



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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CS EXPLAINS REASONS FOR POLICY CHANGE ON BOAT PEOPLE

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THE TIME HAS COME FOR HONG KONG TO CHANGE ITS POLICY OF AUTOMATICALLY ACCEPTING AS REFUGEES ALL BOAT PEOPLE WHO ARRIVE HERE FROM VIETNAM, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR DAVID FORD, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A STATEMENT TO THE COUNCIL, SIR DAVID STRESSED THIS WAS NOT A DECISION WHICH WAS TAKEN LIGHTLY.

"THE MASSIVE INFLUX OF BOAT PEOPLE FROM VIETNAM OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS HAS CAUSED THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMUNITY OF HONG KONG GRAVE CONCERN," SIR DAVID EXPLAINED.

"COMING AS IT DOES AFTER TWO YEARS OF A STEADY INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ARRIVING AND A DRASTIC REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF RESETTLEMENT PLACES ON OFFER, IT HAS CREATED AN INTOLERABLE BURDEN ON THIS ALREADY OVERCROWDED TERRITORY."

IN 1987, THE NUMBER OF BOAT PEOPLE COMING TO HONG KONG ROSE BY 65 PER CENT AND THOSE LEAVING TO BE RESETTLED DROPPED BY 42 PER CENT.

MORE THAN 5,000 PEOPLE HAVE ARRIVED IN HONG KONG DURING THE FIRST FIVE MONTHS OF 1988 AND A FURTHER 2,621 HAD ARRIVED SO FAR IN JUNE.

"ALL BUT A HANDFUL OF THESE PEOPLE ARE ETHNIC VIETNAMESE AND MORE THAN 70 PER CENT COME FROM NORTH VIETNAM AND HAVE NO CONNECTIONS OR FAMILY LINKS OUTSIDE VIETNAM," SIR DAVID SAID.

"THEIR PROSPECTS FOR RESETTLEMENT IN THIRD COUNTRIES UNDER CURRENT CRITERIA ARE NEGLIGIBLE."

THE ARRIVALS HAD SWELLED HONG KONG'S REFUGEE POPULATION TO 16,000 - A FIGURE HIGHER THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE 1980 - AND WERE STRETCHING LOCAL RESOURCES FOR THEIR RECEPTION, ACCOMMODATION, AND CARE TO THE LIMIT, HE SAID.

"RESETTLEMENT PLACES TO MATCH THE CURRENT ARRIVAL RATES OF BOAT PEOPLE IN HONG KONG, OR ELSEWHERE IN THIS REGION, ARE SIMPLY NO LONGER AVAILABLE," SIR DAVID NOTED.

"THE MAJOR RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES ARE INCREASINGLY UNWILLING TO ACCEPT THESE PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY ETHNIC VIETNAMESE FROM NORTH VIETNAM, AS REFUGEES FOR RESETTLEMENT PURPOSES."

SIR DAVID SAID IT WAS WIDELY BELIEVED THAT A LARGE PROPORTION OF THE VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY THOSE ARRIVING IN HONG KONG, WERE NOT REFUGEES.

/THEY WERE .....

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THEY WERE NOT LEAVING VIETNAM, IN THE TERMS OF THE 1951 UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE STATUS OF REFUGEES, BECAUSE OF A "WELL-FOUNDED FEAR OF PERSECUTION ON GROUNDS OF RACE, RELIGION, NATIONALITY OR MEMBERSHIP OF A PARTICULAR SOCIAL OR POLITICAL GROUPING."

THEY WERE SIMPLY PEOPLE SEEKING A BETTER LIFE, HE SAID.

"REPATRIATION FOR THOSE ACCEPTED BY HONG KONG AS REFUGEES CAN ONLY BE DONE ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS AND ALL EFFORTS TO PRODUCE A SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT WITH VIETNAM ON THE REPATRIATION OF THE LARGE NUMBERS OF THEIR CITIZENS WHO CONTINUE TO ARRIVE IN HONG KONG HAVE SO FAR MET WITH DISCOURAGING RESULTS," SIR DAVID SAID.

"THE VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES STEADFASTLY REFUSE TO CONSIDER ACCEPTING THE RETURN OF THEIR PEOPLE EXCEPT ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS."

A RECENT SEMINAR INVOLVING DELEGATES FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS COUNTRIES AND HONG KONG CONCLUDED THAT THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE PROBLEM LAY IN VIETNAM, WHOSE GOVERNMENT HAD A CLEAR OBLIGATION TO RESOLVE IT, AND THAT IT WAS OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE TO DISCOURAGE FUTURE OUTFLOWS FROM THAT COUNTRY, HE NOTED.

IT WAS ALSO CLEAR THAT EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS WHICH HELD OUT THE PROSPECT OR HOPE OF AUTOMATIC RESETTLEMENT FOR ALL WHO LEFT VIETNAM, FOR WHATEVER REASON, WERE A MAJOR 'PULL FACTOR'.

SIR DAVID SAID THAT IT WAS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, OF A SITUATION THAT COULD NO LONGER BE ACCEPTED BY THE COMMUNITY OF HONG KONG, THAT THE CURRENT POLICY WAS REVIEWED, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

EXPLAINING THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS, HE SAID AS FROM MIDNIGHT TONIGHT (WEDNESDAY), ALL BOAT PEOPLE FROM VIETNAM WOULD BE SCREENED AND THERE WOULD BE A PROCEDURE TO DETERMINE THEIR QUALIFICATION AS GENUINE REFUGEES ACCORDING TO THE INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED CRITERIA.

THE SCREENING, CARRIED OUT BY IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT STAFF ON THE BASIS OF INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS, WOULD BE BASED ON GUIDELINES LAID DOWN BY THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR), WHO WOULD BE ABLE TO MONITOR IT.

THERE WOULD ALSO BE A RIGHT OF APPEAL, HE SAID. ANY SCREENED IN AS REFUGEES WOULD BE ACCOMMODATED IN CLOSED CAMPS WITH OTHER REFUGEES, WHILE THE REST WOULD BE TREATED AS ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS AND BE DETAINED, PENDING REPATRIATION TO VIETNAM, IN THE HEI LING CHAU CENTRE.

/THE DETENTION .....

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THE DETENTION CENTRE, TO BE VACATED AND ADAPTED FOR THIS PURPOSE IN A FEW DAYS' TIME, WOULD BE MANNED BY THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT.

"THERE IS NO SIMPLE SOLUTION TO THE SERIOUS PROBLEM WHICH CONFRONTS US, WE RECOGNISE THAT WE CANNOT SOLVE IT ON OUR OWN AND THAT INTRODUCTION OF SCREENING IS NOT THE WHOLE ANSWER," SIR DAVID SAID.

"BUT WE FEEL MOST STRONGLY THAT A STAND MUST BE TAKEN HERE AND NOW AGAINST THE CONTINUING OUTFLOW OF BOAT PEOPLE FROM VIETNAM, THE VAST MAJORITY OF WHOM HAVE NO CLAIM TO BE TREATED AS REFUGEES IN THE NORMAL INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED SENSE."

REFERRING TO THE 16,000 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES NOW IN HONG KONG -- OF WHOM MORE THAN 3,700 HAD BEEN HERE FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS, SIR DAVID SAID THESE PEOPLE HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY HONG KONG AS REFUGEES AND MUST CONTINUE TO BE TREATED AS SUCH.

"DURABLE SOLUTIONS FOR THESE REFUGEES MUST BE FOUND, AND THAT MEANS PRIMARILY RESETTLEMENT IN THIRD COUNTRIES," HE SAID.

"BUT TO CONTINUE TO ACCEPT ALL ARRIVALS AS REFUGEES WOULD PREJUDICE EVEN FURTHER THE PROSPECTS FOR RESETTLEMENT OF THOSE ALREADY HERE AND INCREASE THE FRUSTRATION WHICH IS ALREADY WIDESPREAD AMONGST THEM."

SIR DAVID STRESSED THAT HONG KONG HAD GREATER NEED OF RESETTLEMENT PLACES NOW THAN AT ANY TIME IN THE LAST EIGHT YEARS.

LOOKING BACK ON THE PAST 13 YEARS SINCE THE BOAT PEOPLE BEGAN TO COME TO HONG KONG IN 1975, SIR DAVID SAID THE TERRITORY HAD GIVEN TEMPORARY ASYLUM TO NO LESS THAN 123,000 BOAT PEOPLE AND ITSELF HAD RESETTLED SOME 15,000 INDO-CHINESE REFUGEES.

"WE HAVE NEVER FORCED ANYONE AWAY, NOR WOULD WE CONTEMPLATE DOING SO NOW," HE SAID.

"PUSHING, OR TOWING, SMALL, LEAKY BOATS FILLED WITH MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN BACK OUT TO SEA WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE IN OUR HUMANE AND CARING COMMUNITY.

"WE SHALL CONTINUE THEREFORE TO OBSERVE OUR INTERNATIONAL AND HUMANITARIAN OBLIGATIONS."

HOWEVER, SIR DAVID SAID A DURABLE HUMANITARIAN WAY MUST BE FOUND OF STOPPING THESE MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN FROM PUTTING TO SEA IN SMALL BOATS IN THE HOPE OF MAKING A NEW LIFE FOR THEMSELVES IN WESTERN COUNTRIES.

/"IT IS .....

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"IT IS CLEAR THAT THESE WESTERN COUNTRIES ARE NO LONGER PREPARED TO OFFER A NEW LIFE TO THE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE NOW LEAVING VIETNAM," HE SAID.

"NOR SHOULD THIS TINY OVERCROWDED TERRITORY BE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE A HOME FOR THEM, EVEN IF THEY WANTED TO STAY HERE, AND IT IS CLEAR THEY DO NOT.

"WE THEREFORE URGE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND THE UNHCR TO FIND AN INTERNATIONAL SOLUTION TO THIS INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM."

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MARTIN LEE, AS TO WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO RELAX ITS DEADLINE FOR BOAT PEOPLE ALREADY ON THE WAY TO HONG KONG, SIR DAVID SAID THAT TO ADOPT SUCH A SUGGESTION WOULD CREATE A GREAT NUMBER OF DIFFICULTIES.

AN EXTENSION OF THE DEADLINE WOULD INEVITABLY LEAD TO A VERY LARGE RUSH OF PEOPLE TRYING TO BEAT THE NEW DEADLINE.

"I'M AFRAID WHENEVER THERE'S A CHANGE OF POLICY OF THIS NATURE SOME PEOPLE ARE INEVITABLY CAUGHT IN THAT CHANGE.

"BUT I'M SATISFIED, AS I HAVE SAID IN MY STATEMENT, THAT WE WILL HONOUR UNDER OUR NEW ARRANGEMENTS THE HUMANE INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS WHICH WE TAKE MOST SERIOUSLY," HE SAID.

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LEGISLATION FOR LABELLING, SAFE HANDLING OF INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS  
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WITH THE INCREASING USE OF CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES IN INDUSTRY, HONG KONG NOW PROPOSED TO LEGISLATE FOR THEIR LABELLING, SAFE USE AND SAFE HANDLING ON THE FACTORY FLOOR, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR BRIDGE WAS MOVING A MOTION ON THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES) REGULATIONS 1988 WHICH WERE MADE BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR ON FEBRUARY 22.

FOLLOWING THREE MONTHS OF CONSULTATIONS ON THE REGULATIONS, HE MOVED THAT THE MEASURES, WITH TWO AMENDMENTS, NOW BE APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL.

/THE TWO .....

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THE TWO AMENDMENTS WERE PROPOSED BY COUNCILLORS FOLLOWING CAREFUL SCRUTINY OF THE REGULATIONS, MR BRIDGE POINTED OUT.

AS EMPLOYERS WOULD NEED TIME TO ADAPT TO THE REGULATIONS, MR BRIDGE SAID THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR INTENDED TO BRING THEM INTO OPERATION SIX MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE COUNCIL GIVING APPROVAL.

"INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG IS USING AN INCREASING NUMBER OF CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES. MANY OF THESE SUBSTANCES ARE DANGEROUS IN THAT THEY MAY BE EXPLOSIVE, INFLAMMABLE OR HARMFUL TO HEALTH," HE SAID IN MOVING HIS MOTION.

THE MANUFACTURE, CONVEYANCE AND STORAGE OF THESE SUBSTANCES WERE ALREADY CONTROLLED UNDER THE DANGEROUS GOODS (GENERAL) REGULATIONS MADE UNDER THE DANGEROUS GOODS ORDINANCE.

"WITH THE INCREASING USE OF THESE SUBSTANCES IN INDUSTRY, WE NOW PROPOSE TO LEGISLATE FOR THE LABELLING, SAFE USE AND SAFE HANDLING OF THESE SUBSTANCES ACTUALLY ON THE FACTORY FLOOR," HE SAID.

HONG KONG APPEARED TO BE THE FIRST JURISDICTION TO INTRODUCE SUCH REGULATIONS.

MR BRIDGE SAID THE APPROPRIATE INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS AND THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD HAD BEEN CONSULTED, AND SUPPORTED THE INTRODUCTION OF THE REGULATIONS.

THE SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT THE DANGERS ARISING FROM IGNORANCE ABOUT THE PROPERTIES OF SUBSTANCES AND THEIR CONSEQUENT MISUSE WERE DEMONSTRATED TRAGICALLY IN 1986 WHEN 14 WORKERS DIED AS A RESULT OF AN EXPLOSION AND FIRE IN A FUR FACTORY, WHICH WAS CAUSED BY IMPROPER USE OF A HIGHLY INFLAMMABLE LIQUID.

HE SAID THE REGULATIONS PROVIDED THAT THE PROPRIETOR OF A SPECIFIED INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKING WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LABELLING IN A PRESCRIBED MANNER OF DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES WHICH WERE USED, HANDLED OR STORED IN HIS WORKPLACE.

"THE PROPRIETOR IS ALSO REQUIRED TO PROVIDE HIS EMPLOYEES WITH INFORMATION ON THE HAZARDS AND THE PRECAUTIONS NECESSARY IN HANDLING THESE SUBSTANCES.

"HE IS ALSO REQUIRED TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS, TRAINING AND SUITABLE PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT TO EMPLOYEES EXPOSED TO SUCH SUBSTANCES, AND TO ENSURE THAT THE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT ARE PROPERLY USED."

MR BRIDGE SAID THE REGULATIONS ALSO REQUIRED EMPLOYEES TO COMPLY WITH THE SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS AND TO TAKE OTHER APPROPRIATE PRECAUTIONS.

/"AN EMPLOYEE .....

"AN EMPLOYEE MUST USE THE PROTECTIVE CLOTHING OR EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY THE EMPLOYER IN A PROPER MANNER AND HE MUST REFRAIN FROM EATING, DRINKING OR SMOKING IN A WORKROOM IN WHICH DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES ARE USED.

"THE REGULATIONS WILL APPLY WHERE A DANGEROUS SUBSTANCE IS PRESENT IN A SPECIFIED INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKING IN CONNECTION WITH AN INDUSTRIAL PROCESS OR OPERATION," HE SAID.

THE FIRST SCHEDULE LISTED 231 DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES COMMONLY USED IN INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG. THEY WERE CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO SEVEN TYPES OF BASIC RISK. THE LIST COULD BE EXPANDED IN FUTURE BY NOTICE IN THE GAZETTE, AS NECESSARY.

SYMBOLS ADOPTED FROM THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME DANGEROUS GOODS CODE WERE USED FOR THE SEVEN TYPES OF RISK. FORTY-NINE STANDARD RISK DESCRIPTIONS AND 46 STANDARDISED SAFETY DESCRIPTIONS WERE PRESCRIBED IN THE THIRD AND FOURTH SCHEDULES.

ALL LABELS HAD TO CONTAIN, IN CHINESE AND ENGLISH, THE CHEMICAL NAME OR COMMON NAME OF THE SUBSTANCE; THE RISK DESCRIPTION AND SAFETY CLASSIFICATION OF THE SUBSTANCE; AND A STANDARD SYMBOL INDICATING THE BASIC RISK.

"THE MAXIMUM PENALTIES PRESCRIBED FOR OFFENCES COMMITTED BY A PROPRIETOR RANGE FROM \$20,000 TO \$30,000 WHILE THOSE FOR OFFENCES BY AN EMPLOYEE ARE \$10,000.

"SOME EMPLOYEES' REPRESENTATIVES HAVE SUGGESTED THAT IT IS UNFAIR TO MAKE EMPLOYEES LIABLE UNDER THE REGULATIONS.

"IT IS OUR FIRM VIEW THAT BOTH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES MUST SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENSURING SAFETY AT WORK," HE SAID.

