Unit 6 – Operating Systems

❖ **Introduction**

- The OS (Operating System)

  - The OS is the set of computer programs that allow the user to perform basic tasks like copying, moving, saving and printing files.

  - It also provides an interface (i.e. provides communication) between applications programs (e.g. word processors or spreadsheets) and the computer hardware.

  - As the user interacts with an applications program on the screen, the applications program communicates with the operating system and the operating system communicates with the hardware.

  - The work of the operating system takes place in the background and is not obvious to the user.

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▪ **Supervisor program** (or **supervisory program**)

- The most important program in an OS is the supervisor program. It remains in memory all the time that the computer is operating, and manages the OS. It loads other parts of the OS into memory when they are needed.

- Programs that remain in memory while the computer is in use are known as resident programs.

- Programs that only stay in memory while they are being used are known as non-resident programs.

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  ▪ **Command Driven OS**

  - Some OS are command driven where the user runs a program by typing a command. The screen is usually blank except for a symbol such as $ which acts as a command prompt.

  - When the command is typed at the prompt and the enter key is pressed, the command is processed and the output is displayed on the screen.

  - OS commands are usually short words or abbreviations such as date, logout, passwd, ls

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- ◼ **Unix OS**

  - ●Unix is a command driven operating system used on all sizes of computers, but mostly large multi-user, multi-tasking mainframe computers.

  - ●Other command driven OS mentioned in this unit include: VAX/VMS, MVS VM OS/390, NetWare and Linux.

  - ●It is available in many versions, such as Linux, Minix, HP-UX, Xenix, Venix, Ultrix, A/UX, AIX, Solaris and PowerOpen.

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▪ **OS Graphical User Interface**

- Some OS have a GUI (graphical user interface) that allows the user to use a mouse to click on icons on the screen or choose commands from a list of choices known as a menu.

- OS with a GUI mentioned in this unit include: MacOS, Linux, Windows XP, BC OJ, Palm and Windows Media Centre Edition.

Writing

❖ Description of an operating system