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Asia's highest paid teachers

Hongkong teachers are the most highly paid in Asia.

The startling revelation came out during the four-day Asian Regional Conference of the International Federation of Free Teachers Union which ended in Hongkong yesterday.

The starting salary of a graduate master in a local government or aided secondary school is about \$6,150, doubling that of his counterpart in Japan whose salary is 96,000 yen (about HK\$3,450).

And the monthly salary of a senior university lecturer in Hongkong may reach a maximum of about \$28,000, which is again twice as much as his Japanese counterpart who makes 469,800 yen (about HK\$16,880) a month.

The difference is even more spectacular when compared with other Asian countries.

A general graduate who teaches in a secondary school in the Philippines has a starting salary of about 1,700 pesos which is about \$714.

Teachers getting the lowest pay are those from Sri Lanka. A general graduate with post-graduate diploma in education, who teaches in a secondary school, receives only US\$44 (about HK\$343).

And one with an honours diploma only gets about HK\$20 more.

The conference, hosted by the Hongkong Teachers' Association and attended by 80 delegates from 17 Asian countries, touched on many topics including salary scales.

Mr. Loi Ting-shiin, a member of the conference's preparation committee and the academic officer of the Hongkong Teachers' Association, said he was astonished when he learned that local teachers were earning that much more.

Mr. Loi said it might be due to the fact that salaries of teachers in government and aided schools were being pegged with that of civil servants.

Though there was no mention of fringe benefits, Mr. Loi said Hongkong teachers were still the most highly paid considering the living standards of all the countries, including Japan.