AND THE ASPIRATIONS OF ITS YOUNG PEOPLE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION BEING MET.

+FIRSTLY, THE BILL INTRODUCES A LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK WHEREBY THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE COLLEGE WILL BE BROUGHT IN LINE WITH OTHER PUBLICLY FUNDED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS.

+WITH THAT THE STATUS OF THE COLLEGE WILL BE CONSIDERABLY ENHANCED,+ HE SAID.

TO THE STUDENTS, THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLLEGE WILL WIDEN THEIR OPPORTUNITIES FOR A RECOGNISED HIGHER EDUCATION; TO THE COLLEGE, IT WILL ENABLE STUDENTS OF THE HIGHER CALIBRE TO BE ATTRACTED.

+SECONDLY, PUBLIC FUNDS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE BAPTIST COLLEGE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE.

+THIS STEADY SOURCE OF FUNDING WILL ALLOW THE COLLEGE TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN A HIGH QUALITY TEACHING STAFF AND TO BUILD UP A WELL-STOCKED LIBRARY.

+BOTH IMPROVEMENTS WILL NOT ONLY BENEFIT THE STUDENTS IN THE COLLEGE, BUT ALSO CONSOLIDATE ITS STANDING AS AN INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC INSTITUTION,+ DR HO SAID.

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CRITERIA FOR TRANSLATING LAWS INTO CHINESE

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THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE IN DECIDING WHETHER A CERTAIN PIECE OF LEGISLATION SHOULD BE TRANSLATED INTO CHINESE IS WHETHER IT IS CONSIDERED TO BE OF WIDE PUBLIC INTEREST TO ENABLE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE LAW BY THOSE AFFECTED BY IT.

THIS WAS STATED TODAY IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON DAVID AKERS-JONES, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON WONG LAM.

/UNDER THIS

UNDER THIS PRINCIPLE, A NUMBER OF LAWS AND SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATIONS HAD BEEN TRANSLATED INTO CHINESE LARGELY IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC REQUESTS BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, MR AKERS-JONES SAID.

THE TRANSLATED CHINESE VERSION IS SOLELY FOR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE AND HAS NO LEGAL EFFECT, HE POINTED OUT.

+UNDER EXISTING POLICY, THERE IS NO REQUIREMENT FOR ALL ORDINANCES AND SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATIONS TO BE TRANSLATED INTO CHINESE EXCEPT IN SPECIAL CASES WHERE THE TRANSLATION WOULD FACILITATE A MUCH LARGER SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY TO UNDERSTAND THE LAW,+ HE EXPLAINED.

ADDITIONALLY, AND INDEPENDENTLY OF THE TRANSLATION OF THE LAWS OF HONG KONG, EXPLANATORY BOOKLETS ARE PRODUCED IN CHINESE OF THE MORE IMPORTANT ORDINANCES TO FACILITATE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF A PIECE OF LEGISLATION WHICH IS OF GENERAL INTEREST.

+THE AMOUNT OF TRANSLATION THAT CAN BE DONE IS SUBJECT TO THE MANPOWER RESOURCES AND EXPERTISE AVAILABLE WITHIN THE CHINESE LANGUAGE DIVISION,+ HE SAID.

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PARENTS FREE TO CHOOSE: HAYE
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PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS WERE THAT ABOUT 900 CHILDREN OF THE 80 000 WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE NEW PRIMARY ONE ADMISSION SYSTEM WOULD NOT TAKE UP PUBLIC SECTOR PLACES OFFERED TO THEM, THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THE HON COLVYN HAYE, SAID AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE ADDED THAT THIS WOULD ACCOUNT FOR ABOUT 20 CLASSES IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY REV. THE HON JOYCE BENNETT, MR HAYE NOTED THAT UNTIL THE SEPTEMBER ENROLMENT RETURNS WERE ANALYSED IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO SAY FOR CERTAIN WHETHER THESE CLASSES WOULD BE ADDITIONAL TO THE NORMAL PRIMARY ONE INTAKE IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS WHICH AVERAGED ABOUT 9 000 TO 10 000 EACH YEAR.

HE EMPHASISED THAT UNDER THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS, PARENTS WERE FREE TO CHOOSE TO SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO EITHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

HE SAID: +THIS YEAR WE KNOW THAT THE PARENTS OF 2 100 CHILDREN COVERED BY CENTRAL ALLOCATION HAD ALREADY SECURED PLACES FOR THEM IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS. OF THESE, THE PARENTS OF THE 900 I MENTIONED HAVE SAID THEY PREFER PRIVATE PLACES, WHILE PARENTS OF THE REMAINING MAJORITY, 1 200, HAVE OPTED FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR.

+IN THIS SENSE THEN, THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS HAVE GIVEN PARENTS A FAIR CHOICE,+ MR HAYE NOTED.

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 1983

- 14 -

ACCESS FOR DISABLED TO BUILDINGS STUDIED

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THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, MR CHAN NAI-KEONG, SAID TODAY THAT INVESTIGATION INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVISING AN ELEMENT OF COMPENSATION FOR THE PROVISION OF ACCESS FOR THE DISABLED TO BUILDINGS HAD BEEN COMPLETED.

THE RESULTS, HE ADDED, WOULD SOON BE SUBMITTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

MR CHAN WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ANDREW SO AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE RECALLED THAT IT WAS AN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL DECISION THAT THE PROVISION OF ACCESS FOR THE DISABLED TO BUILDINGS SHOULD BE MADE MANDATORY, SUBJECT TO IT BEING POSSIBLE TO DEVISE AN ELEMENT OF COMPENSATION WITH RESTRICTED APPLICATION TO THE ACCESS TO A BUILDING AND AWARDED BY WAY OF A BONUS PLOT RATIO FORMULA.

