

19 Sept. 1990

Bids for bus route may be sought

By JEREMY LAU

THE Government may invite bids to operate the route between Macdonnell Road and Central rather than awarding it straight to Citybus, a senior Government transport official said yesterday.

Speaking after officiating at a ground breaking ceremony for three Light Rail Transit (LRT) extension routes, Deputy Secretary for Transport Mr Lui Hau-tuen said Citybus applied to run the route about six months ago.

But the Government had not received all relevant information from the company until June.

Since the application involved changes to existing legislation and policies, the Government had told the bus company that it might take some time before it could make a decision, Mr Lui said.

He added that the Government had many things to consider in the granting of a franchised route, and might invite tenders from companies interested in operating scheduled services on the route.

Last week, Citybus, which is campaigning to be given the third bus franchise for the territory, showed off one of the new air-conditioned buses it would use on the Macdonnell Road route.

Mr Lui's remarks are thought to reflect the Government's reluctance to show too much favour to Citybus in the wake of concern expressed over Transport Advisory Committee chairman Miss Maria Tam Wai-chu's past involvement with its associated company, China Paint.

Mr Lui said they would forward their recommendation to the Transport Advisory Committee and the Executive Council.

Meanwhile, the three LRT extension routes will run from Tuen Mun ferry pier to Yau Oi, Yau Oi to Sam Shing and from Tuen Mun town centre to Tuen Mun northeast.

They will be finished in late 1991 and early 1992, while another extension route to Tin Shui Wai will be started next year.