



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Thursday, March 29, 1973

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PAY INCREASE FOR TEACHERS

A new scale of \$1,175 - \$2,050 per month has been established for certificated masters, backdated to 1st April 1971. In addition the standard of the Teacher's Certificate is to be raised, and this will be coupled with an increase in the starting salary to \$1,250.

These salary points apply to the scale as at 1st April 1971. They will be increased by 3% from the 1st April 1972 in line with the general increase in Government salaries already announced.

Announcing this today a Government spokesman said that, as an interim measure, starting this summer, all new graduates from teacher training colleges who are awarded a Teacher's Certificate "with credit" will be granted an extra increment to bring them to a starting point of \$1,250 on first appointment as certificated masters. During this intervening period, other new graduates will enter at the start of the scale at \$1,175 per month.

These arrangements, which are in line with the recommendations of the Morgan Working Group, are intended as a first step towards improving the quality of the teaching service. This will be done by raising the entrance qualifications to training colleges and improving the standard of the Teacher's Certificate.

When this is achieved, all graduates from the training colleges will receive a starting salary of \$1,250 per month on first appointment as certificated masters.

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In the new scale normal annual increments will apply until \$1,750. At that point certificated masters aged 30 or over, who have served satisfactorily for five years on \$1,750, will move automatically and without prejudice to their promotion prospects to a salary point of \$1,850 per month and then at three-year intervals to \$1,950 and \$2,050. Such teachers who had been at the top of the scale for five years on 1st April 1971, or became eligible at any time since then, will automatically move onto the new point of \$1,850.

Commenting on the announcement, a Government spokesman said:

"The Government has largely accepted the recommendations of the Working Group appointed in November to consider salaries for certificated masters. But it has also taken into account proposals and petitions received from interested parties."

Concern

"In reaching its decision, the Government has noted the concern shown by teachers in their comments and public statements. This concern has concentrated more on the status and dignity of the profession than on the pay scales alone."

Commenting on the role of education in Hong Kong, the spokesman said, "The expanded education programme is one of the major priorities of the Government during the next 10 years, and the quality of the teaching profession, as well as the numbers of teachers coming available, are vital factors in the success of that programme."

"The decision announced today will contribute in no small way towards that development," he said.

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The report recommended a special extra-scale for teachers who were over 30 years of age and had served for five years or more at the top of the existing scale of \$1,750. The recommendation envisaged further increments of \$75 by three-year intervals to a maximum of \$1,975. It also recommended that those accepting this scale should forego any further right to promotion prospects.

When the Working Group Report was published on 14th February, interested parties were invited to comment and a period of four weeks was set aside for this.

In view of comments made by teachers, and the administrative problems involved in implementing the Working Group's proposal, the Government has decided that the satisfactory teacher could enter the extra-scale automatically without forfeiting his right to promotion prospects. The salary points of the extra-scale have been adjusted to bring them onto the master pay scale at \$1,950 and \$2,050.

The majority of Certificated Masters are in aided schools. These teachers have recently benefitted by the introduction of a new structure which provides many more promotion posts. In the primary school sector promotion posts have increased from 76 to 1891, and in the secondary school sector from 88 to 236.

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TENANCY AGREEMENTS FOR NEW LETTINGS

On Public Housing Estates

Tenancy agreements will be used for new lettings on all public housing estates from April 1 when the new Housing Department comes into operation.

This agreement is exactly the same as that being used by the present Housing Authority.

Tenants taking up new lettings on public housing estates, whether they are the present Housing Authority estates, Government Low Cost Housing or Resettlement estates, will be asked to sign the document.

The new tenant is required to pay \$50 refundable deposits as security against any damage to the flat.

Commenting on the new procedure, a Government spokesman said it was introduced primarily to simplify and streamline the letting process.

"In addition", he added, "this will give the tenant legal status and protection."

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MA TAU KOK IS HOME FOR NEW HOUSING DEPARTMENT

As from April 1, the new Housing Department will operate from what was formerly the headquarters of the Urban Services Department's Housing Division in Ma Tau Kok Road, Kowloon.

The department will provide the Secretariat for the new Housing Authority and will be its executive arm.

The offices, which stand on the edge of the Ma Tau Wei Estate, will be the nerve centre for the new organization. It will accommodate the Housing Department's directorate and its architectural division.

Other parts of the Housing Department will be situated at:

- * Estates Management Division - San Po Kong Government Offices, No. 692, Prince Edward Road, Kowloon.
- * Clearance Section, Squatter Control Section and Applications Section - No. 10, Middle Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon.
- * Redevelopment Section - Pak Tin Administration Building, Pak Tin Estate, Kowloon.

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RETARDED CHILDREN THRIVING IN COUNTRY ATMOSPHERE

At Siu Lam Hospital

There are at present 150 children at the Siu Lam Hospital, in Tai Lam, and all are thriving as a result of their transfer from urban centres to a country hospital.

