

20,000  
start  
go-slow  
but  
effect  
minimal

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MORE than 20,000 junior civil servants yesterday began a go-slow to press for a higher pay rise but the industrial action had minimal effect.

However, the chairman of the Civil Servants General Union, Mr Anthony Luk, said the impact of the go-slow had yet to be felt.

Despite a Government denial of any disruption due to the go-slow, Mr Anthony Luk said the momentum was certainly building up.

He said it was too early to assess the full effect of the action.

The CSGU represents 17 civil servants unions which include most units of the Urban Service Department, Government Supplies department, police interpreters, butchers, secretaries, clerks within the post office and government Treasury, nurses, ambulancemen and firemen.

The most visible signs of yesterday's go-slow was the piling up of garbage at several collection points on Hongkong and Kowloon and slightly longer than normal queues at the General Post Office.

A spokesman for the abattoirs said there was no go-slow there and meat retailers on Hongkong and Kowloon said supply was normal.

Mr Luk had earlier said the go-slow would not cause the public any inconvenience and would be suspended in cases of danger to life and property.

Chairman of the Association of Government Nursing Staff, Mr Ronald Chow, said though his union fully supported the go-slow, his members did not take part in it.

The reason, he said, was that Mr Luk had told the emergency services not to take part in the first stage of the industrial action.

The CSGU is asking for a 14 to 18 per cent pay increase instead of the Government's offer of six to 10 per cent earlier this month.

The union also wants the Government to include it in the Senior Civil Service Council for the purpose of negotiation and bargaining.

A spokesman for the Civil Service Branch said an invitation had been sent to the CSGU inviting representatives to a meeting to discuss these two points, but the offer has been rejected by the union.

The spokesman said the door to talks was still open.

The one-week go-slow will end on August 5 after which Mr Luk said the union would decide on whether to escalate or extend the industrial action.