+THE DECISION WAS REACHED, TO THE BEST OF MY BELIEF, AS A MEANS OF MINIMISING THE IMPACT OF, AND POSSIBLE OPPOSITION TO, THE INTRODUCTION OF A MANDATORY CODE,+ HE SAID.

IN VIEW OF THE INNUMERABLE DESIGN SOLUTIONS WHICH COULD BE ADOPTED TO MEET ANY ONE DESIGN REQUIREMENT, MR CHAN SAID, INVESTIGATION INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVISING SUCH AN ELEMENT OF COMPENSATION HAD TAKEN SOME TIME.

+THE INVESTIGATION HAS NOW BEEN CONCLUDED AND THE RESULTS WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IN THE NEAR FUTURE,+ HE ADDED.

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SHARP WATCH FOR DOGS IN KOWLOON PARK

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KOWLOON PARK IS AT PRESENT A PARTICULAR PROBLEM AREA AND IS VISITED FREQUENTLY BY DOG CONTROL TEAMS, THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, DR THE HON JOHN RIDDELL-SWAN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE SAID IT WAS A LARGE OPEN AREA WHERE THE PHYSICAL CATCHING OF ALERT STRAY DOGS WAS DIFFICULT, AND TO AUGMENT THE WORK OF THE DOG CATCHERS, BAITED CAGE-TRAPS WERE BEING USED IN THE PARK, WITH PROMISING RESULTS.

DR RIDDELL-SWAN WAS REPLYING TO THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG, WHO ASKED WHAT ACTION WAS BEING TAKEN TO REMOVE STRAY DOGS FROM PUBLIC PLEASURE GROUNDS SUCH AS KOWLOON PARK.

HE ADDED THAT REPORTS OF STRAY DOGS IN PLEASURE GROUNDS WERE FOLLOWED UP IMMEDIATELY.

SINCE APRIL 1 THIS YEAR, 3 158 STRAY DOGS HAD BEEN CAUGHT IN THE URBAN AREA AND OF THESE, 72 WERE FROM THE PUBLIC PLEASURE GROUNDS, INCLUDING 14 CAUGHT IN KOWLOON PARK DURING THE PAST TWO MONTHS, HE SAID.

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CHARGE ON PABX USERS EXPLAINED

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THE TELEPHONE COMPANY PROPOSED CHARGING THE USER OF PRIVATE AUTOMATIC BRANCH EXCHANGE (PABX) EQUIPMENT FOR AN ABORTIVE VISIT IF A REPORTED FAULT LAY WITH THE EQUIPMENT, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON K.Y. YEUNG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MOVING THE MOTION, MR YEUNG SAID THE PROPOSED CHARGES WOULD APPLY EQUALLY IN RESPECT OF OTHER TYPES OF EQUIPMENT WHICH WOULD ALSO BE AVAILABLE IN THE FUTURE ON A COMPETITIVE BASIS AND CONNECTED TO THE TELEPHONE NETWORK.

AS OF JULY 1 THIS YEAR, THE TELEPHONE COMPANY CEASED PROVIDING PABX'S AS THIS AREA OF ITS ACTIVITIES HAD BEEN REMOVED FROM ITS SCHEME OF CONTROL ON THAT DATE.

CONSEQUENTLY, PABX SUPPLIERS COULD NOW OBTAIN PERMISSION FROM THE TELEPHONE COMPANY TO CONNECT THEIR EQUIPMENT TO THE TELEPHONE NETWORK, BUT MAINTENANCE OF THE EQUIPMENT WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SUPPLIER OR THE USER, AND NOT THE TELEPHONE COMPANY, MR YEUNG EXPLAINED.

WHEN FAULTS ARE REPORTED TO THE TELEPHONE COMPANY BY PABX USERS, THE COMPANY WILL ARRANGE TO TEST THE LINES TO THE PABX IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR STANDARD TELEPHONE LINE MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES.

+IF A FAULT PROVES TO BE A LINE FAULT, IT WILL BE THE COMPANY'S RESPONSIBILITY TO RECTIFY IT. HOWEVER, IF THE FAULT LIES WITH THE EQUIPMENT, THE TELEPHONE COMPANY PROPOSE TO LEVY A CHARGE ON THE PABX USER FOR THE ABORTIVE VISIT.

+THE PROPOSED CHARGE WILL APPLY EQUALLY IN RESPECT OF OTHER TYPES OF EQUIPMENT WHICH, IN THE FUTURE, WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE ON A COMPETITIVE BASIS AND CONNECTED TO THE TELEPHONE NETWORK.

+FOR SUCH VISITS, THE TELEPHONE COMPANY HAVE PROPOSED TWO LEVELS OF STANDARD CHARGE BASED ON AVERAGE MAN-HOURS PER VISIT.

+THE CHARGE PER VISIT OUTSIDE NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS IS JUST OVER TWICE THAT FOR A VISIT DURING NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS AS IT INVOLVES BOTH CALLING OUT STAFF FROM PLACES OTHER THAN THEIR NORMAL PLACE OF WORK AND OVERTIME PAYMENTS, + MR YEUNG EXPLAINED.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL HAD EXAMINED THESE CHARGES AND CONSIDERED THEM REASONABLE, HE SAID.

