

ALL 9,500 government clerks will work-to-rule on Thursday in their latest effort to win a pay rise.

Details of the industrial action, which was not disclosed yesterday for fear of Government taking counter measures, will be revealed to the clerks on Wednesday afternoon.

Disclosing this at the Government Clerical Staff Association meeting yesterday, its chairman, Fan Hin-kwong hinted that the action, once started, will involve clerks of all departments and that it will be escalated step by step.

"All I can say at present is that the action will be more severe than the one we had in October last year," he warned.

The proposed action has already gained support from the clerks' adviser, Urban Councillors Tsin Tsai-nin,

9,500 clerks vote to start go-slow action

and Dr Denny Huang, Mr Ma Man-fai and executive members from the Pre-Amalgamation Co-ordination Team (PACT) who were present at the meeting yesterday.

Urban Councillor Elsie Elliott, who was unable to attend the meeting, sent in her support by telephone.

Mr Tsin said that since the Civil Service Branch has no intention to continue negotiation, he called on the clerks to approach the Finance Committee instead.

"The excuse that the pay rise has to be deferred until next April because of

financial difficulties is unacceptable. Their salaries' revision come from savings made by the clerks themselves since 1974," Mr Tsin pointed out.

Mr Tsin illustrated that the Government is spending about \$65.1 million on the salaries of 524 super-scale officers each year, and an additional \$17.9 million on their housing allowance.

These officers' salary range from \$8,550 to \$19,850 each month, while that of the clerks is from \$615 to \$1,840, he added.

The "productivity deal" report, worked out by a

joint committee of clerks and government officials and was disclosed for the first time yesterday since its completion, pointed out that it would have cost \$10.7 million to implement the salary revision in April this year.

The report also mentioned: "Vacancies for the past year in the Clerical Class had been held to about 400 functional posts producing savings of more than \$6 million. The additional workload this brought was shouldered by the clerks and it is considered that the resulting, not inconsiderable, savings, although made 'in anticipation' should not be ignored by Government."

The recommendations in the report also called for a proposed savings of \$8.65 million through deleting leave reserve posts, regrading clerical officer posts to clerical assistant and deleting one clerical officer post for every 20 posts on approved establishment.

"Thus it shows that the immediate implementation has nothing to do with the Government's finance," he stressed.

Sharing the view, Mr Ma proposed that the clerks should launch a signature campaign among the public who are willing to support their industrial action.

At the same time, he said, the clerks should also publish a pamphlet explaining the reasons for the work-to-rule action so that the public could forgive them of the inconveniences it may cause.

"With the signatures, the clerks can wipe out Government's charges that the public is either neutral or uninterested in their recent action," he said.

He criticised the Government of being an "expert in lying" and the breach of promise made with the clerks is one of its usual practices.

A total of 1,000 members and representatives from various organisations took part in the meeting yesterday.