Siu Lam was formally opened last year by Sir Kenneth Ping-fan Fung as a hospital for severely mentally retarded children. The patients came from special wards in the Tung Wah Hospital, the Po Leung Kuk, and Social Welfare Department institutions where they were placed pending completion of Siu Lam.

After the hospital's opening, the children were accepted in groups of 50 at a time to enable the staff to adjust to the special routines required for this type of patient.

The rainstorm of last June seriously damaged the approach road, and so delayed for some months completion of the transfer, but the hospital is now fully operational, and the maximum capacity of 200 will soon be reached.

Siu Lam was built with a large donation from the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club, and was set up on the recommendation of Dr. L.T. Hilliard, who had earlier recommended that mentally-retarded children in Hong Kong be sub-divided into three groups.

Children capable of being educated should be the responsibility of the Education Department, who would organise special classes for them. Children in the medium grade of retardation should be trained by the Social Welfare Department.

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The severely mentally retarded in the third grade should be looked after by the Medical and Health Department in a hospital created especially for them. Plans for Siu Lam were prepared immediately after the report's acceptance by the Government, but it took some years for the hospital to be realised.

Siu Lam is in the general area of the Tai Lam Chung reservoir. It sits on a hill away from the main highway. The design allows the country atmosphere to be retained, and all the wings of the main building open onto a green courtyard.

A spokesman says: "The change has been very good for the children, and they are thriving. The staff have got used to the problems posed by severe mental retardation, and all is well."

The daily routine is planned to give the children as much sunshine as possible, and many hours are spent out of doors. Those who are unable to walk are carried to a patio where they rest on improvised beds in the fresh air.

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Note to Editors:

You are invited to send a representative on a Press tour of Siu Lam Hospital on the afternoon of Wednesday (April 4). Transport will be provided. Members of the Press, radio and TV are requested to assemble at 1.15 p.m. in the sub-pool behind the Tsim Sha Tsui post office, where one large government bus, AM5018, will be waiting. At Siu Lam Hospital, they will be welcomed by Mr. Arthur Starling, Chief Hospital Secretary, and other officials. The tour will include all facilities at the hospital. Photographs will be allowed but in deference to the patients themselves, there should be no identifiable pictures. The Medical and Health Department's Public Relations Officer will be at the Tsim Sha Tsui sub-pool to assist the Press.

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SPECIAL TRAIN SERVICES FOR CHING MING FESTIVAL

Special trains will run to and from Wo Hop Shek Station during the Ching Ming Festival on April 5 and on April 8 (Sunday).

The first special train will leave Kowloon and Wo Hop Shek at 6.15 a.m., 7.34 a.m. respectively.

The last special train will depart from Kowloon and Wo Hop Shek at 3.21 p.m. and 4.57 p.m. respectively.

The special trains will not pick up passengers at the Mong Kok Station.

In addition, all up and down local passenger trains will also not pick up passengers at the Mong Kok Station from 8 a.m. to 3.10 p.m. on April 5 and 8.

Passengers intending to use the special trains are asked to go to the Kowloon Station at Tsim Sha Tsui. Season and monthly ticket holders may board these trains without extra charge.

The concession return tickets for trips from Kowloon to Wo Hop Shek or Lowu will be on sale at the Kowloon Station on April 5 and 8.

A spokesman for the Kowloon Canton Railway advised the public that up trains from Kowloon to the New Territories would probably be full from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. Down trains are expected to be full from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m.

"If traffic warrants, additional special trains will be run in the late evenings," the spokesman said.

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IMPROVED TELEPHONE SERVICE AT LABOUR DEPARTMENT OFFICES

Two direct exchange lines have been installed in the offices of the Local Employment Service (5-270276) and the Workmen's Compensation Unit (5-270083) of the Labour Department's Hong Kong Regional Office at New Rodney Block, Queensway.

The main exchange 5-282523 will continue to function but to avoid congestion, members of the public who wish to make enquiries to these two Units are requested to make use of the appropriate direct exchange line.

The New Rodney Block currently houses the following services of the Labour Department:-

* Labour Relations Division

Headquarters
Hong Kong Office

* Employment Division

Headquarters
Headquarters of the Youth Employment Advisory Service
Headquarters of the Overseas Employment Service
Hong Kong office of the Local Employment Service

* Industry Division

Hong Kong field unit of the Factory Inspectorate
Hong Kong Special Duties field unit of the Factory Inspectorate
Hong Kong field unit of the Labour Inspectorate

* Industrial Training Division

Headquarters of the Industrial Training Unit
Headquarters of the Apprenticeship Training Unit

* Industrial Health Division

Hong Kong office of the Industrial Health Division
Hong Kong office of the Workmen's Compensation Unit

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ARRANGEMENTS FOR COTTON TEXTILE EXPORTS TO E.E.C.

