

MEDIA RELEASE

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Maritime Union with the Right 'Heartware'

More than 5,000 senior citizens have benefitted from close to half a million contributed by Singapore Maritime Officers' Union's (SMOU) for more than a decade at their annual Lunar New Year celebrations. This year, some 650 senior citizens will receive more than \$27,000 in the form of hong baos and food aid over a series of Lunar New Year celebrations. Gracing the SMOU Lunar New Year Luncheon and Hong Bao Presentation at Raffles City Convention Centre (RCCC) on 25 February is Guest-of-Honour Mr Lawrence Wong, Minister for Culture, Community, and Youth and Second Minister for Communications and Information.

"The maritime sector has played a monumental role in Singapore's first 50 years of existence. For the next 50 years, the industry will only flourish if it continues to have men and women like those in SMOU with the commitment and passion for the profession. Through your work, our country will be able to continue to progress and prosper," said Minister Lawrence Wong.

The event at RCCC will also have a SG50 Draw where the senior members of SMOU present will be in for a surprise "Lucky Draw" and stand a chance to win an OTO sponsored Power Chair.

Living up to the Union's core values of "Care and Share", the annual Lunar New Year celebrations are one of the many ways which the Officers' Union wear their heart on their sleeves by appreciating the elderly. Elderly SMOU members, residents from the Union's adopted charity, Henderson Home, seniors from Jalan Besar, Care Community Services Society, Hope Community Services Centre, and Jamiyah Home For The Aged have been invited to the Union's Lunar New Year celebrations for more than a decade. This year, besides the regular group of seniors, the invitation was also extended to the senior residents from Jalan Kukoh, Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped and the White Cane Club.



“I’m pleased to say that we are celebrating Lunar New Year with many pioneers in one of the most significant milestones in Singapore’s history. Our pioneer generation has toiled so hard to give Singapore the fruits of their labour and today, it is deserving for them that we celebrate this festive occasion with them,” said Ms Mary Liew, General Secretary of SMOU.

“SMOU has built and maintained a long term relationship with the residents of Henderson Home by inviting them to the union’s annual Lunar New Year event for more than a decade. Besides this, their young union members also volunteer to bring the old folks out for outings at least twice a year. I am deeply appreciative of SMOU for touching the lives of the old folks,” said Ms Jenny Fong, Manager at Henderson Home.

Singapore Maritime Officers’ Union (SMOU)

Established since 1951, SMOU has grown from a membership base of about 400 in the 1970s to more than 29,000 members currently. SMOU plays a pivotal role in promoting good industrial relations between seafarers (members) and their employers, the ship-owners and ship-management companies, and the governments through its strong tripartite relationships with the local, regional and international maritime community. It seeks to improve the wages and working conditions of members in the maritime industry through collective bargaining agreements with shipping companies which employ them.

Since 1993, SMOU has helped distressed seafarers claim more than US\$17 million of unpaid wages. SMOU is an affiliate of NTUC and the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF). Visit www.smou.org.sg