NEW BILL MAKES PAWNBROKING EASIER

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THE PROPOSED NEW LAW ON PAWNBROKING IS INTENDED TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR PAWNBROKERS AND THEIR CLIENTS TO GO ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS AND WILL NOT INVOLVE ANY SIGNIFICANT STRENGTHENING OR RELAXATION OF POLICE POWERS, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON PATRICK WILLIAMSON, SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AT THE SECOND READING OF THE PAWNBROKERS BILL 1983, MR WILLIAMSON SAID ALSO THAT TWO IMPORTANT AMENDMENTS PROPOSED BY THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON PAWNBROKERS ASSOCIATION IN A PETITION TO THE GOVERNOR, HAD BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

THE FIRST PROPOSAL WAS THAT THE LOAN LIMIT SHOULD BE RAISED FROM THE EXISTING LEVEL OF \$5 000 SET IN 1970, TO \$50 000.

+THIS PROPOSAL HAS BEEN CAREFULLY EXAMINED BUT IT IS CONSIDERED THAT A REVISED LIMIT OF \$25 000 WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE IN VIEW OF THE DEPRECIATION IN VALUE OF MONEY SINCE 1970 AND THE TRADITIONAL CONCEPT OF PAWNBROKING IN MAKING MODEST LOANS TO THE POORER SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY,+ HE SAID.

THE SECOND PROPOSAL WAS THAT THE RATES OF INTEREST SPECIFIED UNDER S. 13(1) SHOULD BE ABOLISHED AND BE REPLACED BY A STANDARD RATE OF THREE PER CENT PER MONTH. IN ADDITION, IT WAS PROPOSED THAT THE RATES LAID DOWN IN THE SPECIAL RATES REGULATIONS SHOULD BE REPLACED BY A STANDARD RATE OF FIVE PER CENT PER MONTH.

+THIS BILL PROVIDES FOR A MAXIMUM RATE OF INTEREST OF 3.5 PER CENT PER LUNAR MONTH FOR ALL LOANS. THIS RATE, EXPRESSED AS AN ANNUAL RATE OF INTEREST, IS LESS THAN THE 48 PER CENT PER ANNUM OVER WHICH RATES OF INTEREST ARE PRESUMED TO BE EXTORTIONATE IN THE MONEY LENDERS ORDINANCE,+ HE SAID.

+BECAUSE OF THE SCOPE OF THE REVISIONS,+ MR WILLIAMSON ADDED, +IT IS MORE APPROPRIATE TO REPEAL THE EXISTING ORDINANCE, AND THIS IS ALSO PROPOSED.+

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED TILL OCTOBER 12.

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BIRTHS INCREASE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE POPULATION

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IN THE 12 MONTHS TO JUNE 30, THERE WERE 544 BIRTHS RECORDED IN VIETNAMESE REFUGEE CENTRES, INCREASING THE REFUGEE POPULATION BY 4.3 PER CENT, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON PATRICK WILLIAMSON, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

DURING THE PRECEDING 12 MONTHS, A TOTAL OF 406 BIRTHS WERE RECORDED IN THE CENTRES, AN INCREASE OF 3.3 PER CENT.

/MR WILLIAMSON

MR WILLIAMSON GAVE THE FIGURES IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE HON SELINA CHOW.

TO DATE THE BIRTH RATE IN THE JUBILEE TRANSIT CENTRE HAD BEEN MARGINALLY HIGHER THAN THAT IN THE KAI TAK TRANSIT CENTRE AND THE CLOSED CENTRES, HE SAID.

AMONG OTHER REASONS FOR THIS HIGHER RATE, HE CITED THE AGE AND ORIGINS OF THE REFUGEES IN THIS CENTRE AND THEIR LENGTH OF STAY IN HONG KONG.

MR WILLIAMSON SAID THAT CARITAS MANAGED THE JUBILEE CENTRE +VERY WELL IN VERY DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES+ .

HE ADDED THAT IT ALSO RAN A FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAMME AT THE CENTRE FOR MARRIED COUPLES AS WELL AS FOR GIRLS IN THE RELEVANT AGE BRACKET.

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EFFORT MADE TO IMPROVE SECURITY
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THE RATE OF PERSONAL CRIME IN TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS WAS 39.4 PER THOUSAND OF THE POPULATION AT THE AGE OF 12 YEARS AND ABOVE, ACCORDING TO THE 1981 CRIME VICTIMISATION SURVEY CITED TODAY IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BY THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON PATRICK WILLIAMSON.

BY COMPARISON, THE RATE WERE 41.3 IN PUBLIC HOUSING AND 37.4 IN PRIVATE HOUSING AREAS.

MR WILLIAMSON CITED THE SURVEY IN REPLY TO A QUESTION ON THE ISSUE BY DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI.

HE POINTED OUT THAT SEPARATE STATISTICS WERE NOT KEPT OF CRIMES IN TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS. HOWEVER, THE SURVEY GAVE SOME INDICATION OF THE SITUATION, THOUGH THE INFORMATION MUST BE TREATED WITH CAUTION, AS THEY INCLUDED UNREPORTED CRIME.

AND, +TEMPORARY HOUSING+ IN THE SURVEY INCLUDED SQUATTER AREAS AS WELL, HE EXPLAINED.

THE STATE OF LAW AND ORDER IN TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS WAS THEREFORE NOT +DRAMATICALLY WORSE+ THAN IN OTHER RESIDENTIAL AREAS, MR WILLIAMSON SAID.

