

**MINISTER JOSEPHINE TEO'S REMARKS
FOR SINGPOST'S BUKA PUASA EVENT ON 20 APR 2022**

Mr Vincent Phang, SingPost Group CEO

Brother Roger Tan, President of UTES

Brother Thuvinder Singh, General Secretary of UTES

Colleagues and friends

1. Selamat petang. This is the first time I'm joining you in SingPost's annual buka puasa event, and I am honoured to be part of your tradition.
2. Ramadan and Raya in the past two years had been challenging for all our Muslim friends.
3. But this year, with Singapore's announcement to living with Covid-19, and the corresponding easing of measures, Ramadan and Raya promise to be extra special. It has been two years since we have been able to have such a large gathering for buka puasa; and I am very grateful that we can do so again this year. Since 1 April, the Singapore-Malaysia land border has been re-opened. I understand that many of our Malaysian postal colleagues have made arrangements to return home. Thank you for making the decision to remain in Singapore for the last two years. It must have been difficult for you to be separated from your loved ones for so long. For those who are returning home, I wish you a safe return and a joyful family reunion.
4. To all of you at SingPost, I would like to say "Thank You" for your dedication and hard work for keeping Singapore's postal system and last mile delivery services going in such extraordinary times. You have to adapt repeatedly and quickly to changing SMMs. You have to watch over your personal health and safety; and cover for colleagues who had unfortunately caught the virus.
5. You have also supported in many national distribution exercises, including the two rounds of Antigen Rapid Test kits delivery to all households; the distribution of notification letters to all households regarding the CDC vouchers, which provided relief to households, and also merchants that are on the receiving end of the vouchers; as well as the delivery of pamphlets on the distribution of Temasek Foundation's hand sanitizer and oximeter. Because of you, our important mail was delivered to our letterboxes and doorsteps safely and in a timely manner. So, a big round of applause to all of you!

6. Today, Singapore is in a much better situation than a year ago. But we must remain vigilant against the battle of Covid-19. The reason is we do not really know if there will be another variant that is more transmissible and harmful than the current strains. Hence, we must always keep our mindset ready to respond to any crisis.
7. On top of that, we must also adapt to structural changes, accelerated by the rapid pace of digitalisation across many different sectors. This is no different for the postal industry.
8. So, I am happy to note that SingPost has been investing to meet the evolving postal needs of our people and businesses. Globally, e-Commerce volumes have risen dramatically during Covid-19, as many of us stayed home. SingPost, as a key player in Singapore's last-mile delivery infrastructure, would have felt intensely its direct impact from the increase in volumes over the last two years. So, I am glad that you are accelerating your plans for the growing e-Commerce logistics business.
9. On the training and upskilling front, SingPost was one of the first few companies to form the Company Training Committee, or CTC, together with UTES and e2i back in 2019. Since then, despite the pandemic, I was told that SingPost has upskilled over 600 staff with digital competencies, and another 400 over staff have completed WSQ trainings. When there is a manpower crunch, squeezing out training time is even harder, but I want to urge all of you to make full use of the opportunities that your company and the union have put together for you, because over time they will be helpful to you.
10. To conclude, as long as SingPost remains nimble, agile and adaptive to changes, and your workforce – which is the core of the company – continues to upskill and strive for excellence, I have every confidence in SingPost's continued ability to weather changes and to reach new heights.
11. On this note, Selamat berbuka puasa! Terima Kasih!

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