MR BRIDGE SAID THE LABELLING SYSTEM PROPOSED IN THE REGULATIONS WAS IN LINE WITH THE METHOD USED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM IN THE CLASSIFICATION, PACKAGING AND LABELLING OF DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES REGULATIONS 1984.

THESE FOLLOWED UNITED NATIONS STANDARDS AND WERE AT PRESENT COMMONLY USED IN EEC COUNTRIES.

"SOME DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES IMPORTED FROM OVERSEAS MAY USE A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT LABELLING SYSTEM. DUE ALLOWANCE FOR THIS HAS BEEN MADE IN THE PROPOSED REGULATION 7(A), WHICH PROVIDES FOR EXEMPTION WHERE THE PARTICULARS IN THE LABELS ARE SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME AS THOSE PRESCRIBED," HE SAID.

/MR BRIDGE .....

MR BRIDGE NOTED THAT DURING THE PAST THREE MONTHS LEGCO MEMBERS HAD CAREFULLY SCRUTINISED THE REGULATIONS, SOUGHT CLARIFICATION OF VARIOUS POINTS AND RECEIVED REPRESENTATIONS FROM INTERESTED BODIES.

"CONCERN HAS BEEN EXPRESSED THAT THERE MAY BE LOOPHOLES AND INADEQUACIES.

"THESE ARE COMPLEX REGULATIONS WHICH CONCERN PEOPLE'S LIVES AND SAFETY AND FULLY DESERVE THE DETAILED ATTENTION THEY HAVE RECEIVED. I AM THEREFORE MOST GRATEFUL TO MEMBERS FOR THEIR EFFORTS.

"THE FACT THAT, AFTER SUCH CAREFUL SCRUTINY, ONLY TWO AMENDMENTS HAVE NOW BEEN PROPOSED IS, I HOPE, AN INDICATION OF THE BASIC SOUNDNESS OF OUR APPROACH," HE SAID.

MR BRIDGE SAID THE TWO AMENDMENTS PROPOSED WERE, FIRST, TO SPECIFY HOW THE CONCENTRATION OF A SUBSTANCE SHOULD BE MEASURED AND, SECONDLY, TO DELETE THE CLAUSE BY WHICH LABORATORIES WITHIN FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS WERE EXEMPTED FROM THE REGULATIONS.

"WE HAVE RECEIVED STRONG REPRESENTATION FROM VARIOUS QUARTERS THAT SUCH AN EXEMPTION WOULD CREATE A MAJOR LOOPHOLE, AND NOW AGREE THAT THERE IS A GOOD CASE FOR INCLUDING THEM UNDER THE REGULATIONS," HE SAID.

MR BRIDGE SAID THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HAD PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIALS, TECHNICAL INFORMATION AND LITERATURE ON THE SUBJECT.

THESE INCLUDED A BOOKLET ON THE CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES COMMONLY USED IN INDUSTRY; LEAFLETS ON THE SAFE USE OF CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES; AND TECHNICAL DATA SHEETS FOR THE LISTED SUBSTANCES.

STANDARD SAMPLE LABELS, WITH PRESCRIBED RISKS, SAFETY INFORMATION AND SYMBOLS WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO FACTORY PROPRIETORS BEFORE THE REGULATIONS CAME INTO FORCE.

IN THE SIX MONTHS BEFORE THE REGULATIONS CAME INTO OPERATION, A PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN WOULD BE CONDUCTED TO EXPLAIN THEIR PURPOSE AND CONTENT.

"WE SHALL MONITOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE REGULATIONS ONCE THEY COME INTO FORCE," MR BRIDGE SAID.

"MANY OF OUR EXISTING REGULATIONS ALREADY MAKE IT CLEAR THAT BOTH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES IN INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE.

"I BELIEVE THAT THESE REGULATIONS ARE A SIGNIFICANT STEP IN OUR CONTINUED EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE TOLL OF ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESSES ARISING FROM UNSAFE WORKING CONDITIONS."

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PROPOSAL FOR CENTRAL CENTRE ON CHEMICALS WILL BE STUDIED  
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A PROPOSAL THAT THERE SHOULD BE A CENTRAL INFORMATION CENTRE ON CHEMICALS, AND THAT THERE ALSO BE SAFETY COMMITTEES IN INDIVIDUAL FACTORIES, WENT RATHER BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THE PRESENT REGULATIONS, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE WAS SPEAKING IN RESPONSE TO COMMENTS MADE BY MEMBERS ON HIS MOTION THAT THE COUNCIL APPROVE THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES) REGULATIONS 1988.

HOWEVER, MR BRIDGE SAID HE WOULD ASK THE DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSALS.

THE SECRETARY PAID TRIBUTE TO THE AD HOC GROUP CHAIRED BY PROF THE HON POON CHUNG-KWONG WHICH HAD SCRUTINISED THE REGULATIONS AND PROPOSED THE TWO AMENDMENTS WHICH WERE NOW INCLUDED.

ON THE CONCERN OF INTERESTED BODIES THAT THE LIST OF 231 CHEMICALS IN THE FIRST SCHEDULE MIGHT NOT BE ADEQUATE, MR BRIDGE EMPHASISED THAT THOSE ALREADY LISTED WERE ONES COMMONLY USED IN INDUSTRY.

"WE WILL CAREFULLY MONITOR THE SITUATION AND, IF NECESSARY, ADD TO THE LIST," HE SAID.

A SUGGESTION THAT IMPORTERS OF DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE SAFETY DATA SHEETS WAS ALREADY BEING CONSIDERED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW OF THE DANGEROUS GOODS ORDINANCE, HE SAID.

ON A NEED FOR ADDITIONAL SYMBOLS, THE USE OF BOTH CHEMICAL AND COMMON NAMES ON LABELS AND THE EXEMPTION OF SOME CONTAINERS, MR BRIDGE SAID THESE POINTS WOULD BE BORNE IN MIND IN MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE REGULATIONS.

HE ASSURED MEMBERS THAT THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WOULD ADVISE FACTORY OWNERS TO PUT UP NOTICES AT ANY WORK PLACE WHERE DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES WERE SUBJECT TO CHEMICAL CHANGE.

MR BRIDGE NOTED THAT THE HON PANG CHUN-HOI AND THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG WERE WORRIED ABOUT IMPOSING PENALTIES ON EMPLOYEES. "I DO THINK IT IS IMPORTANT THAT EMPLOYEES AS WELL AS EMPLOYERS SHOULD TAKE THEIR SHARE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR INDUSTRIAL SAFETY," HE SAID.

"HOWEVER, I AM SURE THAT THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WILL TAKE GREAT CARE IN PROSECUTING EMPLOYEES."

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ON A PROPOSAL THAT CUSTODIAL SENTENCES BE CONSIDERED FOR CERTAIN OFFENCES UNDER THE REGULATIONS, MR BRIDGE SAID THIS WOULD BE DONE IN THE CONTEXT OF A SIMILAR PROPOSAL IN RELATION TO OFFENCES UNDER THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS ORDINANCE.

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION, PUBLICITY AND MONITORING, MR BRIDGE SAID THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD ENSURE THAT THE REGULATIONS WERE ADEQUATELY PUBLICISED.

"WE WILL ALSO MONITOR THEIR EFFECTIVENESS AND, IF NECESSARY, INTRODUCE APPROPRIATE IMPROVEMENTS," HE ADDED.

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL.

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#### NEW RULES ON INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS SUPPORTED

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NEW REGULATIONS WHICH PROVIDE FOR THE LABELLING AS WELL AS SAFE USE AND HANDLING OF DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES IN FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT STEP BY THE GOVERNMENT TO LEGISLATE FOR THE PROTECTION OF WORKERS, PROF THE HON POON CHUNG-KWONG SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

PROF POON WAS SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN SUPPORT OF A MOTION THAT THE COUNCIL APPROVE THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES) REGULATIONS 1988.

HE SAID THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP SET UP TO SCRUTINISE THE BILL HAD BEEN AT ALL TIMES CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED TO HAVE THE REGULATIONS ENACTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO AS TO GIVE PROPER PROTECTION TO WORKERS IN THEIR DAY-TO-DAY HANDLING OF DANGEROUS CHEMICALS.

THE AD HOC GROUP, OF WHICH HE WAS CONVENER, HAD REACHED AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT ON CERTAIN AMENDMENTS TO THE REGULATIONS.

ONE AMENDMENT WAS THE DELETION OF A PROVISION WHICH EXEMPTED BONA FIDE LABORATORIES FROM THE REGULATIONS.

"MEMBERS IN THE AD HOC GROUP AS WELL AS THE REPRESENTATIVES IT MET WERE OF THE VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE TO EXEMPT SUCH LABORATORIES AND MAY LEAD TO CONFUSION IF THE TERM COULD NOT BE CLEARLY DEFINED BY LEGISLATION," HE SAID.

PROF POON ALSO SAID THAT ALL THE ORGANISATIONS WHICH MADE REPRESENTATION TO THE AD HOC GROUP FELT THAT THE LISTING OF 231 CHEMICALS IN THE REGULATIONS WAS INSUFFICIENT AND SHOULD BE EXPANDED.

/HE NOTED .....

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HE NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE WAS THAT THE LIST ONLY REPRESENTED THE FIRST STEP IN IDENTIFYING SUCH SUBSTANCES, AND DELETION OR ADDITIONS COULD BE MADE AS AND WHEN NECESSARY.

"WHILE THE AD HOC GROUP APPRECIATES THE EXPLANATION PUT FORWARD BY THE ADMINISTRATION, MEMBERS FELT THAT THE VIEW OF THE ORGANISATIONS SHOULD BE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED AND THE LIST SHOULD BE REGULARLY REVIEWED TO SEE WHETHER IT ADEQUATELY REFLECTS THE RANGE OF CHEMICALS USED IN INDUSTRY," HE SAID.

ANOTHER POINT RAISED IN THE REPRESENTATIONS AND WHICH WAS SUPPORTED BY THE AD HOC GROUP WAS THE PROPOSAL TO REQUIRE IMPORTERS OR SUPPLIERS TO PROVIDE SAFETY DATA SHEETS FOR ALL DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES USED IN THE TERRITORY.

PROF POON SAID IT WAS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO AMEND THE RELEVANT LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE SUPPLIERS OF CHEMICAL PRODUCTS TO FORMALLY PROVIDE SAFETY DATA SHEETS. HE HOPED THIS COULD BE CARRIED OUT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

HE ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CLOSELY MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGULATIONS AND INTRODUCE APPROPRIATE AMENDMENTS WHEN NECESSARY BY TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE GAINED AFTER THE REGULATIONS BECAME EFFECTIVE.

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FRAMEWORK FOR SELF-REGULATION OF OUTBOUND TRAVEL INDUSTRY  
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THE TRAVEL AGENTS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988 CONTAINS A BROAD FRAMEWORK AND THE ESSENTIAL STATUTORY PROVISIONS REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY OF SELF-REGULATION OF THE OUTBOUND TRAVEL INDUSTRY, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID NENDICK, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE BILL'S SECOND READING, MR NENDICK DESCRIBED THE BILL AS THE CULMINATION OF MANY MONTHS OF EXTENSIVE CONSULTATION RESULTING IN A CONSENSUS OF OPINION THAT SELF-REGULATION OF THE OUTBOUND TRAVEL INDUSTRY SHOULD BE INTRODUCED.

"IN THE INITIAL PHASE OF DEVELOPING SELF-REGULATION, THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO PERFORM THE LICENSING FUNCTION," HE SAID.

/"PROVISIONS HAVE .....

"PROVISIONS HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE BILL AND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY COUNCIL TO ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT TO OVERSEE THE SELF-REGULATION SCHEME AND THE NEW COMPENSATION ARRANGEMENTS.

"THE GOVERNMENT WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH THE INDUSTRY IN IMPLEMENTING THE VARIOUS MEASURES."

MR NENDICK EXPLAINED THAT THE PROPOSALS FOR SELF-REGULATION WERE ANNOUNCED IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR AFTER THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL ENDORSED THE MAJOR PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY. THESE MEASURES WERE DESIGNED TO MEET THREE OBJECTIVES:

- \* FIRST, TO INTRODUCE SELF-REGULATION OF THE OUTBOUND TRAVEL INDUSTRY WITH LIMITED GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT;
- \* SECONDLY, TO REPLACE THE TRAVEL AGENTS' RESERVE FUND WITH A NEW COMPENSATION SCHEME TO BE ESTABLISHED BY THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY OFFERING THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC A DEGREE OF PROTECTION; AND
- \* THIRDLY, TO SETTLE THE OUTSTANDING CLAIMS AGAINST THE TRAVEL AGENTS' RESERVE FUND.

"SINCE THE ENACTMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE IN 1985, A NUMBER OF TRAVEL AGENTS HAVE DEFAULTED DUE TO FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES OR THE ABSCONDMENT OF THEIR OWNERS," HE SAID.

"THE PROVISIONS IN THE ORDINANCE CONCERNING EX-GRATIA COMPENSATION HAVE PROVED TO BE INADEQUATE.

"ACCORDINGLY, THE GOVERNMENT, IN CONSULTATION THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY COUNCIL OF HONG KONG WHICH REPRESENTS ABOUT 50 PER CENT OF ALL LICENSED TRAVEL AGENTS AND THE VAST MAJORITY OF OUTBOUND TOUR ORGANISERS, COMMENCED A REVIEW OF THE ORDINANCE."

THE REVIEW FOCUSED, IN PARTICULAR, ON THE COMPENSATION ARRANGEMENTS AND ON THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF REGULATION OF THE OUTBOUND TRAVEL INDUSTRY.

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRAVEL AGENTS, THE CONSUMER COUNCIL AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AD HOC GROUP ON THE TRAVEL AGENTS ORDINANCE ALSO GAVE THEIR VIEWS ON THE MATTER.

THE GENERAL CONSENSUS WAS THAT THE INTRODUCTION OF SELF-REGULATION WAS THE MOST APPROPRIATE MEANS OF ENCOURAGING BETTER PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND DISCIPLINE WITHIN THE INDUSTRY.

MR NENDICK SAID CLAUSE FOUR OF THE BILL AMENDED THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE TO REQUIRE, AS A STATUTORY CONDITION OF LICENCE, THAT ANY PERSON WHO WISHED TO PROVIDE OUTBOUND TRAVEL SERVICES SHOULD BE A MEMBER OF AN "APPROVED ORGANISATION".

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THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY COUNCIL OF HONG KONG (TIC) WOULD BE DESIGNATED THE "APPROVED ORGANISATION" IN THE NEW SCHEDULE TO THE ORDINANCE.

TRAVEL AGENTS WOULD ACQUIRE MEMBERSHIP OF THE TIC BY JOINING ONE OF ITS SIX ASSOCIATION MEMBERS.

TIC MEMBERSHIP WOULD BE A PRE-REQUISITE FOR THE GRANTING OF A LICENCE BY THE REGISTRAR OF TRAVEL AGENTS.

"THE INTRODUCTION OF THIS LICENSING CONDITION WILL ENSURE THAT ALL LICENSEES MEET CERTAIN MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS," MR NENDICK SAID.

"THE MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA FOR JOINING THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY COUNCIL WILL INCLUDE, AMONGST OTHER THINGS, MINIMUM CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS AND THE PROVISION OF SUITABLE COMMERCIAL PREMISES AND EXPERIENCED STAFF TO RUN THE TRAVEL SERVICE.

"THE MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA SET CERTAIN BASIC STANDARDS, BUT THEY ARE NOT UNDULY ONEROUS. BONA FIDE OPERATORS SHOULD HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN MEETING THEM."

MR NENDICK SAID THAT IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT THE MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA FOR JOINING THE TIC WERE ADMINISTERED FAIRLY AND IMPARTIALLY, AN APPEALS MECHANISM WOULD BE ESTABLISHED.

UNDER THE NEW TIC CONSTITUTION, TO BE ADOPTED UPON THE INCORPORATION OF THE TIC, A TRAVEL AGENT, WHOSE APPLICATION TO JOIN ANY ASSOCIATION MEMBER OF THE TIC HAD BEEN REFUSED, MIGHT APPLY FOR HIS CASE TO BE REVIEWED BY AN APPEAL BOARD OF THE TIC AND THEREAFTER, BY FURTHER APPEAL, TO THE REGISTRAR OF TRAVEL AGENTS.

"SHOULD THE REGISTRAR FIND IN FAVOUR OF THE APPLICANT CONCERNED, HE MAY DIRECT THE TIC TO ACCEPT THE APPLICANT AS A MEMBER.