+NEVERTHELESS, THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE HIGHER INCIDENCE OF CERTAIN TYPES OF CRIME, IN PARTICULAR BURGLARY.

+POLICE AND HOUSING OFFICERS ARE LIAISING ON HOW TO IMPROVE SECURITY IN THESE AREAS,+ MR WILLIAMSON SAID.

WHILE THERE WAS NO STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON ENFORCEMENT, MR WILLIAMSON SAID THAT IN JUNE OF THIS YEAR, THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE REQUESTED REGIONAL COMMANDERS TO EXAMINE WAYS OF IMPROVING THEIR METHODS OF POLICING THESE AREAS, WHICH WERE OFTEN REMOTE AND DIFFICULT TO INCLUDE IN NORMAL BEAT SYSTEMS.

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BILL TO ENABLE KUK TO DISCHARGE DUTIES

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THE HEUNG YEE KUK (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983 WOULD ENABLE THE KUK TO DISCHARGE ITS DUTIES PERTAINING TO THE RESPONSIBILITIES WITH WHICH IT IS ENTRUSTED, AN UNOFFICIAL MEMBER, THE HON BENTON CHEUNG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE WAS SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL.

+FROM THE PREAMBLE OF THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE ENACTED IN DECEMBER 1959, IT WAS APPARENTLY THOUGHT APPROPRIATE THAT THE HEUNG YEE KUK NEED ONLY TO FUNCTION AS AN ADVISORY BODY AND AS A FORUM WHERE LEADERS OF OPINION IN THE TERRITORIES COULD EXCHANGE VIEWS.

+EVENTS HAVE PROVED THAT THE COMMUNITIES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES HAVE ALSO SEEN FIT TO ENTRUST THE KUK WITH TASKS OTHER THAN THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE HAD PROVIDED FOR,+ HE SAID.

HENCE AMENDMENTS ARE NEEDED TO CLAUSE 2 TO COMPLETE THE KUK'S LEGAL ENTITY AND TO CLAUSE 3 TO ENABLE IT TO DISCHARGE ITS DUTIES PERTAINING TO THE RESPONSIBILITIES WITH WHICH IT IS ENTRUSTED.

+WHEN THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE WAS ENACTED IN 1959, IT WAS APPARENTLY NOT FORESEEN THAT THE PRIVATELY ACQUIRED OLD BUILDING AT SUNG TAK STREET, NEAR THE OLD RAILWAY STATION AT TAI PO MARKET, HAD WELL SERVED ITS PURPOSES FOR OVER 30 YEARS.

+THE BUILDING USED TO HOUSE, NOT ONLY THE HEUNG YEE KUK, BUT ALSO THE TAI PO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND A PRIMARY SCHOOL, THE SUNG TAK SCHOOL,+ HE SAID.

IN 1979, MR CHEUNG REPRESENTED THE KUK AND ENTERED INTO A DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH ITS CO-OWNER TO DEVELOP THE SITE.

WHEN REDEVELOPED INTO A SIX-STORY COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL BUILDING, THE UNITS THEREIN COULD BE SOLD BY THE RESPECTIVE PARTIES.

+IT WAS ALWAYS THE INTENTION OF THE KUK TO SELL THOSE UNITS IT RIGHTFULLY OWNS AND TO CREDIT THE PROCEEDS REALISED TO THE KUK'S 'EDUCATION PROMOTION FUND', AFTER REPAYING ITS LAWFUL DEBTS,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEUNG ALSO TOUCHED ON THE HISTORY OF THE KUK AND ITS AMBITIOUS SECONDARY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES.

HE PAID TRIBUTE TO THE +FAR-SIGHTED AND RESOURCEFUL+ FOUNDER MEMBERS OF THE KUK AND TO THE PHILANTHROPIST, MR CHU YAN-KIT OF TAI PO WHO DONATED SUBSTANTIAL TRACKS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND IN FANLING/SHEUNG SHUI TO THE KUK FOR THE PROMOTION OF EDUCATION.

- 19 -

NO AIDS REPORTED IN HONG KONG

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THERE HAD BEEN NO REPORT OF ANY CASE OF THE ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME (AIDS) TO THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT OR IN LOCAL MEDICAL LITERATURE, THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR S.F. LAM SAID TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHAN KAM-CHUEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, DR LAM SAID THE DEPARTMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION.

+AIDS HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN HOMOSEXUALS, INTRAVENOUS DRUG ABUSERS, HAITIANS AND PATIENTS WITH BLEEDING DISEASES (HAEMOPHILIACS) NEEDING FREQUENT AND PROLONGED BLOOD REPLACEMENT TREATMENT,+ HE SAID.

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WATCHMEN'S PARTICULARS CHECKED BY POLICE

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ALL APPLICANTS FOR A WATCHMAN'S PERMIT ARE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE WITH THEIR FULL PERSONAL PARTICULARS.

AND BEFORE THEY ARE GIVEN PERMITS, THEY ARE INTERVIEWED AND A CHECK IS MADE TO ESTABLISH WHETHER THEY HAVE A CRIMINAL RECORD, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON PATRICK WILLIAMSON, SAID TODAY, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ANDREW SO IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

MR SO HAD ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO STATE HOW IT ENSURED THAT PERSONS REGISTERED WITH THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, AS REQUIRED BY LAW, HAD A RECORD OF GOOD CONDUCT AND WERE SUITABLE TO BE EMPLOYED TO PROTECT THE SAFETY OF OTHER PERSONS.

