

Media Release

THE “SINGAPORE STATES TIMES” AND ALEX TAN’S FACEBOOK PAGES DECLARED AS DECLARED ONLINE LOCATIONS UNDER POFMA

The Minister for Communications and Information has today declared the Singapore States Times’ (SST) and Alex Tan’s Facebook pages Declared Online Locations (DOL) under the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (POFMA). The Declarations will come into effect on 7 May 2020.

2. Under the Declarations, the SST’s and Tan’s Facebook pages are required to carry a notice stating that they have been declared DOLs. With the notice, visitors to both Facebook pages will be warned that the pages have a history of communicating falsehoods. The Declaration will also make it an offence for both SST and Tan to derive benefit from operating the Facebook pages, and prohibit the provision of financial support to them for the purposes of supporting, helping or promoting the communication of falsehoods.

3. The SST’s and Tan’s Facebook pages have repeatedly communicated numerous falsehoods, of which at least three on each page were the subject of POFMA Directions from November 2019 to-date¹. SST and Tan have refused to comply with any of the Directions issued to them. In recent months, both Facebook pages have communicated falsehoods regarding the COVID-19 virus situation in Singapore. Both Facebook pages are linked to other websites that are operated by Tan, which derive monetary benefits from these falsehoods at the expense of Singaporeans and our society. This is also the second time that Facebook pages operated by Tan have been declared as DOLs².

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION
6 May 2020

¹ These include falsehoods regarding (1) COVID-19 cases in schools (POFMA Direction issued on 5 May 2020); (2) MOH’s reporting of COVID-19 cases in Singapore (POFMA Direction issued on 18 Apr 2020); (3) payment of salaries for quarantined migrant workers in the context of the COVID-19 situation in Singapore (POFMA Direction issued on 6 Apr 2020); and (4) NUSSU’s FB page and allegations of abuse of Police powers (POFMA Direction issued on 28 Nov 2019)

² The “States Times Review” Facebook page, owned by Alex Tan, was declared a DOL on 16 Feb 2020.

