HKGIS 香港政府新聞處

DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S DIRECTORATE STRUCTURE REORGANISED
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THE DIRECTORATE STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN STREAMLINED BY REGROUPING ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS FOR BETTER OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONING.

THE FIRST STAGE OF THE REORGANISATION CAME INTO FORCE ON SEPTEMBER 1, THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, MR. COLVYN HAYE, SAID TODAY.

+TWO NOTEWORTHY FEATURES OF REORGANISATION AT THIS STAGE ARE THE INTRODUCTION OF UNIFIED REGIONAL, AREA AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION OF KINDERGARTENS, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS UNDER A SCHOOLS DIVISION, AS WELL AS THE COMPLETE DETACHMENT OF THE EXAMINATIONS DIVISION FROM THE DEPARTMENT FOLLOWING THE ESTABLISHING OF THE HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY,+ MR. HAYE SAID.

IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT MR. KENNETH TOPLEY, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON APRIL 7, 1976 THAT HE WAS CONSIDERING REORGANISATION OF THE DEPARTMENT.

FUNDS HAD BEEN APPROVED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR THE REORGANISATION OF THE DIRECTORATE AND THE CREATION OF TWO MAJOR OPERATIONAL WINGS.

TOP PRIORITY HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SCHOOLS AND SERVICES BRANCH UNDER A SENIOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, MR. BASIL BOARD.

KINDERGARTENS, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS ARE NOW THE RESPONSIBILITY OF AN ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, MR. LAM TAT-LAU, WHILE THE SERVICES DIVISION WHICH INCLUDES SPECIAL EDUCATION, EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION, CAREERS AND STUDENT GUIDANCE, AS WELL AS OVERSEAS STUDENTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS, ARE UNDER ANOTHER ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, MR. SUN PING-SHU.

PENDING FURTHER STAGES OF THE REORGANISATION WITHIN THE NEXT THREE YEARS THE OTHER DIVISIONS WILL BE ADMINISTERED AS BEFORE.

DURING THIS INTERIM PERIOD THE ASSISTANT DIRECTORS OF TWO DIVISIONS - TECHNICAL EDUCATION, AND PLANNING AND BUILDING - MR. DANIEL WATERS AND MR. ROBERT CAMERON RESPECTIVELY, REPORT DIRECT TO THE DEPUTY HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT, MR. COLVYN HAYE.

TWO OTHER ASSISTANT DIRECTORS, MR. ARTHUR BROWN AND MR. JOHN WINFIELD, WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADVISORY INSPECTORATE AND FURTHER EDUCATION RESPECTIVELY, REPORT TO MR. HO NGA-MING, DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PROFESSIONAL).

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REWARDING LIFE OF A LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER
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EACH WEEK, MR. LI CHIH-TOU, AGED 53, TAKES A TWO HOUR BOAT JOURNEY THROUGH CHOPPY SEAS TO BEGIN AN ASSIGNMENT IN SOLITARY VIGIL ON WAGLAN ISLAND AT THE SOUTH-EASTERN END OF HONG KONG.

MR. LI HAS BEEN DOING THIS FOR OVER 20 YEARS TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PASSENGERS, CARGOES, AND CREW MEMBERS OF SHIPS THAT SAIL TO AND FROM HONG KONG. FOR MR. LI, WITH A TEAM OF 17 OTHERS, ARE LIGHTHOUSE STAFF OF WAGLAN ISLAND.

THEIR DEDICATION MAY BE LITTLE KNOWN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, BUT IS NOT UNAPPRECIATED BY THOSE WHO SAIL THE HIGH SEAS.

+MANY SHIPS WHICH CALL REGULARLY AT HONG KONG HAVE BECOME OUR OLD FRIENDS,+ SAID MR. LI. +WHENEVER THEY PASS BY, THEY NEVER FAIL TO SEND US A WARM 'HELLO WAGLAN' SIGNAL OR SEASON'S GREETINGS.+

MR. LI STILL REMEMBERS THE TIME HE FIRST SET FOOT ON THE TINY ISLAND TO MAN THE LIGHTHOUSE.

+THAT WAS IN 1950'S WHEN THERE WAS NO TELEVISION. RADIO HONG KONG THEN WAS ONLY BROADCASTING A FEW HOURS A DAY. WE HAD NO NEWSPAPERS TO READ AND WE WERE COMPLETELY CUT OFF FROM OUR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS FOR FOUR WEEKS AT A STRETCH.+

YET, LIVING SO FAR AWAY FROM THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE OF THE CITY HAS ITS REWARDS.

WE ARE FREE TO SPEND OUR LEISURE IN OUR OWN WAY - SOME LIKE TO READ, SOME GO FISHING AND SOME TAKE UP HANDICRAFT AS A HOBBY. THERE IS NO TRAFFIC TO MIND AND NO APPOINTMENTS TO MEET, WHILE THE BRACING AIR IS INVIGORATING AND THE VIEW OF THE VAST EXPANSE OF THE OCEAN FROM HERE IS UNPARALLELED ANYWHERE ELSE,+ MR. LI SAID.

THE QUICK PACE OF DEVELOPMENT IN HONG KONG, HOWEVER, IS CATCHING UP WITH THEM. NOT ONLY CAN THEY NOW WATCH HAPPENINGS BACK IN THE CITY ON THE TELEVISION SCREEN EVERY EVENING AND LISTEN TO A CHOICE OF RADIO PROGRAMMES LATE AT NIGHT, WITH BETTER TRANSPORT FACILITIES THEY CAN NOW RETURN FROM WAGLAN EVERY WEEK FOR TIME OFF.