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POLICY ON HOODING OF SUSPECTS EXPLAINED

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THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE'S POLICY IS THAT HOODING OF SUSPECTS SHOULD ONLY BE CARRIED OUT IN CASES WHERE THE IDENTITY OF THE GUILTY PARTY MAY BE A MATTER FOR THE COURT TO RESOLVE, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON PATRICK WILLIAMSON, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHAN KAM-CHUEN, MR WILLIAMSON SAID HOODING WAS ALSO RECOMMENDED WHEN THE PREMATURE DISCLOSURE OF A SUSPECT'S IDENTITY COULD PREJUDICE HIS CASE OR HIS SAFETY.

HE POINTED OUT THAT HOODING OF SUSPECTS WAS PROVIDED BY WAY OF POLICE HEADQUARTERS GENERAL ORDER, RATHER THAN BY REGULATIONS.

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EFFORTS CONSTANTLY MADE TO IMPROVE ACCIDENT SERVICES

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MEASURES ARE CONSTANTLY BEING TAKEN BY THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO IMPROVE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY SERVICES, IN A BID TO SATISFY THE CONTINUOUS RISING EXPECTATIONS AND INSATIABLE DEMANDS OF THE COMMUNITY, THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR S.F. LAM SAID TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LYDIA DUNN AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, DR LAM SAID THAT ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS IN HOSPITALS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD HAD ONE THING IN COMMON: +THE SERVICES THEY PROVIDE ARE IN SUCH GREAT DEMAND THAT AS A RESULT, THE STAFF ARE USUALLY OVERWORKED, AND HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS ARE NO DIFFERENT.+

THE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS OF REGIONAL HOSPITALS ACT AS THE +LONG-STOP+ FOR ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY CASES THAT SPILL OVER FROM THE PERIPHERAL AND DISTRICT HOSPITALS, SAID DR LAM.

IN HONG KONG THE GOVERNMENT HAS ADOPTED A POLICY OF NOT TURNING AWAY ANY PATIENT AND ANYONE TAKEN TO A HOSPITAL IS SEEN AND TREATED FIRST AND ASKED QUESTIONS LATER, HE SAID.

ALTHOUGH THE IMPLICATIONS ARE THAT THE STAFF ARE WORKING UNDER A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF PRESSURE, THE PATIENTS ARE PROVIDED WITH AN EFFICIENT SERVICE, HE ADDED.

SHORT TERM MEASURES TO IMPROVE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY SERVICES INCLUDE STATIONING A NURSING OFFICER AT THE RECEPTION ROOM TO DETERMINE PRIORITIES SO THAT THE MORE SERIOUSLY ILL OR INJURED ARE TAKEN CARE OF FIRST AND WITHOUT DELAY.

DR LAM SAID THAT WHEN AVAILABLE, THE MEDICAL, NURSING, PARAMEDICAL AND TECHNICAL STAFF HAD BEEN INCREASED BOTH IN QUANTITY AND QUALITY.

+OVER THE PAST TWO TO THREE YEARS, MORE SENIOR POSTS OF CONSULTANTS AND SENIOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH OFFICERS HAVE BEEN CREATED,+ HE SAID.

+IN ADDITION TO MEETING THE NEED FOR EXPERTISE IN PATIENT CARE AND JUNIOR STAFF SUPERVISION, THESE SENIOR POSTS ALSO SATISFY THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ROYAL COLLEGES OF SURGEONS OF EDINBURGH AND ENGLAND IN ORDER THAT THESE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS CAN BE ACCREDITED AS POST-GRADUATE TRAINING INSTITUTIONS,+ HE ADDED.

+SUCH RECOGNITION SIGNIFIES THE ATTAINMENT OF THE HIGHEST STANDARD IN BRITISH MEDICINE,+ SAID DR LAM.

IN THE MEDIUM TERM, MORE SPACIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS HAVE BEEN PLANNED FOR THE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS IN THE EXTENSIONS OF THE THREE REGIONAL HOSPITALS, THE QUEEN MARY, THE QUEEN ELIZABETH AND THE PRINCESS MARGARET HOSPITALS.

/LONG TERM

LONG TERM MEASURES INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS IN ALL NEW HOSPITALS AND TO IMPROVE THE HOSPITAL BACK-UP FACILITIES FOR EXISTING A AND E DEPARTMENTS.

THE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT OF THE PRINCE OF WALES HOSPITAL IN SHA TIN IS PLANNED TO OPEN IN 1984, AND THE NEW RUTTONJEE HOSPITAL SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION IN 1987 WILL BE AN ACUTE DISTRICT HOSPITAL FOR WAN CHAI, AND WILL PROVIDE BACK-UP SERVICES FOR THE TANG SHIU KIN HOSPITAL'S ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT.

ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS ARE ALSO PLANNED FOR THE TUEN MUN HOSPITAL IN 1987, THE EASTERN DISTRICT HOSPITAL ON THE ISLAND AND THE EAST KOWLOON HOSPITAL, BOTH OF WHICH ARE SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION AT THE END OF THE DECADE.

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POLICY IS TO ASSIST SPORTS BODIES WITH FUNDS

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THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY FOR TRAINING IN SPORTS IS TO PROVIDE FUNDS TO ASSIST AND TO ENCOURAGE THE GOVERNING SPORTS BODIES TO ORGANISE THEIR OWN TRAINING PROGRAMMES, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON DAVID AKERS-JONES, SAID TODAY.