"A SIMILAR RIGHT OF APPEAL IS PROVIDED FOR IN RESPECT OF AN AGENT WHOSE MEMBERSHIP HAS BEEN SUSPENDED OR REVOKED BY THE TIC," HE SAID.

MR NENDICK SAID IT WAS INTENDED THAT A NEW NON-STATUTORY COMPENSATION SCHEME SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO REPLACE THE EXISTING TRAVEL AGENTS' RESERVE FUND.

THE NEW COMPENSATION FUND WOULD BE NAMED THE TIC RESERVE FUND. THIS WOULD BE IN THE FORM OF A SEPARATE COMPANY.

"IN ADDITION TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE TIC RESERVE FUND WILL INCLUDE A LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR, A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, A CONSUMER COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE AND FOUR PROFESSIONALS DRAWN FROM THE LEGAL, BANKING, ACCOUNTING AND INSURANCE SECTORS RESPECTIVELY," HE SAID.

/MR NENDICK .....

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MR NENDICK SAID SECTION 35 AND THE EXISTING SCHEDULE TO THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE REQUIRED NEW LICENSEES TO PAY \$2,500 INTO THE TRAVEL AGENTS' RESERVE FUND.

"UNDER THE NEW ARRANGEMENT, THESE PROVISIONS WILL BE REPEALED BY CLAUSES 15(2) AND 17 OF THE BILL AND WILL BE BROUGHT INTO EFFECT FROM JULY 15, 1988," HE SAID.

"THEREAFTER, ALL NEW LICENSEES AND TIC MEMBERS WILL BE REQUIRED UNDER THE TIC CONSTITUTION TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE TIC RESERVE FUND BY WAY OF A LEVY ON THE SALE OF ALL OUTBOUND PACKAGE TOURS.

"THE LEVY HAS BEEN SET AT A RATE OF ONE PER CENT ON THE PRICE OF THE TOUR. THE PERCENTAGE OF LEVY PAYABLE MAY NOT BE AMENDED WITHOUT THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE GOVERNMENT."

MR NENDICK SAID THE BILL ALSO CONTAINED A TRANSITIONAL PROVISION TO PRESERVE CLAIMS FOR EX-GRATIA COMPENSATION LODGED WITH THE REGISTRAR UNDER SECTION 43 OF THE ORDINANCE, PRIOR TO A SPECIFIED DATE.

THE DATE WAS TO BE SPECIFIED BY THE GOVERNOR BY NOTICE IN THE GAZETTE. AFTER THAT DATE, NO CLAIMS WOULD BE ENTERTAINED AGAINST THE TRAVEL AGENTS' RESERVE FUND.

"THE PURPOSE OF THIS TRANSITIONAL PROVISION IS TO ENABLE THE FORMER CLIENTS OF TRAVEL AGENTS WHICH DEFAULTED LAST YEAR, NAMELY AUSTRAVEL AND P.C. TRAVEL SERVICE, TO APPLY FOR EX-GRATIA COMPENSATION IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS," HE SAID.

"THE WINDING-UP PROCEEDINGS IN RESPECT OF AUSTRAVEL HAVE BEEN COMPLETED AND THE MAJORITY OF FORMER CUSTOMERS HAVE ALREADY APPLIED FOR EX-GRATIA PAYMENTS FROM THE TRAVEL AGENTS' RESERVE FUND.

"THE WINDING-UP PROCEEDINGS FOR P.C. TRAVEL SERVICE WILL SOON BE COMPLETED AND FORMER CLIENTS MAY SUBMIT APPLICATIONS FOR EX-GRATIA COMPENSATION LATER."

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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IMPROVEMENTS TO LONG SERVICE PAYMENT SCHEME PROPOSED

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A NUMBER OF MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT SCHEME ARE CONTAINED IN THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1988, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, HE SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT THE PROPOSALS WOULD BE WELCOMED BY THE COMMUNITY AS A FURTHER SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN THE WELFARE OF WORKERS.

THIS WAS PARTICULARLY SO IN RELATION TO THE EXTENSION OF THE SCHEME TO COVER RESIGNATIONS DUE TO ILL HEALTH AND OLD AGE.

MR BRIDGE EXPLAINED THAT THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT SCHEME WAS ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL IN DECEMBER 1985.

IT PROVIDED FOR A LUMP SUM PAYMENT OF UP TO 12 MONTHS FINAL WAGES TO AN EMPLOYEE WHO WAS DISMISSED AFTER WORKING WITH AN EMPLOYER FOR A MINIMUM NUMBER OF YEARS: 10 YEARS IN THE CASE OF THOSE AGED BELOW 41, AND FIVE YEARS FOR THOSE AGED 45 OR MORE.

TO QUALIFY FOR THE SCHEME, THE EMPLOYEE'S CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT MUST BE TERMINATED ON GROUNDS OTHER THAN SUMMARY DISMISSAL, RESIGNATION OR REDUNDANCY.

FOR EACH YEAR OF SERVICE, A MONTHLY PAID EMPLOYEE AGED 41 OR MORE WAS ELIGIBLE FOR TWO-THIRDS OF A MONTH'S WAGES AND A DAILY-RATED OR PIECE-RATED EMPLOYEE WAS ELIGIBLE FOR 18 DAYS' WAGES, SUBJECT TO A MAXIMUM PAYMENT OF 12 MONTHS' WAGES. REDUCED PAYMENTS WERE SPECIFIED FOR YOUNGER WORKERS.

THERE WERE OTHER PROVISIONS GOVERNING RECKONABLE SERVICE AND PROVIDING FOR A GRATUITY OR PROVIDENT FUND PAYMENT TO BE SET OFF AGAINST THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT.

"WHEN THESE PROVISIONS CAME INTO OPERATION IN JANUARY 1986, THE ADMINISTRATION UNDERTOOK TO CONDUCT A REVIEW IN THE LIGHT OF EXPERIENCE," MR BRIDGE SAID.

"I AM NOW VERY HAPPY TO BE ABLE TO RECOMMEND TO THIS COUNCIL A NUMBER OF MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SCHEME, WHICH HAVE BEEN DRAWN UP FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD."

FIRST, HE SAID, IT WAS PROPOSED TO ALLOW AN EMPLOYEE WITH THE RELEVANT QUALIFYING PERIOD OF SERVICE TO BECOME ENTITLED TO A LONG SERVICE PAYMENT IF HE RESIGNED ON THE GROUNDS THAT HE WAS MEDICALLY UNFIT FOR HIS JOB AND WAS LIKELY TO REMAIN PERMANENTLY UNFIT FOR IT.

/A MEDICAL .....

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A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE FROM A GOVERNMENT OR GOVERNMENT-SUBVENTED HOSPITAL WOULD BE REQUIRED TO SUBSTANTIATE THIS CLAIM.

THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR WAS EMPOWERED TO PRESCRIBE THE FORM OF MEDICAL CERTIFICATE, WHICH MUST SPECIFY THE PRECISE JOB FOR WHICH THE EMPLOYEE WAS UNFIT AND THE REASON FOR HIS UNFITNESS.

SECONDLY, IT WAS PROPOSED THAT AN EMPLOYEE AGED 65 YEARS OR OVER WITH NOT LESS THAN 10 YEARS' SERVICE SHOULD BE ENTITLED TO A LONG SERVICE PAYMENT ON RESIGNATION.

THIRDLY, IT WAS PROPOSED TO ALLOW THE SURVIVING FAMILY MEMBERS OF A DECEASED EMPLOYEE TO BECOME ENTITLED TO A LONG SERVICE PAYMENT IF THE DECEASED HAD COMPLETED THE QUALIFYING PERIOD OF SERVICE AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH.

"THE SPOUSE OF THE DECEASED WILL HAVE PRIORITY OVER HIS LEGITIMATE CHILDREN OR PARENTS," MR BRIDGE SAID.

"IF THERE ARE NO FAMILY MEMBERS, THE DECEASED'S LEGAL PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE WILL BE ENTITLED TO THE PAYMENT."

A GRATUITY OR RETIREMENT BENEFIT DUE TO AN EMPLOYEE WHO HAD DIED IN SERVICE MIGHT BE REDUCED BY THE AMOUNT OF THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT. THIS ENSURED THAT EMPLOYERS WOULD NOT BE LIABLE TO PAY A DOUBLE BENEFIT.

FOURTHLY, IT WAS PROPOSED TO PREVENT AN UNSCRUPULOUS EMPLOYER FROM RAISING AN EMPLOYEE'S WAGES JUST BEYOND THE EXISTING WAGE CEILING AND THEN DISMISSING HIM IN ORDER TO AVOID THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT.

A CLAUSE PROVIDED THAT WHERE A NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEE EARNING MORE THAN THE WAGE CEILING WAS DISMISSED, BUT HAD BEEN EARNING BELOW THE CEILING WITHIN ONE YEAR BEFORE HIS DISMISSAL, HE SHOULD BE ENTITLED TO A LONG SERVICE PAYMENT FOR THE ENTIRE PERIOD DURING WHICH HIS WAGES DID NOT EXCEED THE CEILING.

FIFTHLY, IT WAS PROPOSED TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT AN EMPLOYER WAS NOT LIABLE TO PAY A DOUBLE BENEFIT IN RESPECT OF A LONG SERVICE PAYMENT OR SEVERANCE PAYMENT IF THE EMPLOYEE WAS RE-EMPLOYED IMMEDIATELY AFTER RETIREMENT. THE PERIOD OF RE-EMPLOYMENT WOULD BE TREATED SEPARATELY.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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BILL EXTENDS SCOPE OF EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION LAW

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THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988 PROPOSES TWO MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ORDINANCE AND A NUMBER OF MINOR ONES, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, MR BRIDGE SAID THE FIRST MAJOR PURPOSE WAS TO EXTEND THE SCOPE OF THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ORDINANCE TO COVER HONG KONG WORKERS REQUIRED IN THE COURSE OF THEIR DUTIES TO WORK OUTSIDE HONG KONG.

"AS THE LAW NOW STANDS, WHEN SUCH WORKERS SUSTAIN INJURIES WHILE WORKING OUTSIDE HONG KONG, THEY ARE DEPRIVED OF THE PROTECTION OF THE ORDINANCE AND THEIR EMPLOYERS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO COMPENSATE THEM OR THEIR DEPENDANTS," HE SAID.

"FURTHERMORE, IT MAY WELL HAPPEN THAT THEY ARE NOT PROTECTED BY THE LAWS OF THE COUNTRY IN WHICH THE INJURY OCCURS."

MR BRIDGE SAID THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HAD NOTED AN INCREASING NUMBER OF SUCH INJURIES. KNOWN CASES ROSE FROM 95 IN 1986 TO 189 IN 1987, AND THERE MIGHT WELL BE OTHER CASES WHICH WERE NOT REPORTED.

THE DEPARTMENT ALSO KNEW THAT MANY EMPLOYERS HAD VOLUNTARILY TAKEN OUT INSURANCE COVER FOR THEIR WORKERS AND HAD ACTUALLY COMPENSATED THEM AS IF THEY WERE UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE ORDINANCE.

"CLAUSE 10 OF THIS BILL WOULD MAKE THIS A STATUTORY REQUIREMENT," MR BRIDGE POINTED OUT.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT, TO AVOID DOUBLE BENEFITS, IT ALSO PROVIDED FOR COMPENSATION PAID OUTSIDE HONG KONG UNDER THE LAW OF A FOREIGN JURISDICTION TO BE OFFSET AGAINST ANY COMPENSATION RECEIVED UNDER THIS ORDINANCE.

CLAUSE 12 OF THE BILL PROPOSED TO AMEND SECTION 40 OF THE ORDINANCE SO THAT EMPLOYERS' INSURANCE LIABILITY IN RESPECT OF WORK INJURIES OUTSIDE HONG KONG WAS LIMITED TO STATUTORY LIABILITY UNDER THE ORDINANCE AND DAMAGES UNDER COMMON LAW AWARDED BY A HONG KONG COURT.

"THIS IS NECESSARY BECAUSE IT WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE TO REQUIRE INSURANCE COVER FOR DAMAGES AWARDED BY A COURT OUTSIDE HONG KONG. THIS AMENDMENT HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY," MR BRIDGE EXPLAINED.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID IT WAS PROPOSED TO HAVE A THREE-MONTH NOTICE PERIOD FROM THE DATE OF ENACTMENT BEFORE THE PROVISIONS TOOK EFFECT, SO AS TO ALLOW EMPLOYERS TIME TO OBTAIN THE NECESSARY INSURANCE COVER.

NOTING THAT THE BILL ALSO PROVIDED FOR A SECOND MAJOR IMPROVEMENT TO THE EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION SYSTEM, MR BRIDGE SAID CLAUSE 4(A) EXTENDED THE SCOPE OF THE CERTIFICATE OF COMPENSATION ASSESSMENT SYSTEM TO COVER CASES INVOLVING INJURIES RESULTING IN NOT MORE THAN FIVE PER CENT PERMANENT INCAPACITY.

"THIS QUICK AND EFFECTIVE SYSTEM HAS ALREADY HAD A DRAMATIC EFFECT IN SHORTENING THE TIME NEEDED TO SETTLE 83 PER CENT OF EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION CASES," HE SAID.

THIS AMENDMENT WOULD INCREASE TO 98 PER CENT THE PROPORTION OF CASES DEALT WITH BY THE VERY SUCCESSFUL METHOD.

OTHER CLAUSES OF THE BILL INTRODUCED MINOR AMENDMENTS TO THE EXISTING ORDINANCE.

CLAUSE 2 REQUIRED THE EMPLOYEE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON HIS OTHER CONCURRENT EMPLOYMENTS TO HIS EMPLOYER ON REQUEST.

"THIS WILL ENABLE THE EMPLOYER TO TAKE OUT FULL INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR HIS LIABILITY UNDER SECTION 11(7) OF THE ORDINANCE," MR BRIDGE SAID.

HE NOTED THAT THIS PROVIDED THAT WHEN AN EMPLOYEE HAD CONCURRENT CONTRACTS WITH TWO OR MORE EMPLOYERS AND WAS INJURED IN HIS PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT, HIS MONTHLY EARNINGS FOR THE PURPOSE OF COMPUTING COMPENSATION WOULD BE THE SUM TOTAL OF HIS EARNINGS UNDER ALL THE CONCURRENT CONTRACTS.

"THIS METHOD OF RECKONING EARNINGS WILL NOT APPLY IF THE EMPLOYEE FAILS TO SUPPLY THE PARTICULARS REQUESTED BY THE EMPLOYER," MR BRIDGE EXPLAINED.

CLAUSE 3 OF THE BILL RAISED THE CEILING OF AN EMPLOYER'S ADVANCE PAYMENT TO AN INJURED EMPLOYEE OR HIS DEPENDANTS IN A PENDING CASE FROM \$10,000 TO \$20,000 IN ORDER TO REFLECT WAGE AND COST OF LIVING INCREASES.

CLAUSE 5 REQUIRED THAT OBJECTIONS TO THE ASSESSMENT OF A COMPENSATION ASSESSMENT BOARD MUST BE MADE THROUGH THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR.

HE SAID THIS WOULD ENABLE THE EXTENDED CERTIFICATE OF COMPENSATION ASSESSMENT SYSTEM TO BE IMPLEMENTED MORE EFFECTIVELY.

/"AT PRESENT .....

"AT PRESENT IT IS NOT AN OFFENCE FOR AN EMPLOYER NOT TO PAY THE COMPENSATION OR THE SURCHARGE. CLAUSES 4(D) AND 7(C) MAKE IT AN OFFENCE WITH A MAXIMUM PENALTY OF A FINE OF \$10,000," MR BRIDGE ADDED.

CLAUSE 8 EXTENDED THE TIME LIMIT FOR APPEALS TO THE COURT AGAINST ANY DECISION OR ASSESSMENT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR OR AN ASSESSMENT BOARD FROM 30 DAYS TO SIX MONTHS. MR BRIDGE SAID THIS WOULD PARTICULARLY HELP THOSE APPLICANTS WHO REQUIRED LEGAL AID.

CLAUSE 11 REPEALED SECTION 36D(2)(A) WHICH WAS NO LONGER NECESSARY.

"THIS SECTION NOW REQUIRES THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES TO GIVE THE EMPLOYER PARTICULARS OF THE ACCIDENT AND THE INJURY WHEN CLAIMING THE COSTS OF FITTING THE EMPLOYEE WITH A PROSTHESIS OR SURGICAL APPLIANCE," MR BRIDGE SAID.

"IN FACT THE EMPLOYER ALREADY HAS THIS INFORMATION."

AT PRESENT, THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR HAD THE POWER TO REQUIRE AN EMPLOYER TO PRODUCE A CURRENT INSURANCE POLICY, BUT NOT EARLIER POLICIES.

