



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1978

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HK GOVERNMENT BECOMES ONE OF BIGGEST
USERS OF COMPUTERS IN ASIA
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THE GROWING PUBLIC DEMANDS ON THE GOVERNMENT FOR EFFICIENT SERVICE HAVE RESULTED IN A RAPID EXPANSION IN THE USE OF COMPUTERS IN A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

THERE ARE ABOUT 30 COMPUTERS INSTALLED IN VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS - MAKING THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT ONE OF ASIA'S BIGGEST USERS OF ELECTRONIC DATA PROCESSING MACHINES.

DISCLOSING THIS TODAY, MR. LEE TATE, MANAGER OF THE GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT'S DATA PROCESSING DIVISION, SAID THAT MORE AREAS OF GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES WHICH COULD BENEFIT THE PUBLIC SERVICE FROM COMPUTER APPLICATIONS ARE BEING LOOKED INTO.

MR. TATE SAID, +IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS, THE APPLICATION OF COMPUTERS HAS BEEN GREATLY EXPANDED WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT. THE DATA PROCESSING DIVISION (DPD), WHICH SERVES AS THE GOVERNMENT'S CENTRAL COMPUTER BUREAU, IS HANDLING SOME 50 SYSTEMS FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

+TO COPE WITH THE EVER INCREASING NEEDS, THE STAFF OF DPD HAVE GROWN FROM 40 IN 1973 TO THE PRESENT 300, INCLUDING 75 PROFESSIONALS. IT IS HOPED TO FURTHER INCREASE THE NUMBER OF STAFF TO 350 NEXT YEAR.

+ACCORDINGLY, COMPUTER RENTALS PAID BY THE GOVERNMENT HAS GONE UP FROM \$1 MILLION A YEAR IN 1973 TO \$1 MILLION A MONTH AT PRESENT, AND IT WILL CONTINUE TO RISE WITH NEW DEVELOPMENTS.

+EVEN THIS EXPANSION DOES NOT REFLECT THE INCREASED LEVEL OF ACTIVITY,+ MR. TATE SAID.

+THE GOVERNMENT'S EXPENDITURE ON CONTRACTING OUTSIDE COMPUTING SERVICES, WHICH MAINLY CONCERN WITH DEVELOPING NEW SYSTEMS, HAS ALSO INCREASED FROM \$45,000 IN 1973 TO ALMOST \$8 MILLION THIS YEAR.+

TO CATER FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS THE DPD TOOK DELIVERY IN JULY THE FIRST PHASE OF A DUAL ICL 2970 COMPUTER SYSTEM, WHICH IS IN OPERATION, AND THE SECOND PHASE HAS BEEN INSTALLED. THE WHOLE SYSTEM IS EXPECTED TO BE FULLY OPERATIONAL BY MARCH NEXT YEAR.

THE NEW COMPUTER SYSTEM PROCESS JOBS 35 PER CENT MORE QUICKLY THAN THE DPD'S CURRENT RANGE OF COMPUTERS WHICH WILL BE GRADUALLY PHASED OUT BY MID-1978.

+WITH THE INSTALLATION OF NEW MACHINES,+ MR. TATE SAID, +THE DPD WILL BE BETTER EQUIPPED TO MEET SYSTEM DEVELOPMENTS NOW IN THE PIPE-LINE.+

/UNDER

UNDER DEVELOPMENTS ARE THE NEW TRADE STATISTICS SYSTEM, THE PUBLIC HOUSING APPLICATIONS AND TENANCY RECORDS SYSTEM (HATMIS), THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACE ALLOCATION (SSPA) SYSTEM, AN INTEGRATED INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT (IRD) SYSTEM, THE CENTRAL REGISTER OF DRUG ADDICTS, AND THE DOMESTIC ACCOUNTS OF THE WATERWORKS OFFICE. FURTHER DOWN THE PIPELINE, SYSTEMS FOR TEACHER RECORDS, PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS, AND A REGISTER FOR THE DISABLED ARE BEING CONSIDERED.

THE TRADE STATISTICS SYSTEM IS AIMED AT MEETING HONG KONG'S INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS TO STANDARD TRADE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM AT THE SAME TIME AS GIVING A FASTER DELIVERY OF TRADE FIGURES.

HATMIS IS INTENDED TO IMPROVE RECORD-KEEPING, THE PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS, AND TO ELIMINATE MULTIPLE TENANCY.

THE SSPA SYSTEM WILL REPLACE THE CURRENT SSEE, WHILE THE IRD SYSTEM WILL INTEGRATE TAX RECORDS IN DIFFERENT CATEGORIES ABOUT THE SAME PEOPLE.

THE CENTRAL REGISTER OF DRUG ADDICTS IS AIMED AT GIVING A BETTER OVERALL PICTURE OF PUBLIC PROGRAMMES FOR THE TREATMENT OF ADDICTIONS AS AN AID BOTH TO PLANNING AND ALSO TO THE MEASUREMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CURRENT POLICIES.

