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MOVING well into the information age and in meeting the Malaysian government's thrust to modernise itself, the Department of Statistics under the Prime Minister's Department will implement the National Enterprise-wide Statistical Systems (NEWSS) in April next year.

According to the Chief Statistician Danik Wan Ramli Wan Abd Kadir, NEWSS aimed to integrate the different applications and systems in the Department.

"In popularising the concept of information or knowledge society, the Department has upgraded its information technology capacity to enable the provision of statistics to users, be it government, private or those outside the country."

"In this context, a thorough study was conducted in 2006 with regards to the consolidation of all workflow processes."

"This resulted in the development of an integrated computerised system known as NEWSS," she said in an interview.

Through a central database, NEWSS will perform several functions, including:

- To standardise, consolidate and improve the existing systems/application to support the strategic requirement and the operation of Department of Statistics;
- To simplify, improve and expedite the process of statistical data dissemination;
- To develop an integrated business process management that adheres to international statistical standards; and
- To build up a central repository to facilitate data sharing between the Department of Statistics and other government agencies.

"The implementation of the first phase of NEWSS began in 2006 and will end in March 2010. This completion marks another milestone in the history of ICT in the Department of Statistics as a one-stop centre for statistical information," she said.

NEWSS is the solution to upgrade ICT usage in DOS. The main feature is NEWSS which is the Integrated Statistical System Framework.

(ISF), an end-to-end ICT system for developing and processing the statistical surveys and censuses.

"It is an integration and integrated system encompassing pre-collection, data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination activities."

"Thus, it will help DOS in enhanc-

Statistics Dept makes NEWSS

Popularising the concept of an information society, the Department of Statistics has upgraded its IT capacity to enable the provision of statistics to the world.



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ing the service delivery system and in line with DOS vision to become a leading statistical organisation internationally," Wan Ramli added.

Another of the department's other tools of the trade in its modernisation, was equipped its field enumerators with personal digital assistants (PDA) to expedite the collection of, for now, consumer prices while the department looks into its application in other forms of data collection.

"The usage of ICT was not only limited to data processing and tabulation but it was also used in data collection."

"The interview via telephone was

characterised

"This information is needed and widely used for policy formulation and development of social and economic programmes of the country (used as 10th Malaysia Plan)."

"Information on population and housing from the census are collected from all living quarters throughout Malaysia, whether they are Malaysian citizens or non-Malaysian citizens."

Information is collected through face to face interviews, e-census and drop off and pick-up method," Wan Ramli said.

The enumerator will drop the questionnaire and set an appointed date with the respondent for the enumerator to pick the completed questionnaire during the census enumeration period.

Data is then processed using Intelligent Character Reader (ICR) and computer processing (data entry) and have gone through manual checks and computer validations (range, logical, etc.).

Wan Ramli also reminded that households and private sector were required by law under the Statistics Act to respond to DOS's questionnaires and surveys.

"We would also like to urge the public to recognise the enumerators as the official staff of the Department. They must show the ID authority card as well to prove their authenticity," she said.

DOSM is also involved with e-dt initiatives including the mySMS programme.

Seven types of data is available to mobile phone users including the nation's population data, gross domestic product, consumer price index, index of industrial production, manufacturing statistics, external trade and employment.

These data can be easily accessed by typing STATS DADA and sending the SMS to 15888.

Wan Ramli said the department with its myriad data did not rule out the possibility of "customising" data to requests.

Data request can be accessed at www.statistics.gov.my, by filling up the online order form, direct purchase at User Services Unit of the Corporate and User Services Division at headquarters, Putrajaya and other state offices.

At the same time, users can also download 18 DOSM publications on its website.

DOSM was established in 1949 under the provisions of the Statistic Ordinance 1949 and was then known as the Bureau of Statistics.

In 1965, the name of Bureau of Statistics was changed to the DOSM, under the provisions of the Statistics Act 1965 (Revised - 1989) and placed under the Prime Minister's Department.

The Chief Statistician is the head of the national statistical service and responsible to the Chief Secretary to the Government.

The statistics produced by DOSM is widely used in formulation and monitoring of government's policies and development programmes.

The data are used as the main inputs for the five-Year Malaysia Plans, Outline Perspective Plans, Industrial Master Plan, National Agriculture Policy, National Economic Recovery Plan, Economic Report and annual Report of the Central Bank of Malaysia.

Currently, DOSM comprises 19 Divisions, 14 state offices, 28 Operational Offices and 3,314 employees.

Its main functions are:

- To collect and interpret statistics for the purpose of formulation or implementation of government policies in whatever fields as needed by the government or for fulfilling the requirements of trade, commerce, industry, agriculture or others;
- To disseminate statistics which have been collected or interpreted in whatever fields as needed, not only to government agencies but also to authorities or persons where the information is useful to them.

Overall, the department has conducted 127 surveys/censuses in a year.

Surveys are implemented by using the international standard statistical method.

"Among the surveys/censuses conducted by the department comprising the regular survey are monthly consumer price collection, monthly manufacturing surveys, quarterly rent survey and the labour force survey."