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2,000 strike for more pay

(A.S.) in statement for workers.

A Kun Tong electronics factory temporarily shut down yesterday following a pay dispute with its more than 2,000 workers.

The dispute, which stemmed from a demand by workers for a pay rise, remained unresolved last night despite conciliatory efforts by Labour Department officers.

It appears that the factory, Fairchild Semiconductor (Hongkong) Ltd, will remain closed today as well.

The dispute broke into the open yesterday morning when about 1,000 workers gathered outside the nine-storey factory building in Hoi Bun Road.

As the factory's main doors were locked, the workers flooded into Hoi Bun Road and police had to be called to maintain order.

A section of the road had to be cordoned off and traffic diverted.

However, most of the workers dispersed after midday.

Some workers, however, managed to get into the factory canteen where a meeting was held to elect representatives but no formal talks were held between the two sides up till late last night.

On Monday, the workers also staged a strike to press their demands.

Workers said they are demanding a \$5 increase in their basic daily salary and a 5½-day working week.

But company officials said they had so far received no official demands from worker representatives.

One official said the

company had offered to negotiate with two worker representatives at the Labour Department's Kun Tong office but none of the worker representatives turned up.

She said the two management representatives waited in vain at the office for more than five hours.

Management, she said, was puzzled about the workers' intentions as the venue for the talks was suggested by the workers themselves.

She said the management has adopted a sincere attitude in dealing with the workers and hopes to negotiate a peaceful and reasonable settlement under agreed terms.

The official added that the company is currently considering a salary revision to help the workers ease the effects of inflation.

According to the management, the dispute began last week when some workers started a rumour that newly hired workers were getting more pay than they.

The company later clarified the situation but some of the workers stuck to their story and insisted on a pay rise.

A strike was staged on Monday but the workers left the factory when no conclusive agreements were reached.

The company said it was under these circumstances that the factory was forced to shut down yesterday.

It went on to say that the company had already given the workers a salary increase in February.