THIS POLICY WAS BASED ON THE ADVICE OF THE COUNCIL FOR RECREATION AND SPORT WHICH IS GOVERNMENT'S PRINCIPAL ADVISORY BODY ON SPORTS AND RECREATION, HE SAID.

SUPERB TRAINING FACILITIES WERE PROVIDED AT THE JUBILEE SPORTS CENTRE AND A SCHEME OF TRANSPORT SUBSIDY HAD BEEN DEvised TO ENCOURAGE YOUNG SPORTSMEN OF 18 AND BELOW TO UNDERTAKE TRAINING AT THE CENTRE.

FOR THIS FINANCIAL YEAR, \$4.61 MILLION WAS MADE AVAILABLE FOR THE GENERAL PROMOTION OF SPORTS, WHICH INCLUDES SUPPORT FOR TRAINING UNDER THE PROMOTION OF SPORTS VOTE, MR AKERS-JONES SAID, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON F.K. HU AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

IN FURTHERANCE OF THIS POLICY OBJECTIVE, THE COUNCIL FOR RECREATION AND SPORT HAD RECENTLY PUT FORWARD CERTAIN PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD PROVIDE MORE SUPPORT FOR THE TRAINING OF THE REPRESENTATIVE TEAMS OF THE MAJOR SPORTS IN HONG KONG.

THESE PROPOSALS INCLUDED SUPPORT FOR YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMMES IN SKILL AND FITNESS TRAINING, RESIDENTIAL TRAINING SESSIONS AT THE JUBILEE SPORTS CENTRE, AND MORE INTENSIVE PRE-COMPETITION TRAINING.

THESE PROPOSALS WERE SUPPORTED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND SAVINGS WOULD BE IDENTIFIED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE FROM THE PROMOTION OF SPORTS VOTE TO GO SOME WAY TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION WITHIN THIS FINANCIAL YEAR, MR AKERS-JONES SAID.

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 1983

- 22 -

ELEVEN BILLS PASSED

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ELEVEN BILLS WERE APPROVED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE APPROVED BILLS WERE THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (1982-83) BILL 1983, CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1983, CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (PRELIMINARY PROCEEDINGS ON AN INDICTABLE OFFENCE) BILL 1983, SUPREME COURT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, HONG KONG BAPTIST COLLEGE BILL 1983, HEUNG YEE KUK (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, SMOKING (PUBLIC HEALTH) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS BILL 1983, POLICE FORCE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983 AND POLICE SUPERVISION (REPEAL) BILL 1983.

THREE BILLS WERE INTRODUCED AND READ A SECOND TIME, AND DEBATE ON THEM WAS ADJOURNED TILL OCTOBER 12.

THEY ARE: DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, BANKING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983 AND PAWNBROKERS BILL 1983.

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UNOFFICIALS PRAISED FOR LEGCO WORK

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THE ACTING GOVERNOR, SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, CLOSING THE 1982-83 SESSION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, PAID TRIBUTE TO THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL.

SIR PHILIP SAID ALSO THAT THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS HAD DEMONSTRATED THEIR ABILITY TO RESPOND RAPIDLY AND EFFECTIVELY TO MATTERS OF PUBLIC CONCERN.

SIR PHILIP SAID: +IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT PARTICULARLY IN DIFFICULT ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES AND AS WE PASS THROUGH A PERIOD OF UNCERTAINTY WHICH CAN BE TIRING AND UNCOMFORTABLE AT TIMES, THE WORK OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IS VITAL TO GOOD GOVERNMENT AND IS GREATLY APPRECIATED BY THE GOVERNOR AS HE SEEKS TO DEVELOP, AND IMPLEMENT, ALL OUR WIDE RANGING PLANS FOR THE LONG TERM WELL BEING OF HONG KONG.

+DURING THIS SESSION SOME 73 BILLS HAVE BEEN PASSED, OF WHICH 19 WERE AMENDED AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE, A REFLECTION OF THE CRITICAL SCRUTINY OF LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS IN THEIR WORKING GROUPS AND AD HOC GROUPS.

+IN ADDITION, 45 RESOLUTIONS WERE MADE. DURING THE 1981-82 SESSION 75 BILLS WERE PASSED AND 72 RESOLUTIONS MADE. BUT THE COMPLEXITY OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS BEFORE MEMBERS THIS YEAR WAS PROBABLY GREATER AND, THEREFORE, INVOLVED MORE TIME-CONSUMING EFFORT.

/+DURING THIS

+DURING THIS SESSION UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS ASKED 194 QUESTIONS, 34 MORE THAN DURING THE 1981-82 SESSION : AND THESE WERE FOLLOWED UP BY 340 SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS (INCLUDING A REMARKABLE 36 TODAY), AN INCREASE OF 69 ON THE LAST SESSION.

+UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS ALSO DEALT WITH 326 FINANCE COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS AND PAPERS, 289 PUBLIC WORKS SUB-COMMITTEE PAPERS AND 45 ESTABLISHMENT SUB-COMMITTEE PAPERS, ALL OF WHICH ENTAILED MANY HOURS OF PRIVATE STUDY APART FROM MEETINGS.

+BUT THESE STATISTICS ONLY TELL PART OF THE STORY : THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL WHAT ONE MIGHT DESCRIBE AS QUALITATIVE DEVELOPMENTS THIS SESSION. TO BEGIN WITH, THIS SESSION WILL BE REMEMBERED FOR A NUMBER OF VIGOROUS, AND AT TIMES IMPASSIONED, DEBATES ON SUBJECTS AS FAR APART AS AIR POLLUTION, DRIVING OFFENCES, SCHEMES OF CONTROL AND EDUCATION, WHICH HAVE ENLIVENED OUR PROCEEDINGS.