DOMESTIC WATER ACCOUNTS WILL FOLLOW THE CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION OF TRADE ACCOUNTS.

IN ADDITION, CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO INSTALLING MINI-COMPUTERS IN DEPARTMENTS IN WHICH PART OF THEIR WORK CAN BE HANDLED MORE EFFICIENTLY BY SUCH MACHINES IN THEIR OFFICES.

AT PRESENT, THERE ARE ABOUT 30 MINI-COMPUTERS INSTALLED IN VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, INCLUDING THE CIVIL AVIATION, THE POLICE, THE IMMIGRATION, AND TRADE, INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS DEPARTMENTS.

THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY AND THE LOK ON PAI DESALTING PLANT HAVE SPECIALISED COMPUTERS FOR PROCESSING THEIR TECHNICAL DATA. THE ONE AT THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY IS BEING CONSIDERED FOR REPLACEMENT.

A NUMBER OF DEPARTMENTS, INCLUDING THE TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS ALSO HAVE TERMINALS 'ON-LINE' TO RESPECTIVE FILES HELD ON THE DPD COMPUTERS TO ALLOW SPEEDY RETRIEVAL OF INFORMATION.

THE INSTALLATION AT THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT IS PARTICULARLY HELPFUL TO PEOPLE APPLYING FOR A DRIVING LICENCE OR ITS RENEWAL - WHEN AN APPLICATION FORM IS PUT INTO A TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT COMPUTER TERMINAL, THE DPD COMPUTER RECORD IS CHECKED, AND A LICENCE PRINTED OUT, WHERE APPLICABLE, IN ONLY A FEW SECONDS.

THE ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC EXAMINATION PAPERS, ALLOCATION OF SCHOOL PLACES, ISSUE OF TAX ASSESSMENT AND DEMAND NOTES, TRADE WATER BILLS AND THE COMPILATION OF TRADE STATISTICS ARE SOME OTHER EXAMPLES OF PROFITABLE COMPUTER APPLICATIONS WHICH AVOID EXCESSIVE PAPER WORK AND TIME DELAY.

THE GROWTH AND CHANGES OF MARRIAGE REGISTRY
* * * *

PROBABLY THE MOST SOLEMN OCCASION IN A WEDDING CEREMONY IS THE TAKING OF THE MARRIAGE VOWS. IT MAY BE THE SWEETEST MOMENT IN THE LIFE OF THE BRIDE AND THE GROOM, BUT IT COULD ALSO BE THE SORRIEST MOMENT OF TRUTH FOR SOME.

MR. S.S. TAN, IN HIS MORE THAN 30 YEARS' SERVICE WITH THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, HAS WITNESSED MANY SUCH SWEET AND SOUR OCCASIONS.

+THERE WAS A CASE IN WHICH A BRIDE BURST INTO TEARS DURING A WEDDING CEREMONY AND REFUSED TO SAY 'I DO' BECAUSE SHE WOULDN'T PART WITH HER PARENTS. THE MARRIAGE, THEREFORE, COULD NOT TAKE PLACE,+ SAID MR. TAN, THE SENIOR ASSISTANT REGISTRAR OF THE MARRIAGE REGISTRY.

+IN ANOTHER CASE THE SERVICE WAS CANCELLED WHEN I LEARNED THAT THE GROOM RAN AWAY MINUTES BEFORE THE CEREMONY - THE REASON BEING THAT THE MAN'S WIFE APPEARED AT THE SCENE WITH HIS CHILDREN.+

BUT, MR. TAN ADDED THAT TEARFUL OCCASIONS LIKE THESE WERE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN. +IN FACT, MOST MARRIAGE CEREMONIES I HAVE CONDUCTED WERE FULL OF CHEERS AND HAPPINESS.+

MR. TAN WHO JOINED THE GOVERNMENT SHORTLY AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR, RECALLED THAT REGISTERED MARRIAGES IN THE EARLY 1950S WERE NOT VERY POPULAR BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT MANDATORY. MOST OF THE CHINESE RESIDENTS PREFERRED CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE.

THERE WAS THEREFORE NO URGENT NEED TO EXPAND THE MARRIAGE REGISTRATION SERVICE AT THAT TIME. IN FACT THE ONLY MARRIAGE REGISTRY THEN WAS IN SUPREME COURT BUILDING. ABOUT TWO TO THREE THOUSAND MARRIAGES WERE REGISTERED EACH YEAR IN THE EARLY 1950S, I.E. LESS THAN TEN WEDDINGS A DAY.

AND IN THOSE DAYS, BOTH THE BRIDE AND THE GROOM WERE REQUIRED TO BE DRESSED FORMALLY FOR THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

+IF THE GROOM HAD AN OPEN NECK SHIRT, WE SUGGESTED THAT HE SHOULD WEAR A TIE,+ MR. TAN SAID.

