



PRESS RELEASE

ISSUANCE OF CORRECTION DIRECTIONS UNDER THE PROTECTION FROM ONLINE FALSEHOODS AND MANIPULATION ACT REGARDING FALSE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST THE POLICE CONCERNING AN INCIDENT AT YISHUN AVENUE 5 IN 2021

The Ministry of Home Affairs is aware of the following publications making false allegations against the Police concerning an incident at Yishun Avenue 5 in 2021:

- a) Terry Xu's ("Xu") Facebook post on 30 April 2023 ("Xu's FB Post");
- b) The Online Citizen Asia's ("TOCA") article published on its website on 2 May 2023 ("TOCA Article"); and
- c) TOCA's social media posts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn) on 2 May 2023 which reference the TOCA Article ("TOCA's Social Media Posts").

2. In May 2021, The Online Citizen ("TOC") (now defunct) made publications falsely accusing Police officers of reprimanding and taunting an elderly woman for not wearing a mask. The truth was that the Police had received a call for assistance from a member of the public, and were rendering assistance to the elderly woman and trying to help her find her way home. The Police issued two clarification statements regarding this incident on 19 May 2021 and 25 May 2021 (see [Annex](#)).

3. TOC was issued a Correction Direction on 21 May 2021 under the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act 2019 ("POFMA") for publishing the falsehoods. TOC appealed to set aside the Correction Direction, but the appeal was dismissed by the High Court in 2022. The High Court found that TOC had published a false statement of fact, and that the Police officers had in fact expressed concern for the elderly woman, with the aim of rendering assistance to her. The Court observed that the original publisher could not, in good faith, have concluded that there was reprimanding or taunting by the Police.

4. Despite the Government's clarifications and the High Court's clear findings on the matter, Xu and TOCA have persisted in making false allegations pertaining to the case. These allegations are wholly unfounded. They may affect public trust and confidence in the Singapore Police Force. Xu's attempts to rehash issues already considered by the Court, and exploit a case involving an elderly and vulnerable woman, are contemptible.

5. It bears noting that the TOCA article is one of 60 written by Xu to raise funds to pay for the fine imposed upon him by the courts for various offences, including contempt of court and POFMA offences.

6. The Government takes a serious view of the deliberate communication of malicious falsehoods. The Minister for Home Affairs has instructed the POFMA Office to issue Correction Directions¹ to Xu and TOCA in respect of Xu's FB Post, the TOCA Article, and TOCA's Social Media Posts. Xu and TOCA will be required to carry a correction notice alongside their publications.

7. For the facts of the case, please refer to the Factually article "Corrections regarding false allegations against the Police concerning an incident at Yishun Avenue 5 in 2021 <<https://www.gov.sg/article/factually070523>>".

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
7 MAY 2023

Annexes

1. Annex A - [Police News Release - Clarifications on Online Post Accusing Police Officers of Bullying \(19 May\)](#)
2. Annex B - [Police News Release - Police Statement on Online Post Questioning the Accuracy of Polices Clarifications for an Incident \(25 May\)](#)

¹ A Correction Direction is a Direction issued to a person who has communicated a falsehood (i.e. the recipient) that affects the public interest. It requires the recipient to publish a correction notice, providing access to the correct facts. The Direction does not require the recipient to take down their post or make edits to their content and does not impose criminal sanctions.