+IF I MAY SAY SO, UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS HAVE ALSO DEMONSTRATED THEIR ABILITY TO RESPOND RAPIDLY AND EFFECTIVELY TO MATTERS OF PUBLIC CONCERN - A RECENT EXAMPLE BEING THE TREATMENT OF CHICKENS WITH HORMONES - AND OFFICIAL MEMBERS WILL REMEMBER THIS SESSION FOR THE BARRAGE OF PENETRATING SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS WHICH, CONTRARY TO BELIEF IN SOME QUARTERS, ARE NOT MADE KNOWN TO THEM IN SECRET CONCLAVE IN ADVANCE.

+THE AMENDMENTS TO THE STANDING ORDERS WHICH WERE APPROVED AT THE LAST SITTING ALSO REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT STEP IN THE HISTORY OF THIS COUNCIL AND THEY SHOULD RESULT IN EVEN MORE SPONTANEOUS DEBATE IN THE FUTURE AND HELP TO REFLECT MORE CLEARLY THE VERY CONSIDERABLE CONTRIBUTION MADE BY UNOFFICIALS IN THE FORMULATION OF LEGISLATION AND THE CONTROL OF PUBLIC EXPENDITURE.

+IN PARTICULAR, THE HOLDING IN PUBLIC OF THOSE MEETINGS OF FINANCE COMMITTEE AT WHICH HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS ARE QUESTIONED IN DETAIL ON THE FUNDS SOUGHT BY THEM IN THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION BILL SHOULD CONTRIBUTE GREATLY TOWARDS PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THIS ASPECT OF THE COUNCIL'S WORK.

+SO, WITHOUT FURTHER ADO, ON BEHALF OF BOTH THE GOVERNOR AND MYSELF AND THE CLERK AND THE DEPUTY CLERK OF COUNCILS MAY I WISH YOU ALL A RELAXING IF NOT RESTFUL RECESS, AND A SAFE RETURN TO THOSE OF YOU TRAVELLING ABROAD.+

SIR PHILIP SAID THE FIRST SITTING OF THE 1983-84 SESSION WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5, WHEN THE GOVERNOR WILL ADDRESS THE COUNCIL.

FREE MEDICAL CHECK-UP FOR OFFICE WORKERS
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FREE MEDICAL CHECK-UP WILL BE OFFERED TO OFFICE WORKERS IN CENTRAL ON AUGUST 12, 15 AND 17.

THE SERVICES, TO BE PROVIDED BETWEEN NOON AND 2 PM ALONG THE BLAKE PIER PROMENADE, INCLUDE HEIGHT, WEIGHT AND BLOOD PRESSURE MEASUREMENTS, AND BLOOD TESTS.

VOLUNTARY DOCTORS AND NURSES WILL BE PRESENT TO ANSWER QUESTIONS AND GIVE ADVICE ON HEALTH PROBLEMS.

THE CHECK-UP IS PART OF A 'NINE-TO-FIVE WHITE COLLAR' PROJECT JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, THE DISTRICT BOARD AND THE CARITAS SOCIAL CENTRE.

A DISTRICT OFFICE SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY, +OWING TO LONG WORKING HOURS, QUICK AND IRREGULAR LUNCHES, AND LACK OF EXERCISES, STOMACHACHE, INDIGESTION AND POOR HEALTH ARE COMMON AMONG THE WHITE COLLARS IN CENTRAL.

+IT IS HOPED THAT THE PROJECT WILL MAKE THE OFFICE WORKERS AWARE OF THEIR OWN HEALTH,+ HE ADDED.

OTHER PROGRAMMES IN THE PROJECT WILL INCLUDE A HEALTH EXHIBITION, A 'SELF-RELAXATION' TRAINING COURSE, CAMPINGS AND AN ELEMENTARY MEDICAL COURSE.

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HONG KONG NOW +FERTILE LAND FOR ARTISTS+
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FROM THE DESERT OF THE PAST HONG KONG HAS BECOME A FERTILE LAND TO WHICH ARTISTS FROM MANY COUNTRIES COME TO PERFORM AND FROM WHICH ARTISTS AND PERFORMERS ARE BEGINNING TO BE SEEN AND HEARD AROUND THE WORLD, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR DAVID AKERS-JONES, SAID TODAY.

THERE IS ALSO A GROWING AWARENESS AMONG THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG, PARTICULARLY THE YOUNG, OF THE RICH AND REWARDING WORLD OF CULTURE AND THE ARTS, HE SAID.

SPEAKING AT A ROTARY CLUB OF KOWLOON WEST LUNCHEON MEETING, MR AKERS-JONES POINTED OUT THAT 25 YEARS AGO THE STAR FERRY PIER WAS USED AS A VENUE FOR PROTOTYPE ARTS FESTIVAL, AND IN 1962 THE OPENING OF THE CITY HALL AS THE ONLY MAJOR PERFORMING AND EXHIBITION VENUE MARKED A TURNING POINT IN HONG KONG'S POST-WAR HISTORY.

SINCE THEN THERE HAS BEEN AN EXTENSIVE BUILDING PROGRAMME TO PROVIDE A VARIETY OF VENUES TO MEET A DEMONSTRABLE AND GROWING DEMAND FOR PLACES TO PERFORM OR TO BE A SPECTATOR, HE NOTED.