MR BRIDGE SAID IN MANY CASES IT HAD PROVED NECESSARY TO CHECK A PREVIOUS POLICY WHICH WAS IN FORCE WHEN AN ACCIDENT OCCURRED.

"CLAUSE 14 EMPOWERS THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR TO REQUIRE AN EMPLOYER BY NOTICE IN WRITING TO PRODUCE FOR INSPECTION A POLICY OF INSURANCE OR OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO ANY DATE SPECIFIED IN THE NOTICE," HE SAID.

"AN EMPLOYER WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO PRODUCE DOCUMENTS MORE THAN THREE YEARS OLD."

MR BRIDGE POINTED OUT THAT ALL THESE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS HAD THE SUPPORT OF THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD AND HE BELIEVED THEY REPRESENTED A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ORDINANCE.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

CONTROL ON MAJORITY OF PRIVATE BILLIARD CLUBS NECESSARY  
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THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THAT CONTROL SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO THE MAJORITY OF PRIVATE BILLIARD CLUBS WHICH IN REALITY OPERATE AS PUBLIC BILLIARD SALOONS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988, MR CHAMBERS SAID THE EXTENSION WAS CONSIDERED NECESSARY FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC, FROM THE LAW AND ORDER, PUBLIC HEALTH, FIRE AND STRUCTURAL SAFETY POINTS OF VIEW.

MR CHAMBERS EXPLAINED THAT UNDER THE PRESENT PROVISIONS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES ORDINANCE, PRIVATE BILLIARD CLUBS WERE NOT REQUIRED TO BE LICENSED ALTHOUGH MANY OPERATED AS DE FACTO PUBLIC BILLIARD SALOONS.

THE BILL REPLACED THE PRESENT DEFINITION "PUBLIC BILLIARD SALOON" WITH A NEW DEFINITION "BILLIARD ESTABLISHMENT" WHICH MEANT ANY PLACE USED FOR PLAYING BILLIARDS OR OTHER SIMILAR GAMES.

IT ALSO EXEMPTED GENUINE PRIVATE HOMES FROM THE REQUIREMENT TO OBTAIN A LICENCE; AND EMPOWERED THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS TO MAKE BY-LAWS EXEMPTING ANY CLASS OR DESCRIPTION OF BILLIARD ESTABLISHMENT FROM LICENSING.

MR CHAMBERS SAID THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS HAD ENDORSED THESE PROPOSALS AND HAD AGREED WITH THE ADMINISTRATION THAT BILLIARD ESTABLISHMENTS WITH LESS THAN FOUR TABLES, WHICH WOULD NORMALLY NOT BE COMMERCIALY VIABLE, SHOULD BE EXEMPTED FROM LICENSING.

THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE HAD ALSO SUPPORTED THE PROPOSALS AND MADE SOME SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE AGE AND HOURS OF PLAY IN RESPECT OF YOUNG PERSONS IN BILLIARD ESTABLISHMENTS, HE SAID.

MR CHAMBERS SAID THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS WOULD AMEND THE PLACES OF AMUSEMENT (URBAN COUNCIL) AND (REGIONAL COUNCIL) BY-LAWS RESPECTIVELY AFTER THE BILL WAS ENACTED TO EXEMPT FROM LICENSING THE CLASS OR DESCRIPTION OF BILLIARD ESTABLISHMENT THAT WAS INTENDED TO BE EXEMPTED.

THERE WOULD BE A 12-MONTH GRACE PERIOD STARTING FROM THE ENACTMENT OF THE AMENDMENT BY-LAWS TO ENABLE EXISTING CLUB OPERATORS TO APPLY FOR A LICENCE OR TO WIND UP THEIR BUSINESSES, AFTER WHICH THE AMENDMENT BILL WOULD BE BROUGHT INTO EFFECT.

"THE TWO COUNCILS WILL ALSO TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW THE LICENSING CONDITIONS CONCERNING AGES AND HOURS OR PLAY ON SUCH PREMISES, PARTICULARLY IN RESPECT OF YOUNG PERSONS, IN THE LIGHT OF COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS MADE BY THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE," MR CHAMBERS ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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BILL TO REMEDY TWO DEFECTS IN ORDINANCE

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THE REGISTRATION OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988 WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE BILL'S SECOND READING, THE SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND INFORMATION, THE HON PETER TSAO, SAID THE SHORT PIECE OF LEGISLATION WAS INTENDED TO REMEDY TWO DEFECTS IN THE REGISTRATION OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS ORDINANCE WHICH CAME INTO EFFECT IN MARCH LAST YEAR.

HE EXPLAINED THAT CLAUSE 2 OF THE BILL SOUGHT TO NARROW THE DEFINITION OF A "PRINTED DOCUMENT".

"THE EFFECT OF THE PRESENT DEFINITION FOUND IN SECTION 2 OF THE ORDINANCE CURRENTLY IN FORCE WOULD BE TO REQUIRE UNDER THE PRINTED DOCUMENTS (CONTROL) REGULATIONS THAT DOCUMENTS SUCH AS INVITATION CARDS OR PHOTOCOPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE BEAR THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE PRINTER," HE SAID.

"WE HAD NOT INTENDED THAT THE ORDINANCE SHOULD HAVE THIS EFFECT AND I NOW PROPOSE, BY AN APPROPRIATE AMENDMENT, TO EXCLUDE DOCUMENTS PRINTED FOR BONA-FIDE COMMERCIAL, PROFESSIONAL, SOCIAL OR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES."

MR TSAO SAID THAT SECTION 7 OF THE REGISTRATION OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS ORDINANCE REQUIRED THAT EVERY LOCAL NEWSPAPER MUST BE REGISTERED.

THE REGISTRAR OF NEWSPAPERS WAS OBLIGED TO REGISTER A NEWSPAPER IF ALL THE NECESSARY PARTICULARS OF THE NEWSPAPERS WERE FURNISHED TO HIM AND THE APPROPRIATE FEES PAID.

"THIS MEANS THAT HE CANNOT REFUSE TO REGISTER A NEWSPAPER THE TITLE OF WHICH IS IDENTICAL TO THAT OF A NEWSPAPER ALREADY REGISTERED," MR TSAO SAID.

"WHILE CIVIL REMEDIES ARE PROBABLY AVAILABLE, THE REGISTRATION OF TWO IDENTICALLY-TITLED NEWSPAPERS WOULD OBVIOUSLY CAUSE CONFUSION TO THE PUBLIC.

"CLAUSE 3 OF THE BILL SEEKS TO PREVENT SUCH A POSSIBILITY BY EMPOWERING THE REGISTRAR TO REFUSE REGISTRATION OF NEWSPAPERS WITH A TITLE IDENTICAL TO AN EXISTING ONE."

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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EXTENSION OF FUND COVERAGE WELCOMED

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THE STEP TAKEN TO EXTEND THE COVERAGE OF THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY FUND TO INCLUDE CLAIMS BELOW \$5,000 HAD BEEN WELL RECEIVED, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

EMPLOYEES OF SMALL EMPLOYERS WHO BECAME INSOLVENT WOULD NOW BE PROTECTED, MR BRIDGE SAID IN WINDING UP DEBATE ON THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988.

"THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR IS NOW REVIEWING THE SCOPE OF THE INSOLVENCY FUND; AND ITS EXTENSION TO INCLUDE SEVERANCE PAY IS ONE OF THE IDEAS BEING CONSIDERED.

"IN THIS CONTEXT WE WILL CERTAINLY TAKE MR TAM'S POINTS INTO ACCOUNT," HE ADDED, IN REFERENCE TO REMARKS MADE BY THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG.

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EXPANSION OF ASSOCIATION'S MEDICAL SERVICES WELCOMED

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THE DECISION BY THE HONG KONG TUBERCULOSIS, CHEST AND HEART DISEASES ASSOCIATION TO EXTEND ITS SERVICES MUST BE HAILED AS A PROGRESSIVE STEP TAKEN BY A WELL-ESTABLISHED ORGANISATION TO FURTHER ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO HONG KONG, THE HON HUI YIN-FAT SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR HUI WAS SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE HONG KONG TUBERCULOSIS, CHEST AND HEART DISEASES ASSOCIATION INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988, WHICH SOUGHT TO EXTEND THE ASSOCIATION'S ACTIVITIES TO A WIDER SPECTRUM OF MEDICAL SERVICES.

THE BILL WOULD ENABLE THE ASSOCIATION TO OPERATE GENERAL HOSPITALS, PROVIDE SURGICAL SERVICES, AND ALSO PROVIDE MEDICAL CARE FOR GERIATRIC CASES.

"IN THE LIGHT OF THE SHORTAGE OF INFIRMARY BEDS IN HONG KONG, TOTALLING 1,500 PLACES, THIS TIMELY MOVE BY THE ASSOCIATION WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS RELIEVING THE PRESSURE AT PRESENT PUT ON OUR GERIATRIC WARDS AND CARE AND ATTENTION HOMES," HE SAID.

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MORE SUPPORT FOR HOSPITALS ADVOCATED

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN URGED TO OFFER INCREASED FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR THE HOSPITALS UNDER THE HONG KONG TUBERCULOSIS, CHEST AND HEART DISEASES ASSOCIATION, SO THAT THEY CAN SERVE THE PUBLIC EVEN BETTER.

THE CALL WAS MADE TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP, WHEN SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, IN SUPPORT OF THE HONG KONG TUBERCULOSIS, CHEST AND HEART DISEASES ASSOCIATION INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988.

DR IP PAID TRIBUTE TO THE STAFF OF THE HOSPITALS FOR THEIR PATIENCE, DEDICATION AND WILLINGNESS TO ALTER THE NATURE OF THEIR SERVICES TO SUIT THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.

SHE NOTED THAT WHEN THE INCIDENCE OF TUBERCULOSIS HAD BEEN REDUCED IN HONG KONG, AND THAT OF LUNG CANCER HAD INCREASED, THE ASSOCIATION HAD DIRECTED ITS EFFORTS TO THOSE STRICKEN WITH LUNG CANCER.

WHEN HEART DISEASE, PARTICULARLY CORONARY HEART DISEASE, BECAME ONE OF THE MAJOR KILLERS IN HONG KONG, THE ASSOCIATION WAS THE FIRST PUBLIC HOSPITAL, AND STILL THE ONLY ONE, TO OFFER CORONARY BYPASS SURGERY. AND IT HAD DONE THIS EXCEEDING WELL.

DR IP SAID SHE HAD NO DOUBT THAT WITH THE EXTENSION OF ITS SERVICES TO GENERAL MEDICAL SERVICES, AS PROVIDED BY THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT, THE ASSOCIATION WOULD LIKEWISE RENDER GOOD SERVICE TO MORE PEOPLE.

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CONTINUING LEGAL EFFECT INTENDED

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THE PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC FINANCE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988 WAS TO AMEND THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT DECISIONS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE SHOULD CONTINUE TO HAVE LEGAL EFFECT AFTER DISSOLUTION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID NENDICK, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE COUNCIL WOULD BE DISSOLVED ON AUGUST 25 THIS YEAR, MR NENDICK SAID WHEN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL.

/HE SAID: .....

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HE SAID: "THERE IS SOME DOUBT WHETHER CERTAIN DECISIONS MADE BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE UNDER THE PUBLIC FINANCE ORDINANCE, FROM THE DATE OF DISSOLUTION, WILL AS A MATTER OF LAW CONTINUE TO HAVE EFFECT.

"IF THEY DO NOT CONTINUE TO HAVE LEGAL EFFECT, THE NORMAL CONDUCT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S FINANCIAL BUSINESS WOULD BE DISRUPTED.

"THIS APPLIES PARTICULARLY TO THE DELEGATION OF POWER UNDER SECTION 8(3) TO THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE APPROVED ESTIMATE OF EXPENDITURE."

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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

FIVE OF THEM WERE THE JURY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988, THE EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988, THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988, THE HONG KONG BAPTIST COLLEGE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988, AND THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988.

THE OTHER TWO WERE PRIVATE BILLS - THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF HONG KONG INCORPORATION BILL 1988 AND THE HONG KONG TUBERCULOSIS, CHEST AND HEART DISEASES ASSOCIATION INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988.

SIX BILLS WERE GIVEN FIRST AND SECOND READINGS AND DEBATE ON THEM WAS THEN ADJOURNED.

THESE WERE THE PUBLIC FINANCE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988, THE TRAVEL AGENTS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988, THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988, THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988, THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1988 AND THE REGISTRATION OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988.

A MOTION UNDER THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS ORDINANCE, MOVED BY THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, WAS ALSO APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL.

THE MOTION WAS THAT THE COUNCIL APPROVE THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES) REGULATIONS 1988.

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LION ROCK TUNNEL CONGESTION AT TOLERABLE LEVEL

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THE GOVERNMENT WAS HOPEFUL THAT WITH TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW ROADS, TRAFFIC AT THE LION ROCK TUNNEL WOULD BE MAINTAINED AT A TOLERABLE LEVEL UNTIL THE OPENING OF THE TATE'S CAIRN TUNNEL IN 1991, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MAK CHUN-FONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CONRAD LAM, HE SAID SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF TIDAL FLOW ARRANGEMENT AT THE TUNNEL FROM 6 AM TO 7.30 AM IN MID-JANUARY, THERE HAD BEEN AN INCREASE OF 20 PER CENT IN THROUGHPUT OF SOUTHBOUND TRAFFIC FROM 3,300 VEHICLES TO ABOUT 3,900 VEHICLES BETWEEN 7 AM AND 8 AM.

IT DEFERRED THE FORMATION OF THE SOUTHBOUND TRAFFIC QUEUE ON LION ROCK TUNNEL ROAD UNTIL 7.30 AM, AND REDUCED THEREAFTER THE AVERAGE QUEUE LENGTH FROM 3.5 KILOMETRES TO ABOUT 2.5 KILOMETRES.

AS A RESULT, THE JOURNEY TIME OF SOUTHBOUND TRAFFIC IN THE MORNING PEAK HOURS HAD BEEN REDUCED BY AN AVERAGE OF 10 TO 15 MINUTES.

OTHER TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES INTRODUCED INCLUDED THE USE OF TRAFFIC LIGHTS TO REGULATE MERGING MOVEMENTS AT THE SOUTHBOUND APPROACH TO THE TUNNEL AND THE INTRODUCTION OF BUS LANES ALONG KOWLOON-BOUND LION ROCK TUNNEL ROAD, HUNG MUI KUK ROAD AND CHE KUNG MIU ROAD.

THE BUS LANES HAD RESULTED IN AN AVERAGE REDUCTION OF FIVE MINUTES FOR BUS JOURNEYS, MR MAK SAID.

"APART FROM THESE, A CONSULTANCY STUDY COMPLETED IN APRIL HAD MADE A NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDING THE RE-INTRODUCTION OF THE ONE-WAY TOLL SCHEME TO DIVERT NORTHBOUND TRAFFIC TO TAI PO ROAD SO THAT THE OPERATION PERIOD OF THE TIDAL FLOW CAN BE EXTENDED, FURTHER EXTENSION OF THE TIME FOR BUS LANES AND BUS PRIORITY SCHEME ALONG WESTBOUND LUNG CHEUNG ROAD," HE ADDED.

HE SAID THAT THE RELEVANT DISTRICT BOARDS WERE BEING CONSULTED ON THESE AND RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD BE PUT TO THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL AFTER THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND DISTRICT BOARDS HAD BEEN CONSULTED.

THE ROAD PROJECTS WHICH WERE UNDER CONSTRUCTION TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL CAPACITY INCLUDED THE MA ON SHAN - NAI CHUNG LINK ROAD, ROUTES 5 FROM SHA TIN TO TSUEN WAN, ROAD T6 ACROSS THE SHING MUN RIVER AND WIDENING OF TAI PO ROAD.

THE COMPLETION OF ROUTE 5 AND WIDENING OF TAI PO ROAD BY THE END OF 1989 WOULD RELIEVE SUBSTANTIALLY TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN THE CORRIDOR, MR MAK SAID.

THE COMPLETION OF ROAD T6 IN 1990 WOULD PROVIDE A SHORTER ROUTE FROM TOLO HIGHWAY TO KOWLOON VIA THE MA ON SHAN - NAI CHUNG LINK ROAD, HE ADDED.

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TAVAS EXTENSION TO TRAINS RULED OUT

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THE GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED SEVERAL YEARS AGO NOT TO EXTEND THE TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS VICTIMS ASSISTANCE SCHEME (TAVAS) TO COVER RAILWAY ACCIDENTS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON CHIU HIN-KWONG, MR CHAMBERS SAID HE DID NOT SEE ANY REASON TO CHANGE THIS VIEW AT PRESENT.

