

PRESS RELEASE

Issuance of Correction Direction under the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act to “The Independent Singapore”

On 21 April 2022, “The Independent Singapore” (“**TISG**”) published an article with the headline “*K Shanmugam says he may step down as Singapore’s Minister of Law and Home Affairs*” on its website, Facebook page and Twitter account. The headline was clickbait, giving the false impression that the Minister for Law and Home Affairs said he may be stepping down from his ministerial positions. The author of the article, Mr Toh Han Shih (“**Mr Toh**”), also shared TISG’s article on his Twitter account on 21 April 2022.

2. Additionally, the first paragraph of the article stated that the Minister “revealed” in an interview with Vanakkam Malaysia that he may step down as Singapore’s Minister for Law and Home Affairs, but gave no specific time as to when he might do so. Again, this gave the false impression that the Minister said he may be stepping down from his ministerial positions.

3. The Minister for Law has instructed for Correction Directions, under the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (POFMA), to be issued to TISG and Mr Toh. TISG and Mr Toh will be required to carry correction notices on their online platforms that published the article, stating that it contains a false statement of fact.

Clarifications on the False Statement

4. The Minister did not say during the video interview with Vanakkam Malaysia that he may be stepping down from his ministerial positions or that he is contemplating doing so.

5. In the interview mentioned in the article, the Minister said that:

- a. He considers serving people a privilege, which not everyone gets a chance to do.
- b. He must be ready to leave when he no longer has the people’s support.
- c. He should be ready to move on when there are capable leaders to replace him.
- d. He has maintained transparency in both his words and actions and will continue to do that, and if he can no longer continue to do so, he will leave his ministerial posts.

6. It is quite false to state, from the interview, that the Minister said that he may be stepping down from his positions. In addition, viewing the whole video will show that

the Minister, when he spoke about his own views, also intended his comments to be of general application, for persons holding Ministerial appointments (when seen in the context of past comments of the PAP leadership, and history of the PAP).

7. The headline “*K Shanmugam says he may step down as Singapore’s Minister of Law and Home Affairs*” was deceptive clickbait, with the falsity repeated in the first paragraph of the article.

Publication of a Correction Notice

8. As required by the Correction Directions, TISG and Mr Toh must publish a correction notice alongside the posts. The correction notice provides a link to the Factually article, which lays out the facts and clarifications on the matter, at the following link: <https://www.gov.sg/article/factually220422>

MINISTRY OF LAW
22 April 2022