



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Tuesday, May 8, 1973

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MODIFIED PAY SCALE FOR CERTIFICATED MASTERS

Following the successful holding of the Secondary School Entrance Examination the Governor has had more talks with Bishop Baker, Bishop Hsu and Rev. Dr. Wong. As a result the Government has accepted proposals made by the Church leaders for a modified pay scale for Certificated Masters.

The Government has also decided to set up a small commission to examine and report on the underlying causes of the dispute and to suggest ways of preventing similar problems arising again.

The new scale will run from \$1,250 per month to \$1,750 per month by annual stages; thereafter an "extra-scale" will apply, providing \$1,850 after three years and then \$1,950 and \$2,050 by 2-yearly intervals.

The scale which has been approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council will be backdated to 1 April 1971.

The new starting point of \$1,250 will apply to new entrants and serving teachers alike. Masters who have not yet reached the top of the basic scale of \$1,750 will benefit by an increase of one increment and those who have already reached the top of the basic scale will also benefit by having to wait one year less before going on to the first point of the extra scale at \$1,850.

The modified arrangements reduce the overall time taken to reach the maximum of \$2,050 from 18 to 13 years.

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The salary points will be increased by 3% from 1 April 1972 in line with the general increase in Government salaries already announced. The basic scale from that date will therefore range from \$1,295 to \$1,815, and the extra scale from \$1,915 to \$2,115.

Announcing the establishment of a small commission, a Government spokesman said that the Governor was anxious that the underlying causes should be identified and any lessons learnt. Its terms of Reference would be as follows:

1. To examine the underlying causes of the dispute which has arisen between the Certificated Masters in Government and aided-schools and the Government, including existing channels of communication and promotion prospects.
2. To advise on what measures, apart from the newly announced salary scales, should be taken to obviate a recurrence of such a dispute affecting teachers employed in Government and aided schools.

Commenting on the amendments to the pay scale a Government spokesman recalled that the Morgan Working Group had urged that a starting salary of \$1,250 should be considered if the educational qualifications for entrants to the training colleges were raised and the standard of the Teachers Certificate accordingly improved.

"This proposal was accepted in principle in March this year" the spokesman said, "and an interim scheme was announced proposing an additional increment to teachers graduating with credit from the training Colleges" he added.

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The Morgan report noted that since 1970 the qualifications of all students entering the colleges had been well above the minimum requirement. But research has revealed that this has been the case for many years. This point was emphasised by the Church leaders who pointed out that as a result of this trend the higher standards envisaged in the Morgan report had already been achieved by teachers graduating from the colleges.

"It has been agreed therefore that it would be now justifiable to introduce the \$1,250 starting point", the Government spokesman said.

Extra Scale

Turning to the position at the top of the scale the spokesman said that the Morgan working group, in recommending the extra scale, had recognised the unique position of a large number of Certificated Masters at the top of the scale.

The Working Group proposed an extra scale for such teachers from \$1,750 to \$1,975 over a period of 11 years. This recommendation was accepted in March this year but the points on this extra scale were brought onto the master pay scale, raising the maximum to \$2,050.

The Church leaders pointed out that although the promotion prospects for Certificated Masters had improved considerably, the majority of them would nevertheless move onto this extra scale and would have to wait 11 years to reach the top of it. The Church leaders advised that in their opinion the wait was too long and insistence on it could well have an adverse effect on the morale of this grade of teachers which was the largest in the profession.

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This could in turn adversely affect primary education as a whole at a time when all agreed that an improvement in the quality of education was needed.

"In the light of representations made by Church leaders on this point it has been decided that it would be consistent with the principles set out in the Morgan report to reduce the length of the extra scale from 11 years to 7 years", the spokesman concluded.

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LANDSLIDE WARNING SYSTEM

An "early warning system" is to be set up at various hillside sites as part of the intensive precautionary measures being taken against landslides in advance of the rainy season.

The system will involve the use of instruments which will be installed at various levels in the hillsides to gauge the water pressure and to detect any earth movement in the slopes.

One is the piezometer, a bulb-shaped instrument buried within the ground and which makes a reading on a meter whenever pressure is exerted on the sides of the bulb.

A much more sophisticated instrument is the inclinometer, or slope-indicator.

This is a tube-like electronic device sunk at various levels within the ground. The tube is mounted on runners on all its four sides and any movement in any direction will be detected and recorded by a small computer.

The depth and angle of movement of the tube are also recorded to give comprehensive information on soil movement.

Periodic readings of these instruments will be taken and will presage any precautionary action to be taken.

Drilling works for the placement of these instruments are well advanced at sites in Sau Mau Ping and Ching Cheung Road and it is hoped that they can be put into position later this week or sometime next week.

At the Po Shan Road site, it is expected that some 50 piezometers and at least 10 inclinometers will be installed.

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On Thursday, two one-and-a-half-ton drilling rigs will be lifted by helicopter to the top of the landslide area. Later the drills will be lowered progressively down the slope for similar work, again by helicopter.