The Director of Commerce and Industry announced this evening that after consultation with the Textiles Advisory Board, the arrangements which had been introduced at the beginning of March whereby exports of cotton textiles to the E.E.C. were regulated on an actual weight basis, had been discontinued.

Instead the control system would revert to that introduced in January this year in which quotas were debited by reference to conversion factors for expressing pieces in metric tons.

Full details of the changes will be set out in a notice to exporters to be issued tomorrow (Friday).

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SPEECH BY COLONIAL SECRETARY

Note to Editors: Copies of the speech by the Colonial Secretary, Sir Hugh Norman-Walker, in today's Legislative Council meeting are distributed separately in the G.I.S. press boxes.

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TRAFFIC DIVERSIONS AT BUSY ROAD JUNCTION

Temporary traffic arrangements will be introduced at the junction of Nathan Road and Jordan Road to facilitate drainage work to be carried out in the area.

Westbound traffic on Jordan Road will be prohibited from turning right into Nathan Road with effect from 8 a.m. on Saturday (March 31). This will last about two weeks.

Instead, motorists can enter the north-bound lane on Nathan Road via Pilkem Street and Bowring Street.

With effect from 10 a.m. on Saturday (March 31), Cox's Road will be made two-way following the completion of reconstruction works.

Southbound journeys on KMB Route 2C will resume normal operation along Cox's Road, Austin Road and Chatham Road instead of Jordan Road and Nathan Road.

Appropriate traffic signs will be posted in the areas to guide motorists.

Meanwhile, the section of Waterloo Road north of Cornwall Street has been closed to all northbound traffic for three months to allow road works to be completed at the Lion Rock Interchange.

Traffic to Lion Rock Tunnel and Wong Tai Sin are diverted via Junction Road, Fu Mei Street, Fung Mo Street and Lung Cheung Road.

Traffic to Tai Po Road are diverted to Cornwall Street which is now open to two-way traffic.

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Traffic will not be permitted to turn right from Lung Cheung Road to Waterloo Road but could travel via Nam Cheong Street and Cornwall Street.

Temporary traffic signals have been put up at Tunnel Approach Road.

Motorists going to the New Territories are advised to travel via Tai Po Road to avoid the expected severe congestion there as a result of these diversions.

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CORRECTION

Note to Editors: With reference to the summary of Mr. D.H. Jordan's speech on P. 17 of the Daily Information Bulletin yesterday (Wednesday), paragraph two should read: Speaking at the resumed debate in the Legislative Council this afternoon, he said however "it may be that changing circumstances will in the future make it necessary for the Government to take a bigger hand in 'planning, regulation and assistance' for industrial development."

The error is regretted.

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APPROPRIATION BILL 1973 PASSED

The Appropriation Bill 1973 completed its committee stage and third reading and was passed into law at this afternoon's sitting of the Legislative Council.

Four other bills also had their third readings and passed the committee stage to become law.

They are the Dangerous Goods (Amendment) Bill 1973, the Entertainment Tax (Amendment) Bill 1973, the Fixed Penalty (Traffic Contraventions) (Amendment) Bill 1973, and the Public Health and Urban Services (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 1973.

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LABOUR DISPUTE AT HIGH ISLAND SCHEME SETTLED

Wide-Ranging Agreement Signed

Workers and one of the major contractors on the \$1,300 million High Island Water Scheme this afternoon signed a wide-ranging agreement following the settlement of a dispute which began on the site on Monday and ended yesterday afternoon.

The agreement -- between Vianini S.P.A., the giant Italian firm handling the construction work for the dam scheme, and their employees on the site -- is the first of its kind to be signed by management and workers on a major construction undertaking in Hong Kong.

It includes an undertaking to set up machinery for joint consultation, and lays down procedures to be followed in future grievance or disciplinary cases.

The agreement was signed this afternoon at the Kwun Tong office of the Labour Relations Service in the presence of Labour Department officers who helped workers and management frame the agreement.

The head of the department's Labour Relations Service, Mr. Tsui Tim-fook, said this afternoon the agreement was regarded as a breakthrough in the construction and contracting field.

"Management and workers have not reached such an agreement before in any scheme of this magnitude, such as the Plover Cove scheme or the Cross-Harbour Tunnel project," he said, "although there has obviously been a need for it."

"We hope

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"We hope that now Vianini has led the way, other companies will follow. It's interesting to note that Vianini was also the first in its field to employ a qualified industrial safety expert."

Mr. Tsui said joint consultation was the process of regular discussion between management and workers on matters of joint concern. It allowed a two-way flow of ideas which enabled management and workers to discuss problems instead of resorting to drastic action.

He said the second main point of the agreement -- the laying down of grievance and disciplinary procedures -- would help stop situations such as that which gave rise to this week's dispute.

"If good employer-employee relations and work efficiency are to be maintained in any field, regardless of the size of the undertaking, there must be accepted ways of dealing with grievances and appeals arising from disciplinary measures," said Mr. Tsui.

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Release time: 7.30 p.m.