SEA-BORNE TRAFFIC TOO HAS BECOME BUSIER THAN THOSE DAYS WHEN CONTAINERSHIPS WERE UNHEARD OF, AND SUPER-TANKERS WERE STILL ON THE DRAWING BOARD.

+WE NOW HAVE TO MONITOR ABOUT 40 OCEAN-GOING SHIPS COMING IN OR LEAVING EACH DAY AND ON SOME DAYS WE MAY HAVE UP TO 60 VESSELS,+ MR. LI SAID.

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EACH HAS TO BE IDENTIFIED THROUGH AN INTERCHANGE OF SIGNALS. THE PORT COMMUNICATION CENTRE HAS TO BE NOTIFIED SO THAT INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE TO SHIPS' LOCAL AGENTS TO HAVE A BERTHING PLACE READY FOR THEM AND TO NOTIFY THE PILOTS, STEVEDORES AND ALL OTHER PEOPLE EXPECTING THE SHIP TO BE PREPARED TO MEET IT.

THEY HAVE TO WORK OUTDOORS AS WELL. THE MAINTENANCE OR REPAIR OF THE LIGHTHOUSE COMPOUND AND THE BEACON VERY OFTEN MEANS HAVING TO BRAVE STORMS OR BAD WEATHER.

LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS HAVE TO BE KNOWLEDGEABLE IN SHIPPING MATTERS. THEY MUST BE ADEPT IN THE VARIOUS FORMS OF TELECOMMUNICATION AT SEA, AND ON TOP OF THAT THEY HAVE TO BE A GOOD ELECTRICIAN, MECHANIC, CARPENTER AND A NURSE AS WELL.

+NO ONE IS ABLE TO COME TO OUR AID IMMEDIATELY IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG, UNLESS BY HELICOPTER, AND YET THE LIGHTHOUSE HAS TO RESPOND AT ALL TIMES TO THE STREAM OF PASSING SHIPS WHICH BRING IN ESSENTIAL RAW MATERIALS FOR OUR INDUSTRIES AND GOODS FOR OUR SHOPS AND TAKE OUT PRODUCTS OF OUR LABOUR TO MARKETS IN ALL CORNERS OF THE WORLD,+ MR. LI SAID.

MR. LI AND HIS COLLEAGUES THOUGH, HAVE NEVER THOUGHT OF THEMSELVES AS BEING MAROONED ON WAGLAN.

+AFTER THESE TWENTY ODD YEARS I HAVE COME TO BE ATTACHED TO THIS ISLAND AND HAVE COME TO THINK OF BELONGING TO IT.

+BESIDES, THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS TO DO HERE, WITH EACH OF US CARRYING OUT OUR OWN PART OF THE TASK LOOKING AFTER THE LIGHTHOUSE, AND OCCUPIED IN OUR SPARE TIME IN OUR OWN FAVOURITE PASTIME.

+ON BUSY DAYS, IT MAY HAPPEN THAT WE MAY NOT EVEN ONCE HAVE THE CHANCE TO GET TOGETHER DURING OUR WEEK-LONG TOUR OF DUTY DESPITE BEING SO CLOSE TOGETHER.

+BUT I WOULDN'T TRADE THIS FOR ANYTHING IN THE WORLD,+ SAID MR. LI. +THERE MAY NOT BE MUCH HUMAN COMPANIONSHIP, BUT I KNOW THAT OUT THERE I HAVE MANY FRIENDS COMING FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE WORLD AND WHO DEPEND ON ME TO SEE THEM SAFELY THROUGH, AND THAT'S REWARD ENOUGH.+

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TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES POPULAR

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THE SALE OF TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES REACHED A RECORD $102.3 MILLION IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1976-77.

THIS REPRESENTED AN INCREASE OF MORE THAN 60 PER CENT OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR, ACCORDING TO STATISTICS PUBLISHED BY THE INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

COMMENTING ON THE INCREASE IN SALES, THE COMMISSIONER OF INLAND REVENUE, MR. R.V. GIDDY, SAID THAT THIS INDICATED A GROWING AWARENESS BY TAXPAYERS OF THE ADVANTAGE OF BUILDING UP A RESERVE FUND FOR THE PAYMENT OF TAX.

+THIS IS INDICATIVE THAT PRUDENT TAXPAYERS ARE MAKING ADEQUATE PROVISION TO MEET THEIR ANNUAL TAX LIABILITIES,+ MR. GIDDY NOTED.

DURING THE SAME YEAR, REDEMPTION OF THESE CERTIFICATES AMOUNTED TO $81.6 MILLION AND TAX-FREE INTEREST PAID ON THEM WAS $1.3 MILLION.

FOLLOWING THE TREND IN COMMERCIAL INTEREST RATES, THE RATE OF INTEREST PAYABLE ON TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES HAS BEEN REDUCED FROM 4.2 PER CENT TO 3 PER CENT PER ANNUM FOR CERITFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER FEBRUARY 17, THIS YEAR.

AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS, ABOUT 90 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CERTIFICATES WERE BOUGHT BY BANKS ON BEHALF OF TAXPAYERS WITH STANDING INSTRUCTIONS.

TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES MAY BE PURCHASED IN UNITS OF $50 THROUGH BANKS OR AT THE INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT'S MAIN COLLECTION OFFICE IN CLUB LUSITANO BUILDING, GROUND FLOOR, 16, ICE HOUSE STREET, CENTRAL, AND AT BRANCH OFFICES IN OLD HONG KONG AND SHANGHAI BANK BUILDING REAR PORTION, 1ST FLOOR, 664 NATHAN ROAD, KOWLOON AND IN ON YUE BUILDING, GROUND FLOOR, 132 TSUEN WAN MARKET STREET, TSUEN WAN.

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