A spokesman for the Public Works Department explained that the use of helicopters to transport the drills was the most convenient way, as ordinary methods to position them would involve cutting down trees which might disturb the geography of the area.

Special clearance has been obtained from the Department of Civil Aviation for the airlift.

The whole operation is expected to last several weeks, although the airlifts will only take a few minutes each time.

A constant watch will be maintained at the sites so that advance warning can be given in the event of danger and to enable necessary safety measures to be taken.

A number of other sites throughout Hong Kong are being investigated but some of these concern only flooding, such as low-lying areas in the New Territories.

Many of these do not need the instrumentation, and the investigations are in the form of surveys and calculations on the possibility of flooding.

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APPLICATIONS FOR MINI-BUS DRIVING TESTS STOPPED

The Transport Department today announced that no more applications for driving tests for public light buses will be accepted as from tomorrow (Wednesday).

"There is already a backlog of 12,000 candidates for this test and it will take some years to work through them at the present rate of testing," a spokesman explained.

Since there were 11 licensed drivers for every registered public light bus, he said, there could be no shortage of these drivers.

"The Transport Department's resources for testing should be concentrated on other categories of vehicle for which there is a more pressing need," he said.

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POLICY SPEECH BY URBAN COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

The Chairman of the Urban Council, Mr. A. de O. Sales, today spoke of a proper start for the new-look council.

"I have reviewed our practices and procedures so that they may be adapted to the new circumstances," he said.

The new Chairman was speaking at the council's second monthly meeting since its inauguration.

He said he had always attached the greatest importance to the council's select committees of which there were 13.

"Even more so now that direct responsibility devolves on them to ensure that their respective assignments are carried out adequately to best public advantage," he said.

Mr. de Sales went on to say that it was necessary to exercise close control over the implementation of policies and decisions and to ensure that committee projects and programmes were carried out in the way intended by the council.

"In other words," the Chairman continued, "nothing should be overlooked or forgotten so that no worthwhile proposal is lost by default.

"Each year the council adopts a Statement of Aims. Evidently, it is not enough to do so. The aims must be achieved, at least as far as it is practicable to do so.

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"Thus, I have asked our select committees to examine their respective targets in detail so as to relate them to our resources in terms of both money and manpower. Their practicability has to be clearly established just as it is essential to determine the priority to be given to their attainment," Mr. de Sales added.

The Chairman assured his colleagues that he would do all he could to assist them as much as possible in this endeavour. He said he had attended all committee meetings, numbering 12 since the Council met in mid-April and had read all their committee papers.

"It has been a very stimulating experience to see so much thought and action on the part of the select committees all working very earnestly in their respective spheres of responsibilities.

"I will try to continue attending such meetings as far as possible. But, there are other aspects of council work to be done and responsibility to be discharged. They will also require my attention. Therefore a shift of emphasis may be necessary in time to come," Mr. de Sales said.

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WIDENING OF SHIPPING LANE FOR CONTAINER SHIPS

The shipping channel between the wreck of the "Seawise University" and Tsing Yi Island is being widened to facilitate the passage of container ships moving to the Kwai Chung terminal.

The channel will be widened to 1,000 feet and dredged to a depth of 40 feet to enable easy passage and to accommodate ships of 59,000 tons gross and 950 feet in length.

A spokesman for the Marine Department said today that at present container ships find it rather difficult to manoeuvre along the shallower east coast of Tsing Yi Island and the red marking buoys of the wreck.

This is possible during daylight hours, but the operation becomes more difficult at night, he said.

The dredging began a few days ago and is expected to be completed by the middle of October.

A notice to mariners has been issued by the Marine Department to alert them of the work.

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TALK ON GERMAN GRAPHIC ARTS

The City Museum and Art Gallery has invited a leading Hong Kong architect, Mr. Tao Ho, to give a gallery talk on the development of contemporary German graphics.

The talk will be held in conjunction with an exhibition currently on display in the gallery entitled "Graphic Art in Germany Today".

Mr. Tao Ho recently returned from a tour arranged by the German government to study aspects of German art. During his visit he met some of the artists represented in the exhibition.

His talk, to be held in the art gallery at 5.30 p.m. on Friday (May 11), will use some of the exhibits as examples. It will be open to all interested people.

The exhibition consists of 130 original prints by 54 German artists from the last two decades and provides a characteristic cross-section of the current art scene in West Germany.

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NEW PLAYGROUND TO BE OPENED

Urban Councillor, Miss Cecilia L.Y. Yeung, will formally open a 3½-acre playground in Wong Tai Sin tomorrow (May 9).

Named the Heng Lam Street Playground, this latest Urban Council amenity has been built at a cost of \$200,000.

It comprises two mini-soccer pitches and a garden with turfing and attractive greenery, benches and paths.

An exhibition football match will be played tomorrow to mark the opening and there will also be band music.

Note to Editors: You are invited to send a reporter and/or photographer to cover the event.

Transport will be provided and will leave the car park next to the Tsim Sha Tsui Post Office at 2.50 p.m. The opening is at 3.30 p.m.

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Release time: 7.00 p.m.