/HE SAID

HE SAID THERE ARE NOW SOME 800 INDOOR PERFORMANCES A YEAR ATTENDED BY HALF A MILLION PEOPLE AND THIS COMPARED WITH SOME 90 PERFORMANCES ATTENDED BY ABOUT 60 000 PEOPLE IN 1977. IN ADDITION, SOME 800 OUTDOOR ENTERTAINMENT EVENTS WERE ENJOYED LAST YEAR BY ALMOST A MILLION PEOPLE.

MR AKERS-JONES ALSO SAID TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL PERFORMERS WERE PROVIDED AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL DIRECTLY BY THE GOVERNMENT'S RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT THROUGH ITS MUSIC OFFICE AND THE RECREATION AND SPORTS SERVICE.

+AT A CENTRAL LEVEL, ORGANISATIONS LIKE THE HONG KONG CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC, THE HONG KONG ACADEMY OF BALLET ARE GIVEN FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM PUBLIC FUNDS TO MEET A NEED FOR TRAINING OUR FINE MUSICIANS AND DANCERS AT THE TERTIARY LEVEL,+ HE SAID.

THE ACADEMY FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS DUE TO BE COMPLETED AT THE END OF NEXT YEAR WILL TRAIN 600 STUDENTS IN THE FOUR DISCIPLINES OF DANCE, DRAMA, MUSIC AND TECHNICAL ARTS, MR AKERS-JONES SAID.

HE SAID GRADUATES OF THE ACADEMY WILL BE ABLE TO FORM THE BACKBONE OF HONG KONG'S VARIOUS PERFORMING GROUPS.

MR AKERS-JONES ALSO MENTIONED THE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION OF DISTRICT BOARDS TO THE PROMOTION OF THE ARTS IN THEIR DISTRICTS AND THAT EACH DISTRICT NOW HAS ITS OWN ORGANISATION DEDICATED TO THIS WORK.

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NEW TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN KOWLOON AND NT

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FROM 10 AM ON AUGUST 12 (FRIDAY), THE FOLLOWING TRAFFIC REGULATIONS WILL COME INTO EFFECT:

THE TELFORD GARDENS BUS TERMINUS WILL BE DESIGNATED A 'PROHIBITION ZONE'. ALL MOTOR VEHICLES, EXCEPT FRANCHISED OMNIBUSES AND THOSE AUTHORISED IN WRITING BY THE AUTHORITY, WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING THE BUS TERMINUS.

AND THE TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE TERMINUS AT TELFORD GARDENS WILL BECOME A 'PROHIBITED ZONE'. ALL MOTOR VEHICLES, EXCEPT FRANCHISED OMNIBUSES, TAXIS AND THOSE AUTHORISED IN WRITING BY THE AUTHORITY, WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING THE AREA.

THE ACCESS RAMPS LINKING WAI YIP STREET AND TELFORD GARDENS, AND THE TELFORD GARDENS ACCESS ROAD IN KWUN TONG WILL BE DESIGNATED AS 24-HOUR URBAN CLEARWAY RESTRICTED ZONES DAILY.

WITHIN THE RESTRICTED ZONES, ALL MOTOR VEHICLES EXCEPT THOSE AUTHORISED IN WRITING BY THE AUTHORITY WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM PICKING UP OR SETTING DOWN PASSENGERS, OR FROM LOADING OR UNLOADING GOODS.

PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING MAIDSTONE LANE AND MAIDSTONE ROAD BETWEEN MAIDSTONE LANE AND LOK SHAN ROAD, UNLESS AUTHORISED IN WRITING BY THE AUTHORITY.

THE SECTION OF LOK SHAN ROAD BETWEEN MAIDSTONE ROAD AND MA TAU WAI ROAD WILL BE DESIGNATED A 24-HOUR PUBLIC LIGHT BUS RESTRICTED ZONE WHERE ALL PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM PICKING UP AND SETTING DOWN PASSENGERS.

THE RIGHT TURNING MOVEMENT FROM KWU HANG ROAD SOUTHBOUND ONTO YEUNG UK ROAD WESTBOUND WILL BE BANNED TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC ON YEUNG UK ROAD.

MOTORISTS ON SHA TSUI ROAD HEADING FOR YEUNG UK ROAD WESTBOUND SHOULD USE CHUNG ON STREET INSTEAD OF KWU HANG ROAD BEFORE REJOINING YEUNG UK ROAD WESTBOUND.

ALL PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES EXCEPT THOSE AUTHORISED IN WRITING BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING THE FANLING KCR STATION FORECOURT SOUTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH PAK FUK TSUEN ROAD.

ALL MOTOR VEHICLES, EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES AND TAXIS, WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING THE SECTION OF THE FANLING KCR STATION FORECOURT SOUTH OF THE STATION SERVICE YARD.

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RCD MOVING TO HARBOUR CENTRE

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THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT AT CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES (WEST WING) WILL MOVE TO HARBOUR CENTRE IN WAN CHAI ON AUGUST 25.

THE DEPARTMENT WILL OCCUPY THE 11TH FLOOR AND A HALF OF THE 10TH FLOOR OF THE CENTRE AT 25 HARBOUR ROAD, NEAR THE WAN CHAI FERRY PIER.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID THE PUBLICITY AND INFORMATION UNIT AND SEVERAL SECTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT WILL VACATE THE CGO BLOCK ON FRIDAY (AUGUST 12).

FROM SATURDAY (AUGUST 13) ALL ENQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

5-735334
5-734925
5-735045.

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