+SO TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT, WE KEPT A FEW TIES IN THE REGISTRY JUST IN CASE A GROOM TURNED UP WITHOUT ONE,+ HE ADDED.

THINGS HAVE CHANGED A LOT IN THE PAST TEN YEARS PARTICULARLY AFTER THE ENACTMENT OF THE MARRIAGE REFORM ORDINANCE IN 1970 WHICH ABOLISHED CONCUBINAGE AND MADE REGISTRATION OF A MARRIAGE MANDATORY IN 1971.

+PEOPLE WHO NOW MARRY IN A MARRIAGE REGISTRY MAY DRESS CASUALLY PROVIDED THEIR OUT-FITS ARE NEAT AND CLEAN. THE WEARING OF A NECK TIE IS NO LONGER A CONDITION,+ MR. TAN SAID.

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THERE ARE NOW 14 MARRIAGE REGISTRIES INCLUDING THE ONE AT CITY HALL WHICH ALSO OPENS ON SUNDAY MORNING. PLANS ARE IN HAND TO OPEN MORE REGISTRIES IN THE NEW TOWNS FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF THE PUBLIC, MR. TAN ADDED.

MR. TAN WILL BE RETIRING IN MARCH THIS YEAR. HE WAS AWARDED AN M.B.E. LAST YEAR FOR HIS LONG AND DEDICATED SERVICE.

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GOOD RESPONSE TO TSUEN WAN TOWN HALL EMBLEM DESIGN COMPETITIONS
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THE COMPETITIONS TO FIND THE EMBLEM AND MURAL DESIGNS FOR USE IN THE \$23 MILLION TSUEN WAN TOWN HALL HAVE GOT OFF TO A GOOD START.

MORE THAN 1,000 ENTRY FORMS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED THROUGH THE NEW TERRITORIES DISTRICT OFFICES AND PUBLIC ENQUIRY CENTRES AND MANY OTHERS ARE BEING HANDED OUT BY THE CITY DISTRICT OFFICES.

THE COMPETITIONS REPRESENT THE FIRST MAJOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROJECT BY THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD WHICH HAS ALLOCATED \$23,000 IN CASH AND OTHER PRIZES FOR THE COMPETITION WINNERS.

+THE RESPONSE SO FAR HAS BEEN MOST ENCOURAGING AND WE EXPECT MORE PEOPLE TO COME AND COLLECT THEIR ENTRY FORMS,+ THE SECRETARY FOR THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD, MR. BENJAMIN TANG, SAID TODAY.

IN TSUEN WAN ALONE, HE SAID, SOME 500 ENTRY FORMS HAVE BEEN ISSUED.

THE COMPETITION FOR THE EMBLEM DESIGN IS OPEN TO ALL HONG KONG RESIDENTS, AND THE ONE ON THE MURAL DESIGNS IS DIVIDED INTO THREE GROUPS - GROUND-FLOOR MURAL, OPEN TO ANY HONG KONG RESIDENTS= FIRST-FLOOR MURAL, TO PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS= AND SECOND-FLOOR MURAL, TO SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS.

ANY NUMBER OF ENTRIES CAN BE SUBMITTED - TO THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT OFFICE, THE TSUEN WAN OR KWAI CHUNG TOWN MANAGEMENT OFFICES, OR TO THE ART SECTION OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S CULTURAL CRAFTS CENTRE.

ALL ENTRIES SHOULD BE SUBMITTED FLAT, NOT ROLLED, TOGETHER WITH A COMPLETED ENTRY FORM, BEFORE THE END OF MARCH THIS YEAR.

ENTRY FORMS ARE AVAILABLE FROM ALL CITY DISTRICT OFFICES AS WELL AS ALL DISTRICT OFFICES AND PUBLIC ENQUIRY CENTRES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES. TELEPHONE ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE AT 12-435408 OR 12-271335.

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TRAMPOLINING COMPETITIONS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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THE ANNUAL TRAMPOLINING COMPETITIONS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS, JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE HONG KONG SCHOOLS SPORTS ASSOCIATION, THE NEW TERRITORIES SCHOOLS SPORTS ASSOCIATION AND THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, WILL BE HELD ON FEBRUARY 17 AND 18 AT BOUNDARY STREET GAMES HALL.

ABOUT 200 STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITIONS WHICH WILL BE DIVIDED INTO THREE GRADES FOR BOYS AND GIRLS AGED BETWEEN 14 AND 20.

EACH TEAM WILL CONSIST OF FIVE COMPETITORS= THE BEST FOUR SCORES WILL COUNT IN THE TEAM COMPETITION. THE TEAM WITH THE HIGHEST TOTAL AGGREGATE POINTS WILL BE THE WINNER.

THE BEST 15 COMPETITORS IN THE FIRST ROUND COMPETITIONS OF EACH GRADE WILL QUALIFY FOR THE FINAL OF THE INDIVIDUAL COMPETITIONS, WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE BETWEEN 9 A.M. AND 11 A.M. ON FEBRUARY 18.

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