HE EXPLAINED THAT PERSONS WHO WERE INJURED ON TRAINS OR WITHIN THE PRECINCTS OF RAILWAY STATIONS WERE NOT COVERED AT PRESENT BY ANY SCHEME SIMILAR TO THE TAVA SCHEME.

MR CHAMBERS POINTED OUT THAT THE QUESTION OF EXTENDING TAVAS TO COVER VICTIMS OF RAILWAY ACCIDENTS OR SETTING UP A SEPARATE FUND WAS CONSIDERED IN SOME DETAIL SEVERAL YEARS AGO.

THERE WAS HOWEVER A BASIC DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACCIDENTS ON THE ROADS AND ON THE RAILWAYS, HE SAID.

"WHEREAS EVERYBODY HAS THE RIGHT OF ACCESS TO PUBLIC ROADS, PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ACCIDENTS ON THE RAILWAYS ARE EITHER FARE-PAYING PASSENGERS, WHO ARE IN A CONTRACTUAL POSITION WHEREBY THE CARRIER IS REQUIRED TO TAKE ALL REASONABLE STEPS TO ENSURE THEIR SAFETY, OR ARE TRESPASSERS ON RAILWAY PROPERTY," MR CHAMBERS NOTED.

HE ADDED THAT ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS WHY THE TAVA SCHEME WAS INTRODUCED WAS THE FREQUENT DIFFICULTY IN IDENTIFYING DRIVERS INVOLVED IN ROAD ACCIDENTS, WHILST THE PROBLEM DID NOT ARISE IN THE CASE OF RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

"IF ACCIDENTS DO OCCUR AND THE VICTIMS ARE UNABLE TO OBTAIN COMPENSATION QUICKLY, ASSISTANCE CAN USUALLY BE PROVIDED THROUGH THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM OR THROUGH CHARITABLE FUNDS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE," MR CHAMBERS SAID.

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AIM IS SELF-REGULATION WITHIN PEST CONTROL INDUSTRY

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THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THAT SELF-REGULATION WITHIN THE PEST CONTROL INDUSTRY, COUPLED WITH A HIGHER LEVEL OF PUBLIC AWARENESS, IS THE MOST APPROPRIATE WAY TO ENCOURAGE COMPANIES TO RAISE SAFETY STANDARDS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY PROF THE HON POON CHUNG-KWONG, MR CHAMBERS SAID THAT AT PRESENT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT CONSIDERING THE INTRODUCTION OF STATUTORY CONTROLS OVER THE OPERATION OF PEST CONTROL COMPANIES.

"INSTEAD, A NUMBER OF NON-STATUTORY MEASURES AIMED AT ENCOURAGING SELF-REGULATION WITHIN THE INDUSTRY ARE BEING CONSIDERED," HE SAID.

MR CHAMBERS SAID THESE WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE HONG KONG PEST CONTROL ASSOCIATION, AN ASSOCIATION OF THE MAJOR PEST CONTROL COMPANIES OPERATING IN HONG KONG.

THE PROPOSED MEASURES INCLUDED DRAWING UP A CODE OF PRACTICE WHICH WOULD BE BINDING UPON MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION, THE INTRODUCTION OF TRAINING COURSES FOR PEST CONTROL OPERATORS AND THE ORGANISATION OF SEMINARS ON PEST CONTROL MATTERS FOR MEMBERS OF THE TRADE AND THE PUBLIC.

"THESE EFFORTS WILL BE ACTIVELY SUPPORTED BY THE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED," HE SAID.

IN ADDITION, HE SAID THAT AN ELEMENT OF INDIRECT CONTROL WAS BEING CONSIDERED BY MEANS OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE AGRICULTURAL PESTICIDES ORDINANCE.

THESE AMENDMENTS WOULD EXTEND THE EXISTING CONTROLS UNDER THE ORDINANCE TO COVER THE IMPORT, SUPPLY, STORAGE, TRANSPORTATION, RETAILING, LABELLING, BOTTLING AND MAXIMUM CONCENTRATION LEVELS OF NON-AGRICULTURAL PESTICIDES, INCLUDING ALL THOSE CURRENTLY USED BY PEST CONTROL COMPANIES, MR CHAMBERS ADDED.

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STABLE PATTERN IN EARLY RETIREMENTS FROM POLICE

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THE FIGURES INDICATING THE SCALE AND PATTERN OF EARLY RETIREMENTS FROM THE ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE FORCE HAVE BEEN STABLE AT A LOW LEVEL OVER RECENT YEARS AND ARE NOT A CAUSE FOR CONCERN, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI, MR BARNES GAVE FIGURES ON EARLY RETIREMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS FROM THE POLICE OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

MR BARNES NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN 106 EARLY RETIREMENTS IN 1983, 70 IN 1984, 79 IN 1985, 46 IN 1986, 75 IN 1987 AND 27 SO FAR THIS YEAR.

THE FIGURES FOR EARLY RETIREMENTS OF JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS, WHICH CONSTITUTED THE MAJORITY OF THE TOTAL NUMBER, WERE: 96 IN 1983, 61 IN 1984, 72 IN 1985, 37 IN 1986, 66 IN 1987 AND 26 SO FAR THIS YEAR.

AS FOR RESIGNATIONS, MR BARNES SAID THERE HAD BEEN AN INCREASE IN RESPECT OF INSPECTORS AND JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS IN 1987 AND THE FIRST FIVE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR.

THE FIGURES FOR INSPECTORATE OFFICERS WHO HAD RESIGNED FROM 1983 TO 1988 (UP TO MAY) WERE: 27 IN 1983, 29 IN 1984, 20 IN 1985, 19 IN 1986, 38 IN 1987 AND 14 THIS YEAR.

THE CORRESPONDING FIGURES FOR JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS WERE: 293, 220, 209, 222, 312 AND 228.

"I AM SATISFIED, HOWEVER, THAT ALTHOUGH THIS TREND MUST BE WATCHED CLOSELY, THESE RESIGNATIONS HAVE NOT SERIOUSLY AFFECTED THE EXPANSION PLANS DESIGNED TO ENABLE THE POLICE TO RESUME THE ANTI-ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION DUTIES AT PRESENT UNDERTAKEN BY THE BRITISH GARRISON," MR BARNES SAID.

"RECRUITMENT WILL OF COURSE PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN THIS EXPANSION BUT I AM INFORMED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE THAT RECRUITMENT TARGETS ARE BEING MET WITHOUT REDUCING STANDARDS, AND THAT BOTH WASTAGE RATES AND RECRUITMENT ARE MATTERS WHICH ARE KEPT UNDER CLOSE AND CONSTANT SCRUTINY," HE ADDED.

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MEDICAL REPORT EXPECTED IN AUTUMN

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THE FINAL REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IS EXPECTED TO BE RECEIVED IN THE AUTUMN, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP, MR CHAMBERS SAID THAT IN THE MEANTIME IT WOULD BE QUITE INAPPROPRIATE FOR HIM TO REQUIRE THE WORKING PARTY TO CARRY OUT FURTHER CONSULTATION ON THE FORMATION OF A MEDICAL COLLEGE OR ANY OTHER MATTER.

"THIS IS FOR THE WORKING PARTY TO DECIDE," HE SAID.

MR CHAMBERS POINTED OUT THAT THE WORKING PARTY ISSUED AN INTERIM REPORT IN SEPTEMBER LAST YEAR.

"IN THAT REPORT, A LIST OF POSSIBLE COLLEGES AND SPECIALTY BOARDS WHICH MIGHT FORM THE PROPOSED HONG KONG ACADEMY OF MEDICINE WAS SET OUT," HE SAID.

THE REPORT MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE LIST WAS TENTATIVE ONLY AND SOUGHT FURTHER VIEWS ON THE QUESTION FROM MEMBERS OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

"ONCE THE WORKING PARTY'S FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED, I ACCEPT THAT IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT FURTHER CONSULTATION BEFORE THE PROPOSALS ARE PUT TO THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL FOR DECISION," HE ADDED.

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CONSISTENT ACTION AGAINST OVERCHARGING TAXI-DRIVERS

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THE NUMBER OF PROSECUTIONS TAKEN AGAINST TAXI DRIVERS BY THE POLICE FOR OVERCHARGING IN THE LAST THREE YEARS WERE CONSISTENTLY ABOUT 20 PER CENT, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MAK CHUN-FONG, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON SELINA CHOW, HE SAID THAT THE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY THE POLICE IN 1985-86 AND 1986-87 WERE 155 AND 140 RESPECTIVELY.

"THE NUMBER OF PROSECUTIONS INSTITUTED DURING THESE TWO YEARS WERE 33 OR 21.3 PER CENT AND 28 OR 20 PER CENT," HE SAID.

/MR MAK .....

MR MAK ADDED THAT IN 1987-88, 240 COMPLAINTS WERE RECEIVED WITH 50 CASES PROSECUTED OR 20.2 PER CENT.

HE SAID: "THESE FIGURES INDICATED CONSISTENT EFFORTS BY THE POLICE TO HANDLE COMPLAINTS ON OVERCHARGING."

HE SAID THE EXISTING PENALTY FOR OVERCHARGING - A FINE OF \$3,000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR SIX MONTHS - WAS ADEQUATE.

"TO DETER TAXI DRIVERS FROM OVERCHARGING OR OTHER MALPRACTICE AND TO ENCOURAGE COMPLAINANTS TO REPORT SUCH CASES, A COMPLAINT HOT LINE OF THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE TRANSPORT COMPLAINTS UNIT (TCU) WAS DISPLAYED IN TAXIS," HE ADDED.

"WHEN A PERSON MAKES A COMPLAINT TO THE UNIT, THE COMPLAINANT WILL BE ASKED WHETHER HE IS WILLING TO BE A COURT WITNESS. IF HE IS WILLING, TCU WILL ARRANGE WITH THE POLICE TO CONTACT HIM TO MAKE FURTHER ENQUIRIES."

HE ADDED THAT TO ENCOURAGE COMPLAINANTS TO REPORT TAXI MALPRACTICES AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, EVERY EFFORT WAS MADE BY THE POLICE TO TAKE STATEMENTS AT LOCATIONS CONVENIENT TO THEM, FOR EXAMPLE HOME, OFFICE OR THE NEAREST POLICE STATION.

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#### STEPS TAKEN TO ASSIST FISH FARMERS

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IN VIEW OF THE FREQUENT OCCURRENCE OF RED TIDES, A NUMBER OF MEASURES HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO ASSIST FISH FARMERS TO CONTINUE TO OPERATE IN TOLO HARBOUR, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WENDESDAY)..

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ANDREW WONG, MR CHAMBERS SAID A RED TIDE REPORTING NETWORK HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED TO GIVE EARLY WARNING TO THE FISH FARMERS.

IN ADDITION, THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT PROVIDED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING ADVICE ON THE INTRODUCTION OF MORE EFFICIENT AERATION DEVICES AND IMPROVED HUSBANDRY PRACTICES.

THE IMPLEMENTATION FROM JUNE 24 OF THE TOLO HARBOUR ACTION PLAN, WHICH INCLUDED THE CONTROL OF LIVESTOCK WASTE IN THE AREA SURROUNDING TOLO HARBOUR AS WELL AS VARIOUS SEWERAGE AND SLUDGE CONTROL SCHEMES WAS EXPECTED TO BRING ABOUT IMPROVEMENTS IN WATER QUALITY DURING THE NEXT FEW YEARS, MR CHAMBERS ADDED.

/HE SAID .....

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HE SAID ACTION WAS BEING TAKEN BY THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT TO IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL AREAS FOR MARICULTURE.

THESE INCLUDED AN EXTENSION TO THE SHAM WAN FISH CULTURE ZONE IN LONG HARBOUR AND THE POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW ZONE AT SHAM CHUNG, KAT O.

HOWEVER, MR CHAMBERS POINTED OUT THAT MARICULTURE WAS ITSELF A POLLUTING OCCUPATION BECAUSE OF THE ORGANIC MATTER WHICH WAS PUT INTO THE SEA TO FEED THE FISH AND THE KITCHEN AND TOILET WASTES WHICH WERE FREQUENTLY DISCHARGED BY THOSE LIVING ON THE FISH RAFTS.

"GIVEN THE INTENSITY OF COMPETING DEMANDS FOR THE USE OF COASTAL WATERS, PARTICULARLY FOR RECREATION, FUTURE EXPANSION OF THE MARICULTURE INDUSTRY IS EXPECTED TO BE LIMITED," HE CONCLUDED.

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#### MORE FINANCIAL AID LIKELY FOR LINGNAN COLLEGE

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IT IS LIKELY THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL RECOMMEND AN INCREASE IN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR LINGNAN COLLEGE, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON DANIEL TSE, MR BRIDGE SAID HE HOPED THAT RECOMMENDATIONS TO THIS EFFECT WOULD BE MADE WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.

DR TSE HAD ASKED WHAT MEASURES THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO TAKE ON THE FUTURE OF LINGNAN COLLEGE AS A RESULT OF THE RECENT ASSESSMENT MADE BY THE UNITED KINGDOM COUNCIL FOR NATIONAL ACADEMIC AWARDS (CNA) OF THE COLLEGE'S ACADEMIC PROGRAMME.

EXPLAINING THE BACKGROUND AGAINST WHICH THE CNA CARRIED OUT ITS ASSESSMENT, MR BRIDGE SAID IN 1978 THE COLLEGE WAS REGISTERED AS A POST-SECONDARY COLLEGE UNDER THE POST-SECONDARY COLLEGES ORDINANCE.

"IT ADOPTS A 2-2-1 COURSE STRUCTURE: THAT IS TO SAY, TWO YEARS OF FORM 6; A TWO YEAR POST-FORM 6 COURSE LEADING TO A LINGNAN HIGHER DIPLOMA; AND ONE FURTHER YEAR LEADING TO A LINGNAN HONOURS DIPLOMA," HE SAID.

/"FOR THE .....

"FOR THE FIRST FOUR YEARS OF STUDY IT RECEIVES A SUBVENTION FROM THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, BASED ON A FORMULA DERIVED FROM THE UNIT COST OF A FORM 6 PLACE.

"THESE ARRANGEMENTS ARE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS OF THE 1978 WHITE PAPER ON SENIOR SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION, WHICH ALSO STIPULATED THAT THE STANDARDS OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AWARDED BY SUCH ASSISTED POST-SECONDARY COLLEGES SHOULD BE ASSESSED TO ENSURE COMPARABILITY WITH THOSE OF THE POLYTECHNIC."

MR BRIDGE SAID THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT THEREFORE ARRANGED FOR THE COLLEGE TO BE ASSESSED BY THE CNAА IN 1981.

"THE OUTCOME OF THAT ASSESSMENT WAS VERY DISAPPOINTING AND IT WAS CLEAR THAT GOVERNMENT SUBVENTION COULD ONLY CONTINUE TO BE JUSTIFIED IF STANDARDS WERE SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVED.

"THE COLLEGE WAS THEREFORE TOLD THAT CHANGE WAS NEEDED," HE SAID.

MR BRIDGE SAID EARLY IN 1986 THE COLLEGE WAS TOLD THAT A FURTHER ASSESSMENT WOULD BE CARRIED OUT TOWARDS THE END OF 1987 AND THAT THE CONTINUATION OF GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE MIGHT DEPEND ON THE OUTCOME OF THIS ASSESSMENT.

"THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ACCORDINGLY INVITED THE CNAА TO MAKE A FURTHER ASSESSMENT OF THE COLLEGE IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR," HE SAID, "AND THE CNAА REPORT REACHED US IN MARCH.

"IT COMMENTED VERY FAVOURABLY ON THE COLLEGE'S SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS SINCE THE PREVIOUS REPORT IN 1981 MAKING IT CLEAR THAT CONTINUED ASSISTANCE IS FULLY JUSTIFIED.

"WHILE WE WERE CONSIDERING THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE REPORT, THE COLLEGE WROTE TO US EARLY IN MAY ASKING FOR INCREASED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT SOME OF THE SUGGESTIONS MADE BY THE CNAА.

"WE IMMEDIATELY STARTED EXAMINING THEIR PROPOSALS. WE ARE SYMPATHETIC TOWARDS THEIR REQUEST AND ARE RESPONDING TO IT QUICKLY."

MR BRIDGE SAID ON JUNE 1 THE COLLEGE MADE A FURTHER, SEPARATE REQUEST FOR IT TO BE INCLUDED IN THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE SYSTEM.

"THIS PROPOSAL HAS CONSIDERABLE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LONGER TERM ROLE OF THE COLLEGE," HE SAID.

