

Hong Kong protesters start campaign against proposed political reform

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Pro-democracy demonstrators in Hong Kong have kickstarted their campaign to oppose a political reform package, as lawmakers begin their debate on the measure on Wednesday.

About 3,500 pro-democracy supporters took to the streets on Sunday, Channel News Asia reported.

The reform package outlines the method of electing Hong Kong's next leader by universal suffrage in 2017, the earliest possible date granted by Beijing.

But China has decided that only two or three candidates, who will require the majority support of a 1,200-strong Nominating Committee, will be eligible to run for the office of Hong Kong's next leader.

"Our goal is to make sure that the electoral reform package gets voted down in the Legislative Council (LegCo) later this week," said the Civil Human Rights Front, which organised the rally.

Till then, the Front will be holding nightly rallies but they do not intend to re-occupy the streets of Central, if the vote does not go their way.

Student activist group Scholarism, which led the street pro-democracy protests last year, is also taking part.

"We're still discussing our actions but all of our actions need to have a motive. We don't want the package to pass," said Wong Ji-Yuet, spokeswoman for Scholarism.

The latest rolling poll survey carried out by Hong Kong's top three universities showed that public support for the bill is slightly less than 41 per cent, with about 43 per cent opposing it.