



PRESS RELEASE

ISSUANCE OF CORRECTION DIRECTIONS AND TARGETED CORRECTION DIRECTION UNDER THE PROTECTION FROM ONLINE FALSEHOODS AND MANIPULATION ACT 2019 ON FALSEHOODS REGARDING ALLEGED POLICE BULLYING

The Ministry of Home Affairs is aware of falsehoods circulated online in an Instagram story by user “@nichology”. These falsehoods were also shared by The Online Citizen Asia and Singapore Uncensored on their online platforms.

2. The Minister for Home Affairs has instructed the POFMA Office to issue Correction Directions to:

- (i) Instagram user @nichology for his Instagram story on 18 May 2021, alleging that Police officers had taunted and reprimanded an elderly woman for not wearing a mask;
- (ii) Singapore Uncensored for posts dated 18 May 2021, sharing an article on the abovementioned Instagram story by @nichology; and
- (iii) The Online Citizen Asia for posts dated 18 May 2021, sharing the abovementioned Instagram story by @nichology.

3. They will all be required to carry the correction notice as new posts.

4. The Minister for Home Affairs has also instructed the POFMA Office to issue a Targeted Correction Direction to Facebook, Inc., for the falsehoods which have been communicated in Singapore by means of Facebook. Facebook, Inc. will be required to communicate a correction notice to Facebook users in Singapore who had accessed the falsehoods.

Clarifications Regarding Falsehoods

5. The Instagram story on 18 May 2021 alleged that four Police officers, who had “cluster[ed around] an elderly auntie that took off her mask because she was feeling breathless”, “continued to tell her off to the extent [that] someone had to come and salvage the situation” and “taunt[ed]” the elderly woman. The Instagram story also claimed that the Police officers had abused their authority.

6. These allegations are wholly false, and there is no basis for the claim that the Police abused their authority. The Police had responded to an incident on 17 May 2021 at 6.43pm, at Block 743 Yishun Avenue 5. An 85-year-old woman, who did not have a mask on, appeared to be lost at the said location. Police officers attended to the elderly woman to help her find

her way home. With the help of a member of the public, it was subsequently established that the elderly woman resided in a nearby block and her domestic helper was contacted to bring her home.

7. As the incident took place during dinner time, the Police officers also bought food for the elderly woman. No further police assistance was required after the elderly woman was handed over to her domestic helper safely.

8. For the facts of the case, please refer to the Factually article “Clarifications on Online Posts Alleging Police Bullying” at <https://www.gov.sg/article/factually210521>.

9. Members of the public are advised not to participate in the spreading of unverified information and to be responsible when posting or sharing any information online.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
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