"IT WILL REQUIRE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION IN CONSULTATION WITH THE UPGC.

"HOWEVER SYMPATHETIC WE MAY BE TO THE COLLEGE AND HOWEVER ENERGETICALLY WE MAY FOLLOW UP ITS PROPOSALS, IT WILL INEVITABLY BE SOME TIME BEFORE FIRM CONCLUSIONS CAN BE REACHED."

LEASE ENFORCEMENT MEASURES TO PREVENT IMPROPER USE

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THE GOVERNMENT TAKES LEASE ENFORCEMENT MEASURES AGAINST BREACH OF LEASE CONDITIONS IN ORDER TO PREVENT IMPROPER USE OF PRIVATE LAND AND BUILDINGS, AND TO SUPPORT OBJECTIVES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON ROBIN SAUNDERS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON POON CHI-FAI, MR SAUNDERS ALSO STRESSED THAT SUCH LEASE ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS WERE CARRIED OUT FAIRLY, PROFESSIONALLY, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH WELL-DEFINED PROCEDURES.

HE SAID THERE WAS A SMALL LEASE ENFORCEMENT TEAM IN EVERY DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE OF THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT.

DISTRICT LANDS OFFICERS WORKED TO PRIORITIES WHICH WERE AIMED AT ENSURING THAT THE WORST OFFENDERS WERE DEALT WITH FIRST, HE SAID.

"THE TOP PRIORITIES ARE INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS IN RESIDENTIAL OR NON-INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS, PARTICULARLY THOSE UNDERTAKINGS WHICH ARE DANGEROUS OR OBNOXIOUS," MR SAUNDERS SAID.

WHEN A BREACH OF CONDITIONS WAS DISCOVERED, HE SAID, THE OWNER WOULD BE SENT A WARNING LETTER IDENTIFYING THE BREACH AND GIVING THE OWNER ONE MONTH TO REMEDY THE SITUATION.

"IF THE BREACH IS SUFFICIENTLY SERIOUS TO NEED MORE THAN ONE MONTH'S WORK TO REMEDY IT, THEN AN EXTENSION OF TIME WILL BE GIVEN, SUBJECT TO THE PAYMENT OF FORBEARANCE FEES, TO ENABLE THE OWNER TO TAKE REMEDIAL ACTION.

"IT IS ONLY IF AN OWNER IGNORES THE WARNING LETTERS AND TAKES NO REMEDIAL ACTION THAT THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT WILL INVOKE THE ULTIMATE SANCTION OF RE-ENTRY. RE-ENTRY IS THEREFORE ONLY TAKEN AS A LAST RESORT IF ALL OTHER AVENUES HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED," HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT IF A BREACH OF CONDITIONS OCCURRED, THIS WAS USUALLY A MATTER OF FACT. BUT IN CASES OF DOUBT, LEGAL ADVICE WAS SOUGHT BEFORE LEASE ENFORCEMENT ACTION WAS INITIATED.

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MEASURES TO CURB CYCLING NUISANCE IN COUNTRY PARKS

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THE GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF THE NUISANCE CAUSED BY CYCLISTS, AND PARTICULARLY BY LEARNERS, IN COUNTRY PARKS, THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DONALD LIAO, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN, MR LIAO POINTED OUT THAT CYCLING IN THE PARKS, IN ADDITION TO CAUSING ANNOYANCE, ALSO REPRESENTED A SAFETY HAZARD TO OTHER PARK USERS.

HE NOTED THAT UNDER THE COUNTRY PARKS AND SPECIAL AREAS REGULATIONS, NO PERSON SHOULD, EXCEPT WITH THE CONSENT OF THE AUTHORITY, BRING INTO A COUNTRY PARK OR SPECIAL AREA ANY VEHICLE OR BICYCLE, OR DRIVE, USE OR BE IN POSSESSION OF ANY VEHICLE OR BICYCLE WITHIN A COUNTRY PARK OR SPECIAL AREA.

ON MEASURES BEING DONE TO CURB THE NUISANCE, MR LIAO SAID "NO CYCLING" SIGNS HAD BEEN ERECTED AT THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO COUNTRY PARKS.

"IN ADDITION, ADVICE AND WARNINGS ARE GIVEN BY PARK WARDENS TO CYCLISTS TO DETER THEM FROM ENTERING RECREATIONAL SITES, AND PROSECUTION ACTION IS TAKEN WHERE NECESSARY," HE SAID.

IN 1987-88, A TOTAL OF 108 WRITTEN WARNINGS WERE ISSUED AND 163 PROSECUTIONS WERE INITIATED.

"THE COUNTRY PARKS AUTHORITY RECOGNISES, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS A NEED TO PROVIDE AREAS WITHIN THE PARKS EXCLUSIVELY FOR CYCLING ACTIVITY.

"A PILOT CYCLING AREA FOR THIS SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE IS BEING DEVELOPED AT TAI MONG TSAI, SAI KUNG AND IS DUE FOR COMPLETION IN OCTOBER," HE SAID.

IF THIS PROVED TO BE SUCCESSFUL, IT WAS INTENDED THAT MORE WOULD BE DEVELOPED, HE ADDED.

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GATEWAY FOR BOAT PEOPLE IS CLOSED : GOVERNOR

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HONG KONG SIMPLY CANNOT GO ON PLAYING HOST TO A NEVER-ENDING STREAM OF PEOPLE LEAVING VIETNAM BY BOAT, HOPING FOR RESETTLEMENT ELSEWHERE, WHEN THE PROSPECTS OF SUCH RESETTLEMENT ARE INCREASINGLY SLIM, THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"THE MESSAGE WHICH OUGHT TO GO BACK TO VIETNAM NOW IS THOSE WHO SEEK TO COME TO HONG KONG LOOKING FOR RESETTLEMENT AND LEAVING ESSENTIALLY FOR ECONOMIC REASONS CANNOT HOPE TO FIND IN HONG KONG A GATEWAY TO RESETTLEMENT ELSEWHERE," SIR DAVID SAID.

"THAT GATEWAY IS CLOSED, AND FOR THOSE PEOPLE HONG KONG WILL SIMPLY BE A PLACE OF TEMPORARY DETENTION PENDING THEIR RETURN TO VIETNAM," HE SAID.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER ATTENDING A LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING, SIR DAVID SAID WHAT HONG KONG WAS DOING NOW WAS TREATING THOSE WHO ARRIVE BY BOAT FROM VIETNAM AS ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

HE SAID: "AFTER THEY ARRIVE, THEY WILL BE SCREENED TO SEE WHETHER THEY JUSTIFY BEING TREATED AS REFUGEES UNDER UNHCR CRITERIA. HONG KONG, YOU MIGHT SAY, IS GOING TO BE A PLACE OF TEMPORARY REFUGE FOR GENUINE REFUGEES.

"WE ARE NOT GOING TO PUSH OUT TO SEA, FORCE OUT TO SEA THOSE WHO INSIST ON COMING HERE. BUT IF THEY INSIST ON COMING HERE, THEN THEY MUST TAKE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE NEW POLICY," HE ADDED.

SIR DAVID WENT ON TO SAY THAT IF THERE WERE PEOPLE IN VIETNAM WHO HOPED TO REJOIN THEIR FAMILIES OVERSEAS, THERE WERE PROPER CHANNELS TO DO SO.

"THAT IS THE ORDERLY DEPARTURE PROGRAMME ORGANISED BY UNHCR. THAT'S A LEGAL WAY AND IT'S A SAFE WAY," HE SAID.

ASKED WHETHER VIETNAM WOULD TAKE BACK THE REFUGEES, SIR DAVID SAID THAT WAS WHAT HONG KONG SHOULD NOW WORK ON.

SIR DAVID SAID: "UP TO NOW, AS YOU KNOW, VIETNAM HAS REFUSED TO TAKE BACK PEOPLE. OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD, WHEN THEY HAVE PEOPLE LEAVING THEIR TERRITORIES ILLEGALLY, WOULD TAKE THOSE PEOPLE BACK.

"VIETNAM HAS SO FAR NOT AGREED TO DO THAT. THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF ATTEMPTS TO PERSUADE VIETNAM THAT THEY SHOULD DO SO. THOSE ATTEMPTS WILL CONTINUE.

/"ONE OF .....

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"ONE OF THE MOST RECENT WAS THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, SPEAKING TO THE VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER IN NEW YORK LAST WEEK. THAT EFFORT WILL BE CONTINUED BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ON BEHALF OF HONG KONG," HE SAID.

WHEN ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS A MESSAGE TO WESTERN GOVERNMENTS ON THE NEW POLICY, SIR DAVID SAID THAT IF THERE WAS TO BE A LOOKING-AFTER OF PEOPLE WHO WERE GENUINE REFUGEES IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD, THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT ARRANGEMENT HAD TO BE THAT THERE SHOULD BE RESETTLEMENT ELSEWHERE.

"IT CANNOT SIMPLY BE A ONE-SIDED ARRANGEMENT WHERE PEOPLE STOP IN THE TERRITORIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA AND HONG KONG AND DO NOT HAVE A CHANCE TO DO WHAT THEY WISH TO DO, WHICH IS TO GO ON ELSEWHERE," HE SAID.

SIR DAVID ALSO SAID THAT THE NEW POLICY WOULD NOT DESTROY THE IMAGE OF THE TERRITORY, BECAUSE HONG KONG HAD PLAYED ITS PART TO THE FULL IN LOOKING AFTER PEOPLE COMING BY BOAT FROM VIETNAM.

"WHEN THERE WAS AN UNDERSTANDING IN 1979 THAT ALL PEOPLE LEAVING VIETNAM BY BOAT WILL BE TREATED AS REFUGEES WITH NO QUESTIONS ASKED, THE OTHER HALF OF THAT UNDERSTANDING WAS THEY WOULD ALSO BE RESETTLED.

"IT'S SELF-EVIDENT TO EVERYBODY THAT THE OTHER HALF OF THAT ARRANGEMENT NO LONGER APPLIES, I BELIEVE PEOPLE WILL FULLY UNDERSTAND THAT HONG KONG MUST NOW DETERMINE WHO IS A GENUINE REFUGEE AND WHO IS NOT.

"I AM SURE THAT WOULD BE WIDELY UNDERSTOOD THROUGHOUT THE WORLD," THE GOVERNOR SAID.

REFUTING A SUGGESTION THAT HONG KONG WAS ACTING IN CONCERT WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT, SIR DAVID SAID: "WE HAVE EXPLAINED WHAT WE ARE DOING TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA, MANY OF WHOM FACE THE SAME PROBLEMS. BUT IT WOULD NOT BE RIGHT TO SAY WE ARE ACTING IN CONCERT."

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NEW POLICY ON BOAT PEOPLE FROM VIETNAM

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HONG KONG WILL ADOPT A NEW POLICY FROM MIDNIGHT TONIGHT (WEDNESDAY) UNDER WHICH ALL VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE SEEKING TO ENTER HONG KONG AS ECONOMIC MIGRANTS WILL BE TREATED AS ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS UNLESS THEY ARE ACCORDED REFUGEE STATUS AFTER A SCREENING PROCESS, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, MR GEOFFREY BARNES, SAID TODAY.

ANNOUNCING THE NEW POLICY AT A PRESS CONFERENCE, MR BARNES SAID FROM ONE MINUTE PAST MIDNIGHT TONIGHT, ALL BOAT PEOPLE ARRIVING FROM VIETNAM, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THOSE LATER IDENTIFIED BY THE SCREENING PROCESS AS GENUINE REFUGEES, WILL BE HELD IN DETENTION CENTRES PENDING REPATRIATION TO VIETNAM.

"THEY WILL NOT HAVE ACCESS TO RESETTLEMENT PROCESSING," HE SAID.

"THOSE WHO ARE SCREENED IN BY THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT AS REFUGEES ACCORDING TO THE 1951 UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION WILL BE ACCOMMODATED IN REFUGEE CAMPS WITH ACCESS TO RESETTLEMENT PROCESSING," HE SAID.

MR BARNES POINTED OUT THAT GENUINE REFUGEES WHO HAD A "WELL FOUNDED FEAR OF PERSECUTIONS ON GROUNDS OF RACE, RELIGION, NATIONALITY OR MEMBERSHIP OF A PARTICULAR SOCIAL OR POLITICAL GROUPING" WOULD NOT BE PENALISED BY THIS CHANGE IN POLICY.

"THE SCREENING PROCEDURE WILL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH UNHCR GUIDELINES AND THERE WILL BE AN AVENUE OF APPEAL TO THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL.

"THOSE WITH REFUGEE STATUS ALREADY IN HONG KONG WILL CONTINUE TO BE TREATED ACCORDINGLY, AND WILL BE OPEN TO SUCH OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESETTLEMENT AS MAY BECOME AVAILABLE.

"BUT FOR THOSE SCREENED OUT AS ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS, THE PROSPECT IS ONE OF DETENTION AT CENTRES ON HEI LING CHAU AND AT CHI MA WAN UNTIL THEY ARE REPATRIATED TO VIETNAM," HE SAID.

MR BARNES POINTED OUT THAT THIS CHANGE OF POLICY, WHICH HAD BEEN WORKED OUT BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IN CONSULTATION WITH, AND WITH THE APPROVAL OF, THE UK GOVERNMENT, WAS NO QUIXOTIC MOVE.

"A DETERRENT HAD TO BE FOUND.

"HONG KONG HAS BEEN ACCEPTING VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SINCE 1975. DURING THIS TIME, WE HAVE GIVEN REFUGE TO ABOUT 120,000 BOAT PEOPLE.

/"NONE HAS .....

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"NONE HAS BEEN TURNED AWAY AND NONE WILL BE TURNED AWAY NOW.

"WE DO NOT SUBSCRIBE TO PUSHING OFF BOATS WHEN THEY ATTEMPT TO ENTER OUR WATERS. BUT WE ARE AND WILL REMAIN A SMALL OVERCROWDED TERRITORY AND WE ARE FACED WITH A MOUNTING TIDE OF FRUSTRATION AND RESENTMENT AT THE INCREASING NUMBERS OF VIETNAMESE COMING TO HONG KONG AND THE COST AND EFFORT WHICH IT SEEMS HONG KONG IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO SHOULDER AS AN OPEN ENDED COMMITMENT".

MR BARNES NOTED THAT THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF RECENT ARRIVALS FROM VIETNAM WERE ETHNIC VIETNAMESE.

"SEVENTY PER CENT COME FROM NORTH VIETNAM AND THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT A VERY LARGE NUMBER OF THE BOAT PEOPLE ARE NOT GENUINE REFUGEES BUT MERELY ORDINARY PEOPLE, MOSTLY FARMERS AND FISHERMEN, SEEKING A BETTER LIFE.

"MOST HAVE NO CONNECTIONS OR FAMILY LINKS OUTSIDE VIETNAM AND THEIR CHANCES OF RESETTLEMENT OVERSEAS ARE REMOTE INDEED.

"OVER 3,000 REFUGEES HAVE NOW BEEN IN HONG KONG FOR MORE THAN FIVE YEARS. THE OFFTAKE BY RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES SIMPLY CANNOT KEEP PACE WITH ARRIVALS, AND RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES ARE APPARENTLY NO LONGER PREPARED TO CONTINUE RESETTLING VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE INDISCRIMINATELY AS REFUGEES.

"THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION OF HONG KONG CONTINUING TO BE USED, APPARENTLY INDEFINITELY, AS A TRANSIT CENTRE FOR THIRD COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY WHEN RESETTLEMENT IN NO WAY MATCHES THE NUMBERS ARRIVING," HE SAID.

MR BARNES SAID THE MESSAGE THAT HONG KONG MUST GET BACK TO THOSE CONTEMPLATING LEAVING VIETNAM IN THE HOPE OF RESETTLEMENT VIA HONG KONG WAS "DO NOT COME HERE. AS ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS YOU WILL ONLY FACE YEARS OF DETENTION PENDING REPATRIATION TO YOUR OWN COUNTRY."

HE SAID IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT VIETNAM ALSO PLAYED ITS PART IN PREVENTING ITS PEOPLE FROM LEAVING ON SUCH HOPELESS AND HAZARDOUS JOURNEYS.

"ORDERLY DEPARTURE FROM VIETNAM ITSELF DIRECT TO RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES MUST BE THE AIM.

"AT THE SAME TIME WE ASK FOR THE UNDERSTANDING AND ASSISTANCE OF MAJOR RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES IN TAKING THOSE REFUGEES NOW IN OUR CROWDED CAMPS.

"FOR THE FUTURE, EVERY EFFORT MUST BE MADE BY HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT AND OTHER MAJOR COUNTRIES TO REACH A SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT WITH VIETNAM FOR THE RETURN OF OUR VIETNAMESE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN A SAFE AND ORDERLY MANNER," HE ADDED.

