

**Opening remarks by Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Communications & Information, and Chairman, National Translation Committee, Mr Tan Kiat How at the National Translation Committee Appreciation Dinner on Friday, 21 October 2022.**

Members of the National Translation Committee and the Language Resource Panels,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. A very good evening to everyone. I am delighted to see all of you again after our first physical meeting in April. The journey since then has been an exciting one. Through your active involvement, and support over the past 8 months since the new term started, we have made good progress together.

**Citizen Engagement**

*Citizen Translators*

2. Our Citizen Translators (CT in short) project has come a long way since we launched it in January 2021. I am happy to share that we have more than 1,800 members who have stepped forward to partner the Government and public agencies in improving translations for public communication materials.

3. Over the last nine months, many of them have supported public agencies and People's Association (PA) divisions in more than 10 translations review.

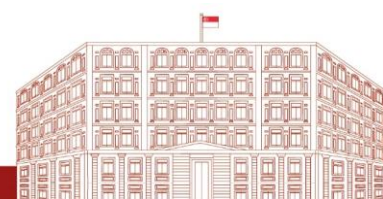
***Kampung Spirit***

4. To strengthen the community bonding, NTC Secretariat forged partnership with PA and concluded two dialogue sessions at Jalan Besar and East Coast divisions respectively. The aim of these sessions was to link our pool of Citizen Translators residing in the various estates to provide translation assistance at these divisions. Minister Josephine Teo lent her support at the Jalan Besar session, and she was heartened to note that many participants, some of them new to community and PA activities, felt passionate about raising translation standards together.

5. This is a good platform to strengthen the community spirit. Hence, MCI will continue to work closely with PA to partner more divisions to allow CTs to be more involved in these community communications materials.

6. Last month, we also had the first hybrid session to engage CTs, with the aim of discussing how they can work together with the Government to tackle translation-related challenges. Dr Muklis and Mr Pala were my co-panellists in this robust discussion session attended by close to 270 CTs. From the feedback we received, CTs were happy with the initiatives rolled out to raise translation standards in Singapore, and for organising a lively discussion. Some even suggested expanding the scope and awareness of the CT project so that CTs could contribute more to benefit Singaporeans.

7. I am confident with a committed Translation community; we will be able to reach greater heights.



## Leveraging Technology

8. Since early 2017, we have embarked on the journey to use technology in raising translation standards in Singapore. By end 2019, we have completed the development of SG Translate for all official languages and it is now a useful tool for public officers who need to generate first cut translations.

9. This year, we have achieved another milestone with the launch of the SG Translate Together Web Portal, or SGTT. I am heartened to hear that as of August 2022, we have seen more than 70,000 translations generated online via SGTT. This represents nearly an 80% increase in translations generated since the site's launch in June.

10. In celebration of the International Translation Day last month, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong had also expressed his recognition to the translators on his "magic cup" social media post and invite those who require to generate good, localised translations to use SGTT.

11. I would also like to encourage everyone in this room to try out SGTT if you have not done so. I hope that you will also share about this uniquely "Singapore" portal with your family and friends.

## Developing Talent: Translation Talent Development Scheme (TTDS)

12. Apart from putting efforts to leverage technology, we also continue to support our translation practitioners in deepening their professional knowledge and skills. Four years ago, we started a co-sponsorship award called the Translation Talent Development Scheme (TTDS). Annually, selected recipients have been receiving funding support up to \$10,000 to offset 90% of the costs of their professional courses, seminars, and conferences, conducted either locally or overseas.

13. This year, we saw an increase in the number of applications received. This is a happy problem, showing that our translation practitioners truly embody the lifelong learning spirit. However, this means the evaluation panel which some of you were involved had a harder time to select the most deserving.

14. Tonight, I am pleased to announce that after a stringent process, six practitioners will be awarded with the TTDS this year. We will be meeting them shortly, but allow me to share about one of the award recipients first. He is Mr Haniman Bin Boniran, who works at the Life Sciences Department at Mandai Wildlife Group. He translates all the English language collaterals and books into Malay language at the Singapore Zoo, River Wonders, Night Safari, and Jurong Bird Park. He specialises in scientific explanation of animal facts and has translated more than 500 animal signages, e-posters as well as children's books into Malay language so far. I am glad to learn that he is currently taking a part-time degree course in Malay Language and Literature to strengthen his competency despite his busy work schedule.

15. Together with the other TTDS recipients, he will also join our pool of NTC ambassadors, where they will collaborate with us to nurture more younger Singaporeans to enter this field.

## Conclusion

16. Lastly, allow me to thank everyone once again for your continued commitment. Without your strong support provided to the Secretariat, we would not have done so much over the years. I look forward to working closely with all of you as we walk this journey together.



17. Before I end my remarks, I would also like to take this opportunity to wish our members who will be celebrating the festival of lights on Monday, a “Happy Deepavali”.
18. Thank you.

