

Transcript of remarks by S for S and heads of six disciplined services at media session after LegCo Finance Committee special meeting

The Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee; the Commissioner of Police, Mr Tang Ping-keung; the Director of Immigration, Mr Erick Tsang; the Commissioner of Custom and Excise, Mr Hermes Tang; the Director of Fire Services, Mr Li Kin-yat; the Commissioner of Correctional Services, Mr Woo Ying-ming; and the Controller of Government Flying Services, Captain West Wu, met the media after attending the special meeting of the Legislative Council Finance Committee on security policy areas today (April 9). Following is the transcript of remarks at the media session:

Reporter: I have two questions. So yesterday the court called against the JPOA (Junior Police Officers' Association)'s appeal to ban the disclosure of voter's details. How would you respond to that? And the second one is that today the High Court will rule on the anti-mask ban, so if they rule against the ban, how do you think it would affect the Police's law enforcement? Will it bring inconvenience to them? And how would they adjust to it?

Secretary for Security: I respect the decision of the court in respect of your first question. What is important here is the problem of doxxing. The problem of revealing people's personal particulars without consent, especially when there may be evil motives, such as trying to intimidate a particular person so as not to say something or do something, I think the society should face this issue seriously because it can affect every one of us, whatever your background is, whatever your political stand is. So what is important is for any activities that contravene the law, then of course I have already asked law enforcement agencies to make use of the powers under the present ordinances, so as to take people responsible to justice.

I also understand that the Privacy Commissioner has been seriously examining how these issues can be tackled in a more effective way, such as whether there is any need for new legislative powers for the Privacy Commissioner to carry out his duties more effectively. What is also important is that the public should know that without a person's consent; if somebody exposes a person's personal particulars with intent of causing that person harm or making himself some gains, that is a criminal offence liable to a five-year imprisonment.

What is also important is to take note that there is currently an injunction against people putting up, reviewing, exposing personal details of police officers and special constables. That injunction is still valid.

The second question regarding the judgment in regard to the emergency

regulation, of course I will be keenly looking at the decision, and then I will study the judgment.

Reporter: If the court...(inaudible)

Secretary for Security: I shall not speculate here, but what is important is that we all will examine the judgment in detail.

Reporter: There are reports suggesting that some defendants who are now facing charges related to the anti-extradition protests, they told the court that they were attacked by the Police during their arrest and also during their detention in the police stations. Is the Police aware of such incidents and how would you follow up on these alleged or possible police abuse?

Secretary for Security: Any allegations against the Police will be followed up seriously by the Complaints Against Police Office, which will investigate each case thoroughly and impartially. The investigation result will be reported to the Independent Police Complaints Council, comprising independent members of different backgrounds, including people with a legal background. We should give time to the investigation of all these complaints. It will not be appropriate to speculate at this stage, that's the first point.

The second point is, there are a lot of so-called allegations made by a lot of people, but these people never come up to give their side of the story to the Police. It is totally unfair and sometimes gets people to suspect the motives when somebody makes serious allegations against government officials, including police officers, without providing actual information or evidence. This is very unfair and also can be misleading, particularly we have already noted that some of these people who have made such allegations have been changing their stories from time to time. So, it is important that people making all these allegations come out to prove what they believe is what's happening, rather than making allegations on air, sometimes being totally masked so as not to show his identity, or not willing to go to the Police to provide the information so that a fair and impartial investigation will be conducted. Thank you very much.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)