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SIR S.Y. CHUNG WELCOMES VR POLICY CHANGE

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THE SENIOR MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, SIR S.Y. CHUNG TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WELCOMED THE CHANGE OF POLICY TOWARDS VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE ARRIVING IN HONG KONG.

"THIS IS A MAJOR STEP IN ELIMINATING THE DOUBLE STANDARDS PRACTISED BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IN DEALING WITH ILLEGAL ENTRIES FROM CHINA AND VIETNAM," HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT AT PRESENT, WHEN ILLEGAL ENTRANTS FROM CHINA ARE INTERCEPTED, THEY ARE HANDCUFFED AND PUT INTO A DETENTION CENTRE, PENDING IMMEDIATE REPATRIATION.

BUT WHEN ILLEGAL ENTRANTS FROM VIETNAM ARE DISCOVERED, THEY ARE TAKEN ASHORE, EXAMINED BY MEDICAL PERSONNEL, FED, HOUSED AND PROVIDED WITH EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

"MOREOVER, HONG KONG MAKES GREAT EFFORTS IN GETTING THEM RESETTLED IN WESTERN COUNTRIES," HE ADDED.

"IN FACT," SIR S.Y. SAID, "THE VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE ARRIVING IN HONG KONG TODAY ARE NO DIFFERENT FROM THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM CHINA IN THAT THE VAST MAJORITY LEAVE THEIR COUNTRY SIMPLY FOR ECONOMIC REASONS, I.E. IN SEARCH OF A HIGHER MATERIAL STANDARD OF LIVING. THESE PEOPLE ARE NOT GENUINE REFUGEES WHO ARE LIABLE TO PER-SECUTION BY THEIR GOVERNMENT ON POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS OR ETHNIC GROUNDS."

"IT IS, THEREFORE, ONLY RIGHT THAT THEY BE TREATED ON ARRIVAL AS ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS," HE SAID.

"NONETHELESS, WE ARE INTRODUCING A SCREENING PROCESS TO ALLOW ANY GENUINE CASES TO CLAIM REFUGEE STATUS," HE ADDED.

SIR S.Y. DESCRIBED THE NEW MEASURE AS BEING FAIR.

"HONG KONG CANNOT AND SHOULD NOT CONTINUE TO TREAT AUTOMATICALLY EVERY SINGLE VIETNAMESE ARRIVING HERE BY BOAT AS A 'REFUGEE'," HE SAID.

MEANWHILE, SIR S.Y. HAS RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS, SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, INFORMING OMELCO MEMBERS THAT HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT ENDORSED THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO IMPLEMENT THE NEW POLICY.

IN HIS MESSAGE, SIR GEOFFREY SAID THAT THIS HAD RESULTED FROM HIS DISCUSSION OF THE VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE PROBLEM WITH HIS CABINET COLLEAGUES SOON AFTER HIS RECENT VISIT TO HONG KONG.

/SIR GEOFFREY .....

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SIR GEOFFREY ADDED THAT APART FROM DISCUSSING THE PROBLEM WITH THE SOVIET AND CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTERS AS WELL AS THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF STATE, MR GEORGE SHULTZ, HE HAD ALSO SPOKEN TO THE VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER IN NEW YORK, PRESSING HIM TO TAKE STEPS TO REDUCE ILLEGAL DEPARTURES AND TAKE BACK THOSE WHO HAD NO PROSPECT OF RESETTLEMENT ELSEWHERE. "WE SHALL KEEP UP THE PRESSURE," SIR GEOFFREY SAID.

HOWEVER, SIR GEOFFREY STRESSED THAT A "COMPLETE SOLUTION" WAS STILL BEING SOUGHT.

HE SAID, "THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO DO WHAT IT CAN TO FIND A LASTING SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM, INCLUDING THE REPATRIATION OF ALL BOAT PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT GENUINE REFUGEES."

"WE ARE NOW IN TOUCH WITH ALL THE RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES, UNHCR AND THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION TO EXPLAIN HONG KONG'S CHANGE IN POLICY," HE ADDED.

SIR GEOFFREY CONCLUDED HIS MESSAGE BY COMMENDING HONG KONG FOR THE GENEROUS, EFFICIENT AND HUMANE WAY IN WHICH IT HAD DEALT WITH THE INFLUX OF BOAT PEOPLE OVER THE YEARS.

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#### FACES THAT WILL MAKE POSTAL HISTORY

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FACES OF THE DEAF, THE AGED, THE BLIND AND THE NEEDY WILL BE PORTRAYED IN HONG KONG'S FIRST-EVER CHARITY STAMP ISSUE LATER THIS YEAR.

PERSONIFYING THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE COMMUNITY CHEST OF HONG KONG'S MEMBER ORGANISATIONS, THE FOUR STAMPS IN THE SET ARE EXPECTED TO RAISE \$1 MILLION ON THEIR FIRST DAY OF ISSUE ON NOVEMBER 30.

AT LEAST 200,000 LOCAL PHILATELISTS ARE EXPECTED TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE HISTORIC STAMPS WHICH MIGHT FETCH A TOTAL OF \$2.5 MILLION IF ALL 10 MILLION WERE SOLD.

THE STAMPS, IN DENOMINATIONS OF 70 CENTS, \$1.60, \$2.10 AND \$6, ARE ISSUED TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE CHEST, WHICH WILL CELEBRATE ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY THIS YEAR.

THE AMOUNT OF DONATION TO BE DRAWN -- 10 CENTS, 20 CENTS, 30 CENTS AND \$1 RESPECTIVELY -- WILL BE SHOWN CLEARLY ON THE STAMPS, TOGETHER WITH THEIR NORMAL POSTAGE VALUE.

ACCORDING TO THE POST OFFICE'S SENIOR CONTROLLER (POSTAL MARKETING), MR ALBERT LEUNG MING-FAI, THE IDEA OF ISSUING CHARITY STAMPS IN HONG KONG WAS FIRST PUT FORWARD BY THE CHEST'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MR DENIS BRAY, IN APRIL LAST YEAR.

/THE WORLD'S .....

THE WORLD'S FIRST CHARITY STAMP WAS ISSUED IN 1897, WHEN AUSTRALIA ISSUED TWO STAMPS TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF TUBERCULOSIS PATIENTS.

THIS IDEA WAS SPEEDILY ADOPTED IN OTHER COUNTRIES, AND POSTAL ADMINISTRATIONS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES SUCH AS GERMANY AND SWITZERLAND HAVE ISSUED CHARITY STAMPS FOR VARIOUS PURPOSES. NEW ZEALAND RAISED FUNDS IN THE SAME WAY TO HELP PROMOTE HEALTH.

AS THE ISSUE OF CHARITY STAMPS IS UNPRECEDENTED IN HONG KONG, AN AMENDMENT TO THE POST OFFICE ORDINANCE HAS BEEN MADE TO EMPOWER THE POSTMASTER GENERAL TO ISSUE SUCH STAMPS FOLLOWING THE APPROVAL BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL.

"PHILATELISTS ABROAD WILL ALSO BE ATTRACTED TO BUYING HONG KONG'S HISTORIC STAMPS, AND THOSE IN BRITAIN, THE UNITED STATES AND MALAYSIA ARE EXPECTED TO BE THE BIGGEST PURCHASERS," MR LEUNG SAID.

"THE CROWN AGENTS PHILATELIC CORPORATION LIMITED IN U.K. WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SALE ABROAD AND MAIL ORDERS WILL ALSO BE OFFERED BY THE POST OFFICE PHILATELIC BUREAU TO PEOPLE OF OTHER COUNTRIES."

MR LEUNG SAID A 50-CENT DONATION WOULD ALSO BE ADDED TO THE NORMAL 50 CENTS CHARGE FOR AN OFFICIAL FIRST DAY COVER.

"PURCHASE OF THE CHARITY STAMPS, HOWEVER, WILL BE VOLUNTARY AND THE NORMAL POSTAGE STAMPS WILL REMAIN ON SALE FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT WISH TO MAKE A DONATION," HE SAID.

IN VIEW OF THE EXPECTED ATTRACTION OF THE STAMP ISSUE, ADDITIONAL COUNTERS WILL BE SET UP IN MOST POST OFFICES AND EXTRA STAFF WILL BE DEPLOYED TO COPE WITH THE ANTICIPATED LARGE NUMBERS OF COLLECTORS.

THE STAMPS WERE DESIGNED BY MR MICHAEL TUCKER, WHO FORMERLY WORKED IN THE SCHOOL OF DESIGN AT THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC.

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PROFILE OF SOCIAL WORKERS PUBLISHED

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A PROFILE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN HONG KONG, COMPILED FOR THE FIRST TIME WITH A COMPUTERISED SYSTEM, HAS BEEN PUBLISHED.

IN ITS NO. 1 REPORT, THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL WELFARE MANPOWER PLANNING SYSTEM NOTED THAT THE OVERALL WELFARE MANPOWER STRENGTH WAS 3,453 AS AT SEPTEMBER 30, 1987, COMPARED WITH 3,093 IN THE LAST MANPOWER SURVEY CONDUCTED IN 1984.

/AMONG THE .....

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AMONG THE SERVICES, MORE WORKERS WERE WORKING IN THE SERVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILY WELFARE, ACCOUNTING FOR 29.5 AND 21.6 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY. THE CORRESPONDING PERCENTAGES IN 1984 WERE 29.2 AND 19.4

SIMILAR TO THE 1984 SITUATION, ABOUT 72.1 PER CENT OF THE SOCIAL WORKERS WERE REPORTED TO BE MAINLY INVOLVED IN FRONTLINE SERVICE.

THE JOINT COMMITTEE, COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR, THE HONG KONG COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE AND THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, WAS FORMED IN JULY 1987 TO ADVISE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A COMPUTERISED DATA SYSTEM TO CENTRALISE AND MAINTAIN INFORMATION ON INDIVIDUAL SOCIAL WELFARE PERSONNEL AND ON THE DEMAND AND SUPPLY OF TRAINED WORKERS.

"SUCH STATISTICS ARE ESSENTIAL IN THE OVERALL MANPOWER PLANNING IN THE WELFARE FIELD," SAID MISS STELLA LEUNG, CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER (TRAINING) OF SWD AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE.

SHE POINTED OUT THE MANPOWER SURVEYS IN THE WELFARE FIELD USED TO BE CONDUCTED MANUALLY.

"SUCH SURVEYS WERE TIME-CONSUMING AND THERE WAS A LONG TIME-LAG BETWEEN DATA COLLECTION AND PUBLICATION OF THE FINDINGS.

"BESIDES, UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION CANNOT BE READILY OBTAINED," SHE SAID.

THE COMPUTERISED MANPOWER PLANNING SYSTEM IS OPERATED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE MANPOWER PLANNING SYSTEM OFFICE OF THE SWD.

IN THE DATA COLLECTION EXERCISE LAUNCHED IN SEPTEMBER 1987, DATA WERE COLLECTED FROM 134 VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND SIX TRAINING INSTITUTES WHICH RESPONDED TO THE APPEAL FOR INFORMATION AND THE SWD.

FROM THE 141 ORGANISATIONS WHICH TOGETHER EMPLOYED 3,453 SOCIAL WORKERS, PERSONAL PARTICULARS WERE OBTAINED FROM 3,275, OR 94.8 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL STRENGTH ON VOLUNTARY BASIS.

DATA COLLECTED INCLUDED THEIR AGE, SEX, AREA OF SERVICE, JOB ROLE, HIGHEST QUALIFICATION OBTAINED, YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN SERVICE AND WHETHER WORKING FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME.

MISS LEUNG STRESSED THAT ALL THESE PERSONAL PARTICULARS WERE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND DATA WERE ONLY PRESENTED IN AGGREGATE FORM.

IN ADDITION TO PROFILES OF SOCIAL WORKERS, DATA WERE COLLECTED FROM PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS ON STRENGTH, VACANCIES, NEW RECRUITS, TURNOVER, DEMAND AND SUPPLY OF THEIR PERSONNEL.

/ANALYSIS OF .....

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ANALYSIS OF THE DATA REVEALED THAT THE OVERALL DEMAND OF TRAINED SOCIAL WORKERS FOR FILLING VACANCIES AND ADDITIONAL POSTS AND FOR REPLACEMENT OF WASTAGE WAS ESTIMATED TO BE 1,452 FOR DEGREE HOLDERS AND 1,510 FOR DIPLOMA HOLDERS BY 1990-91.

BALANCING THE DEMAND WITH THE ESTIMATED SUPPLY, THE ESTIMATED CUMULATIVE SHORTFALL WOULD REACH 676 FOR DEGREE HOLDERS AND 519 FOR DIPLOMA HOLDERS BY THAT TIME.

"THE AVAILABILITY OF THESE STATISTICS FACILITATES THE EARLY WORKING OUT OF APPROPRIATE ACTIONS TO COPE WITH THE MANPOWER SITUATION," MISS LEUNG SAID.

THE REPORT HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL WORK TRAINING WHICH WILL ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SWAC).

THE SWAC IS SCHEDULED TO DISCUSS THE MANPOWER SITUATION AT ITS NEXT MEETING IN JULY.

TO ENSURE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS MANPOWER PLANNING SYSTEM, MISS LEUNG SAID THAT AN ANNUAL REVIEW EXERCISE WOULD BE CARRIED OUT SO THAT ANY UNREPORTED CHANGES DURING THE YEAR COULD BE RECAPTURED.

HOWEVER, SHE URGED THE PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS TO REPORT ANY CHANGE AS IT OCCURS AND TO SUPPLY UPDATED DATA PROMPTLY IN ORDER TO KEEP THE INFORMATION IN THE SYSTEM REALLY UP-TO-DATE.

ON BEHALF OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE, SHE THANKED ALL THOSE WHO HELPED TO SET UP THE SYSTEM, THE SOCIAL WORKERS AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND TRAINING INSTITUTES FOR THEIR FULL CO-OPERATION AND SUPPORT DURING THE DATA COLLECTION EXERCISE AND LOOKED FORWARD TO THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT IN FUTURE.

COPIES OF THE REPORT HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO THE PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS AND TRAINING INSTITUTES.

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RADIO PROGRAMME TO PROMOTE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY  
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A POPULAR RADIO SERIES STARTING MONDAY (JUNE 20) WILL LAUNCH THIS YEAR'S INDUSTRIAL SAFETY CAMPAIGN.

THE SERIES, ENTITLED SAFETY HINTS IN INDUSTRY, CONSISTS OF 40 FIVE-MINUTE SEGMENTS.

THIS FOLLOWS THE SUCCESS OF A SIMILAR PROGRAMME ORGANISED JOINTLY BY COMMERCIAL RADIO AND THE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE LAST YEAR.

/THE PROGRAMME .....

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THE PROGRAMME WHICH AIMS TO ADVISE WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS ON MATTERS RELATING TO INDUSTRIAL SAFETY AT WORK, WILL BE AIRED ON COMMERCIAL RADIO I AT 2.30 PM FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY.

DETAILS OF THE RADIO SERIES WILL BE ANNOUNCED BY AN ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, MR MAK SAI-YIU, AND THE PROGRAMME DIRECTOR OF COMMERCIAL RADIO I, MISS KITTY IP, AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TO BE HELD AT COMMERCIAL RADIO TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH WILL BE HELD AT 2 PM TOMORROW ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF COMMERCIAL RADIO, NO. 3 BROADCAST DRIVE, KOWLOON.

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YUEN LONG DB TO DISCUSS VR PROBLEM

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THE YUEN LONG DISTRICT BOARD WILL DISCUSS THE PROBLEM OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN HONG KONG AT ITS MEETING TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

MEMBERS WILL AIR THEIR VIEWS ON WHETHER HONG KONG SHOULD CHANGE ITS PRESENT POLICY OF OFFERING FIRST ASYLUM TO THE BOAT PEOPLE.

THERE WILL ALSO BE A DISCUSSION ON THE MERITS OF INTRODUCING SUMMER TIME IN HONG KONG. THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND INFORMATION (INFORMATION), MISS KITTY CHOI, WILL ATTEND THE MEETING TO COLLECT MEMBERS' VIEWS.

