



## **PRESS STATEMENT ON THE ISSUANCE OF CORRECTION DIRECTIONS UNDER THE PROTECTION FROM ONLINE FALSEHOODS AND MANIPULATION ACT AGAINST GILBERT GOH AND THE INDEPENDENT SINGAPORE (TISG)**

The Minister of National Development has instructed the POFMA Office to issue Correction Directions (CD) on: (i) a Facebook post by Gilbert Goh (19 Feb 2020), (ii) an article by The Independent Singapore (TISG) on their website (21 Feb 2020), and (iii) a Facebook post by TISG (21 Feb 2020). They will be required to carry a correction notice alongside their posts<sup>[1]</sup>.

### **Corrections and clarifications regarding falsehoods posted by Gilbert Goh and TISG**

2 On 19 February 2020, Goh published a Facebook post alleging that a single mother 'Lina' and her six children had been evicted from their rental flat due to rental default, and that they have been staying at her sister's house.

3 On 21 February 2020, TISG published an article and Facebook post on 'Lina' reiterating the same claims, after it approached Goh to obtain more details.

4 The claims listed in both articles are entirely false, for the following reasons:

- First, HDB did not evict 'Lina' from her rental flat. 'Lina' was previously living in a HDB rental flat with her husband and children. The family did not have any overdue rent throughout the period of the last tenancy. 'Lina's' husband terminated the tenancy for the rental flat and returned the keys to HDB in early February 2020.
- Second, 'Lina' and her husband have bought a new flat from HDB, which has been paid for in full. 'Lina' and her family have since moved into their new HDB flat.

### **Additional Clarifications**

5 When HDB staff visited 'Lina' and her husband in their new flat on 22 February 2020, the couple explained that it was a relative who had approached Goh for assistance.

6 'Lina' and her family have been receiving assistance, including cash, vouchers, subsidies and food rations, from various government agencies and community partners – the Ministry of Social Development (MSF), the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA), HDB and the Sembawang Family Service Centre. The family also received food rations and supermarket vouchers from their local grassroots organisation.

7 HDB public rental flats cater to needy Singaporean households who have no other housing options and no family support. HDB works closely with other agencies and community partners, such as Social Service Offices and Family Service Centres, to provide support to rental tenants.

8 The false statements reported by Goh and TISG give the impression that HDB has deprived a needy family of public rental housing because of their inability to pay for it. This is not the case and it is important to set the facts straight.

**- END -**

**Issued by: Ministry of National Development**

**Date: 26 February 2020**

[<sup>1</sup>] Afternote: One Correction Direction was issued to The Independent Singapore with respect to their (i) website and (ii) Facebook page.