

Transcript of remarks by SCS at media session at HK Children's Hospital (with photos/video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mrs Ingrid Yeung, at a media session after inspecting the first-day operation of the Children Community Vaccination Centre at Hong Kong Children's Hospital concurrently providing vaccination service for children with the Sinovac and BioNTech vaccines this morning (August 15):

Reporter: Secretary, how's the pace of young kids getting vaccinated? Because an expert said when the vaccination rate reach 20 per cent, it will go up quickly. So is the pace now quick enough? And also do you know about the procurement of BioNTech vaccines for young children? Is there a date for it?

Secretary for the Civil Service: I hope the pace will be quicker but I note that we have only begun the vaccination for infants aged 6 months to 3 years old for less than two weeks. Right now we have more than 3 000 infants between this age bracket who have got vaccinated. I hope the pace will quicken. But I am confident that as school opens, as many more schools organise outreach services for their students, and as parents become more aware of the benefit of having the vaccination, the percentage will go up. We are still discussing with the pharmaceutical company that produces BioNTech vaccine for the infant formula of the BioNTech vaccine, procurement of this vaccine for use. When we have further news, we will let everybody know.

Reporter: Would it be illegal to create a private social group like the "Civil Service Secrets" to express their dissatisfaction about the Government, and what is the criteria to...would it be illegal for that discussion?

Secretary for the Civil Service: The Secretary for Security has clearly explained yesterday that simple criticism of the Government would not be illegal. For the civil service, we have plenty of established channels for colleagues to reflect their views to the management. We are very open to colleagues' views. In fact, I do have regular meetings with staff unions from time to time and I received a lot of criticisms about government policies, human resources management policies, etc. Government departments and bureaux also have their own departmental liaison channels with civil servants. So I don't think there is no channel for civil servants to express their views except on private social media platforms. And even on private social media platform as long as the information is not confidential and as long as it is a normal sort of criticism of government policies, it is no problem for civil servants to express them. Thank you.

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