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA INCLUDE ILLEGAL MOTOR CAR RACES IN YUEN LONG, PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECTS IN YUEN LONG TOWN EAST, TRAFFIC CONGESTION DURING MORNING HOURS ALONG CASTLE PEAK ROAD NEAR HUNG SHUI KIU, SERVICES PROVIDED IN HOMES FOR THE AGED IN YUEN LONG, AND A COMPLAINT FROM LAU FAU SHAN OYSTER FARMERS AGAINST THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CAUSEWAY IN DEEP BAY.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE MEETING OF THE YUEN LONG DISTRICT BOARD TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AT 9.30 AM IN THE DB CONFERENCE ROOM, 13TH FLOOR, TAI KIU GOVERNMENT OFFICES BUILDING, 2 KIU LOK SQUARE, YUEN LONG.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 1988

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CONSULTANT TO SELECT FARMS FOR DEMONSTRATION  
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A CONSULTANCY FIRM RECENTLY APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO SET UP DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS ON PRIVATE FARMS HAS BEEN VISITING LIVESTOCK FARMS IN MUI WO, MA ON SHAN AND NORTH DISTRICT SINCE LAST WEEK AND WOULD SOON RECOMMEND A SELECTION LIST FOR THE PROJECTS.

SPEAKING AT THE LIVESTOCK WASTE DISPOSAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE'S STEERING GROUP MEETING THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON, AN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE SAID THAT BY THE END OF THE WEEK THE CONSULTANT WOULD HAVE VISITED ALL THE 24 LIVESTOCK FARMS WHICH SATISFIED THE PRELIMINARY SELECTION CRITERIA.

"IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE CONSULTANT WILL RECOMMEND A LIST OF 12 OR MORE LIVESTOCK FARMS SUITABLE FOR TAKING PART IN THE DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS FOR THE STEERING GROUP'S ENDORSEMENT AT ITS NEXT MEETING."

"IF EVERYTHING GOES SMOOTHLY, THE INSTALLATION OF FACILITIES WILL COMMENCE BY MID-AUGUST," HE ADDED.

"HOWEVER, THE DRY-MUCK-OUT AND PIG-ON-LITTER METHODS ARE LIKELY TO BE IN OPERATION EARLIER AS ONLY MINOR MODIFICATION TO EXISTING FARM STRUCTURES IS REQUIRED," HE SAID.

THE STEERING GROUP WAS ASSURED THAT STAFF FROM THE CONSULTANCY FIRM WOULD PROVIDE ADEQUATE TECHNICAL TRAINING AND ADVICE TO FARM OPERATORS DURING COMMISSIONING AND INITIAL OPERATION OF THE DEMONSTRATION TREATMENT FACILITIES.

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SPECIAL TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS FOR DRAGON BOAT RACES  
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SPECIAL TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES IN CONNECTION WITH THE DRAGON BOAT RACES ON SATURDAY (JUNE 18), THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED.

IN YAU MA TEI, MAN CHEONG STREET BETWEEN MAN WAI STREET AND FERRY STREET WILL BE CLOSED TO TRAFFIC FROM MIDNIGHT ON FRIDAY (JUNE 17) TO 6 PM ON SATURDAY.

AT THE SAME TIME, MAN WAI STREET BETWEEN MAN CHEONG STREET AND MAN SING STREET WILL BE RE-ROUTED FROM ONE-WAY WESTBOUND TO EASTBOUND TRAFFIC.

TRAFFIC ON SOUTHBOUND FERRY STREET HEADING FOR JORDAN ROAD VEHICULAR FERRY PIER WILL HAVE TO USE FERRY STREET SOUTHBOUND, CANTON ROAD SOUTHBOUND, JORDAN ROAD FERRY CONCOURSE AND CANTON ROAD NORTHBOUND.

/TRAFFIC IN .....

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TRAFFIC IN THE FERRY POINT AREA HEADING FOR TSIM SHA TSUI WILL BE DIVERTED VIA MAN WUI STREET, FERRY STREET NORTHBOUND, SAIGON STREET, CANTON ROAD, KANSU STREET AND FERRY STREET SOUTHBOUND.

FROM 8 AM TO 6 PM ON SATURDAY, THE METERED PARKING SPACES IN MAN CHEONG STREET AND THE PUBLIC CAR PARK ADJACENT TO THE JORDAN ROAD VEHICLUAR FERRY PEIR WILL BE SUSPENDED.

IN SHA TIN, SAND MARTIN BRIDGE WILL BE CLOSED FROM 7.30 AM TO 1.30 PM ON SATURDAY. ALL VEHICLES CROSSING SHING MUN RIVER VIA SAND MARTIN BRIDGE WILL BE DIVERTED VIA LION BRIDGE AND BANYON BRIDGE.

AT THE SAME TIME, KMB ROUTES NO. 48, 70, 72A, 73A, 81K, 170 AND 281, AND NEW TERRITORIES GREEN MINIBUS ROUTES NO. 65K AND 67K WILL BE DIVERTED VIA TAI PO ROAD, LION ROAD TUNNEL ROAD AND TAI CHUNG KIU ROAD.

IN ADDITION, THE SECTIONS OF CYCLE TRACKS ALONG BOTH BANKS OF SHING MUN RIVER BETWEEN SAND MARTIN BRIDGE AND BANYAN BRIDGE WILL ALSO BE CLOSED DURING THE SAME PERIOD ON SATURDAY.

IN TAI PO, THE FOLLOWING MEASURES WILL BE IMPLEMENTED BETWEEN 7.30 AM AND 2 PM ON SATURDAY:

- \* DAI KWAI STREET SOUTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH DAI CHEONG STREET WILL BE CLOSED.
- \* CYCLISTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENTER TAI PO INDUSTRIAL ESTATE.
- \* THE SERVICES OF KMB ROUTE NO. 72K RUNNING BETWEEN TAI PO KCR STATION AND TAI PO INDUSTRIAL ESTATE WILL BE STEPPED UP TO MEET DEMAND.

AS TRAFFIC CONGESTION MAY OCCUR ALONG TING KOK ROAD NEAR THE TAI PO INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE URGED TO USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT. IN ADDITION, ILLEGALLY PARKED VEHICLES WILL BE TOWED AWAY.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 1988

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COLOURFUL SUMMER PROGRAMME STARTS TODAY

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THE 1988 TUEN MUN DISTRICT SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMME WHICH FEATURES SOME 430 EDUCATIONAL AND ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITIES STARTED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) AND WILL RUN UNTIL SEPTEMBER 15.

THESE ACTIVITIES ARE ORGANISED BY 43 VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS. THEY RANGE FROM HIKING, CAMPING, VISITS, PICNICS, COMPETITIONS, EXHIBITIONS, AND CARNIVALS TO LEADERSHIP TRAINING SCHEME, CATERING FOR PARTICIPANTS BETWEEN SIX AND 24 YEARS OLD.

THE BUDGET FOR THE DISTRICT PROGRAMME IS \$280,000 WHICH IS SPONSORED BY THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB. LIKE LAST YEAR, THE THEME FOR THIS YEAR'S PROGRAMME IS "SHARE THE FUN, SERVE THE COMMUNITY".

THE MAIN ATTRACTION OF THE PROGRAMME IS A GRAND OPENING SCHEDULED FOR 10.30 AM ON JULY 9 (SATURDAY) IN THE TUEN MUN TANG SHIU KIN SPORTS GROUND.

THE CEREMONY WILL COINCIDE WITH THE "GIRL GUIDES OUTDOOR CHALLENGE DAY", A LARGE SCALE ACTIVITY TO BE PARTICIPATED BY MORE THAN 1,000 GIRL GUIDES AND WILL FEATURE A KITE DESIGN COMPETITION AND FOLK DANCE PERFORMANCE.

TO MARK THE CLOSING OF THE THREE-MONTH PROGRAMME, A VARIETY SHOW WILL BE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 9 IN THE TUEN MUN TOWN HALL FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF THE YOUTHS. IN ADDITION TO MUSIC AND DANCE ITEMS, THERE WILL BE TAE KWON DO AND CHILDREN'S CHOIR PERFORMANCES.

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DB TO CONSIDER LANDFILL PROJECT AT TA KWU LING

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MEMBERS OF THE NORTH DISTRICT BOARD WILL MEET TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO COMMENT ON SUGGESTED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR AND THE FINDINGS OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT ON A PROPOSED LANDFILL AT WONG MAU HANG SHAN EAST OF TA KWU LING.

IT IS INTENDED THAT THIS LANDFILL WILL REPLACE THE CURRENT WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITY IN SHUEN WAN WHICH IS EXPECTED TO BE EXHAUSTED IN 1992.

PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE (POLLUTION), MR PETER MANN, AND THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (WASTE AND WATER), MR JOHN BOXALL, WILL BRIEF MEMBERS ON THE PROJECT.

/ALSO, MEMBERS .....

ALSO, MEMBERS WILL BE BRIEFED BY THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT (NEW TERRITORIES), MR RICHARD MEAKIN, ON THE FINDINGS OF THE LION ROCK TUNNEL TRAFFIC STUDY CARRIED OUT BY A CONSULTANCY FIRM.

TWO MEMBERS WILL PRESENT PAPERS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING. ONE PAPER TOUCHES ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AREA COMMITTEES IN THE DISTRICT, AND THE OTHER RELATES TO THE APPLICATION OF THE ROADS (WORKS, USE AND COMPENSATION) ORDINANCE TO LOCAL PUBLIC WORKS AND MINOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS INVOLVING VILLAGE ACCESS.

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA INCLUDE REPORTS ON ANNUAL DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAMMES, AND AN APPLICATION FROM THE SECOND NORTH DISTRICT FLOWER, BIRD, INSECT AND FISH SHOW ORGANISING COMMITTEE FOR GRANTS UNDER THE REGIONAL COUNCIL'S DISTRICT FESTIVALS SUBSIDY SCHEME.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE NORTH DISTRICT BOARD MEETING TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AT 9.30 AM IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE NORTH DISTRICT OFFICE, JOCKEY CLUB ROAD, FANLING.

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ENROLMENT BEGINS FOR PUTONGHUA COURSE

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JOURNALISTS ARE BEING INVITED TO APPLY FOR AN UPGRADING COURSE IN PUTONGHUA TO BE JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE JOURNALISM TRAINING BOARD OF THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL AND THE DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES OF THE HONG KONG CITY POLYTECHNIC.

THE INTERMEDIATE PUTONGHUA FOR JOURNALISTS COURSE WILL BE CONDUCTED ON EVERY MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY MORNING FROM AUGUST 8 TO SEPTEMBER 12 THIS YEAR.

CLOSING DATE FOR ENROLMENT IS JULY 25. FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES, CONTACT THE SECRETARY OF THE TRAINING BOARD ON 5-8932341 EXT. 283.

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WOMEN'S TURN TO GET NEW I.D. CARD

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WOMEN BORN BETWEEN 1951 AND 1969 WILL SOON BE REQUIRED TO APPLY FOR A NEW I.D. CARD.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT SAID: "THOSE BORN IN 1967, 1968 AND 1969 WILL BE THE FIRST GROUP TO BE CALLED UPON TO COME FORWARD FOR THEIR NEW I.D. CARDS."

HE URGED WOMEN OF THIS AGE GROUP TO WATCH OUT FOR THE EXACT DATES FOR THEIR APPLICATION.

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED: "FULL DETAILS OF THE DIFFERENT PHASES FOR THE ISSUE OF THE NEW I.D. CARD FOR WOMEN WILL BE WIDELY PUBLICIZED OVER TV, RADIO AND IN NEWSPAPERS IN DUE COURSE."

HE SAID: "APPLICANTS NORMALLY NEED TO BRING ALONG THEIR EXISTING I.D. CARDS IF THEIR CARDS WERE FIRST REGISTERED NOT LESS THAN SEVEN YEARS AGO AND BEAR THE \*\*\* SYMBOL."

"HOWEVER, IF AN APPLICANT'S I.D. CARD WAS FIRST REGISTERED LESS THAN SEVEN YEARS AGO OR DOES NOT HAVE THE \*\*\* SYMBOL, SHE IS REQUIRED TO FURNISH MORE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THE ASSESSMENT OF HER RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG AND SUBSEQUENTLY HER ELIGIBILITY FOR A PERMANENT I.D. CARD."

"THE DOCUMENT MAY TAKE THE FORM OF TRAVEL DOCUMENT, HONG KONG BIRTH CERTIFICATE, HONG KONG NATURALIZATION CERTIFICATE OR HONG KONG REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE, ETC," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE REITERATED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO AMNESTY FOR ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

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INTEREST ON TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES

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THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE PUBLISHED ON TUESDAY (JUNE 14) CONTAINS A LEGAL NOTICE TO THE EFFECT THAT THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY HAS AUTHORISED AN INCREASE IN THE RATE OF INTEREST PAYABLE ON TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES.

AS FROM TOMORROW (THURSDAY), THE NEW ANNUAL RATE OF INTEREST WILL BE 4.8 PER CENT (TAX FREE) AS AGAINST THE CURRENT RATE OF 4.32 PER CENT (TAX FREE).

INTEREST ON TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES IS CALCULATED IN MONTHLY STEPS AND THE NEW RATE WILL BE \$0.40 PER MONTH PER \$100. INTEREST WILL BE CREDITED AS BEFORE IN RESPECT OF COMPLETE MONTHS BETWEEN PURCHASE AND SURRENDER IN PAYMENT OF TAX.

/INTEREST IS .....

INTEREST IS ONLY CREDITED WHEN CERTIFICATES ARE USED TO PAY TAX AND NO INTEREST IS DUE WHERE THE PRINCIPAL VALUE OF A CERTIFICATE IS REPAID BY A CHEQUE.

THE NEW RATE WILL APPLY TO ALL CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER JUNE 16, 1988.

CERTIFICATES WHICH WERE ISSUED BEFORE JUNE 16, 1988 WILL CONTINUE TO EARN INTEREST AS FOLLOWS:

2.52%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER JANUARY 19, 1987 AND BEFORE MARCH 4, 1987;
3.00%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER MARCH 4, 1987 AND BEFORE APRIL 9, 1987;
3.36%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER APRIL 9, 1987 AND BEFORE JUNE 4, 1987;
3.84%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER JUNE 4, 1987 AND BEFORE JUNE 24, 1987;
4.32%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER JUNE 24, 1987 AND BEFORE OCTOBER 14, 1987;
5.28%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 14, 1987 AND BEFORE OCTOBER 28, 1987;
4.32%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 28, 1987 AND BEFORE OCTOBER 30, 1987;
3.24%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 30, 1987 AND BEFORE DECEMBER 2, 1987;
3.00%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER DECEMBER 2, 1987 AND BEFORE DECEMBER 9, 1987;
2.04%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER DECEMBER 9, 1987 AND BEFORE FEBRUARY 20, 1988;
2.76%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER FEBRUARY 20, 1988 AND BEFORE APRIL 13, 1988;
3.36%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER APRIL 13, 1988 AND BEFORE MAY 11, 1988;
1.32%	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER MAY 11, 1988 AND BEFORE JUNE 16, 1988.

/BUT ALWAYS .....

BUT ALWAYS SUBJECT TO THE GENERAL RULE THAT INTEREST CEASES TO ACCRUE AFTER 36 COMPLETE MONTHS WITHOUT SURRENDER FOR PAYMENT OF TAX.

EXAMPLE: \$1,000 CERTIFICATES PURCHASED ON JUNE 16, 1988, JULY 16, 1988 AND AUGUST 16, 1988 RESPECTIVELY, SURRENDER IN PAYMENT OF TAX DUE ON SEPTEMBER 15, 1988 WILL HAVE INTEREST CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS -

ON \$1,000, JUNE 16, 1988 TO SEPTEMBER 15, 1988	
3 COMPLETE MONTHS AT \$4.00 PER MONTH	= \$12.00
ON \$1,000, JULY 16, 1988 TO SEPTEMBER 15, 1988	
2 COMPLETE MONTHS AT \$4.00 PER MONTH	= \$8.00
ON \$1,000, AUGUST 16, 1988 TO SEPTEMBER 15, 1988	
1 COMPLETE MONTH AT \$4.00 PER MONTH	= \$4.00
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	\$24.00
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SHAM SHUI PO UNDERPASS TO BE CLOSED  
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THE LUNG CHEUNG ROAD/NAM CHEONG STREET VEHICULAR UNDERPASS IN SHAM SHUI PO, LEADING FROM LUNG CHEUNG ROAD EASTBOUND TO NAM CHEONG STREET SOUTHBOUND, WILL BE CLOSED TO TRAFFIC FROM 1 AM TO 5 AM ON SATURDAY (JUNE 18), THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED.

THE CLOSURE WILL FACILITATE CLEANING OF THE UNDERPASS. MOTORISTS ON LUNG CHEUNG ROAD EASTBOUND HEADING FOR NAM CHEONG STREET SOUTHBOUND WILL BE DIVERTED VIA LUNG PING ROAD, FLYOVER AND NAM CHEONG STREET SOUTHBOUND.

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