

Government statement

On recent moves by some people to issue anonymous open letters in the name of civil servants, and the plans by some people to organise a political assembly and a strike in the name of civil servants and call on civil servants to participate, a Government spokesman made the following solemn statement today (August 1):

Civil servants have all along been upholding the principle of political neutrality and serving the public in a dedicated and professional manner. Civil servants should be dedicated; be committed to the rule of law, objectivity and impartiality; and at all times ensure that their behaviour would not impede their performance of official duties in a fair and professional manner. These values are what the public expects of them.

Government colleagues must maintain political neutrality regardless of their personal thoughts on recent events. The Government has all along been listening to views of colleagues through various established internal channels. Colleagues can make use of these channels to express their views.

Any acts to undermine the principle of political neutrality of the civil service are totally unacceptable to the Government as this will damage the public's confidence in the political neutrality of the civil service and give a wrong impression to the public that civil servants are unable to discharge their duties in an impartial manner. Such acts will also cause the public to mistakenly believe that these individuals are representing the 180 000-strong civil service or their respective departments, and think that civil servants are acting against the Government. These acts will also create division and conflicts within the Government, and seriously affect the Government's effective operation and implementation of policies and the delivery of services to the public.

In fact, it is difficult to determine the real identity of those who issued anonymous open statements.

According to the Civil Service Code, civil servants shall uphold the principle of political neutrality, meaning that civil servants shall serve the Chief Executive and the Government of the day with total loyalty and to the best of their ability, no matter what their own political beliefs are. The Government will, in accordance with the established mechanism, seriously follow up on any violations of regulations by civil servants.

At this difficult moment, government colleagues have to stay united and work together to uphold the core values of the civil service and not to affect the effective operation of the Government because of personal beliefs as this may undermine public confidence in the impartial discharge of duties by civil servants.