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# SAMUDRA

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## SINGAPORE NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS ACROSS THE ISLAND



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# SINGAPORE WILL GET THROUGH COVID-19 CRISIS, SAYS PM LEE

Photo Credit: Lee Hsien Loong's Facebook Post

**S**ingapore celebrated its 55th birthday on August 9 2020 with scaled-down festivities in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it was not any less special.

For the first time, the state flag fly-past could be seen from every home as two Chinook helicopters, each carrying the Singapore flag 1000 ft in the air, flew across the island via two routes.

To salute the healthcare workers who are fighting the pandemic, six Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) F-15SG fighter jets, in the longest fly-past in history, flew over the heartlands for the 'Roar of Unity', making tribute passes around eight hospitals.

Loud cheers sounded across the heartlands as the mobile column and fireworks display were brought islandwide. The Red Lions also made their special appearances by landing at Jurong East and Sengkang.

"In good years," Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said in his National Day message, "our parades rejoice in our progress, and look forward to a better future together."

"In difficult years, we still hold National Day Parades, to renew our resolve to weather the storm and take Singapore through to better days."

In his same address, PM Lee called on Singapore to be resilient in the face of the severe economic downturn. Just as Singapore worked hard to "secure our position, gritted our teeth and came through together" in Asian Financial Crisis (1997-1998), the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks (2001), and the Global Financial Crisis (2007-2009), he expressed confidence that the nation will get through the COVID-19 crisis too.

Singaporeans, he mentioned, are "understandably anxious and worried" with business closures, retrenchments and unemployment all likely to go up in the coming months.

"All of us must do our part, but none of us will be alone," he highlighted.

Today, the government is actively helping people find new jobs and acquire new skills. To ease the burden on employers and individuals, the Jobs Support Scheme (JSS) and Self-employed person Income Relief Scheme (SIRS) have been implemented.



Photo Credit: Lee Hsien Loong's Facebook Post

“The Labour Movement is working with employers to create job training programmes and career pathways. It will also ensure that every worker is treated fairly and with dignity, especially when job losses cannot be avoided. Employers too must make every effort to keep their workers, and not drop them at the first sign of trouble. This will build loyalty, and encourage the employees to help their employers rebuild when conditions improve.”

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong

Just like how the Pioneer and Merdeka Generations were tempered by Separation and Independence, and economic crises in the early years as a nation, this experience of fighting COVID-19 will toughen the whole population and bond Singapore together as one united people.

Singapore, PM Lee pointed out, is a nation whose story is worth celebrating, whose history is worth cherishing, and whose future is worth building.

“We have dreams to realise, and goals to reach for. Let us show the world that whatever the challenges, Singaporeans will stay united, and prevail once more.”



Photo credit: NTUC





Photo Credit: Ng Chee Meng's Facebook Post

### 2020 – a year like no other

NTUC celebrated National Day across the different online digital platforms with real-time broadcast from the NTUC Centre on 7 August 2020. The programme highlights included interactive games and songs held through Zoom, and live performances transmitted through YouTube.

This year has been a year like no other. In his National Day message, NTUC Secretary-General Ng Chee Meng sounded a sombre message saying:

“We are amidst great change and upheaval... Although the government’s substantial financial aid has shielded us from the very worst economic effects at the onset of the pandemic, we must be prepared for retrenchments, cutbacks, and more difficult days ahead.”

**“NTUC remains prepared to Protect every worker, Preserve jobs for all, while continuing to Provide care and support for those in need.”**

Brother Chee Meng shared that NTUC is working with companies to preserve jobs by first exploring all cost-cutting options to save jobs. NTUC will partner employers by extending more training support to workers, such as the enhanced Union Training Assistance Programme (UTAP) and the NETF (NTUC-Education and Training Fund) Collaborative Fund.

Where retrenchment is unavoidable, NTUC’s top priority is to ensure that companies treat their workers fairly and with dignity according to the NTUC Fair Retrenchment Framework. Brother Chee Meng gave the assurance that unions, NTUC Job Security Council and NTUC’s e2i will work closely together to assist workers with job matching “to the best of our ability.”

**“Every worker matters, and every job counts.”**

Looking forward, Brother Chee Meng spoke about how the Labour Movement must be ready for the post-COVID world when the pandemic and the economic crisis come to pass. “We will press on with digital transformation and innovations to our union model, membership model and training model. Only then can we represent our workers well and be relevant to them,” he elaborated.

He called on the tripartite partners to continue working with the NTUC in the “spirit of shared responsibility and common understanding, to ensure that we pull through this crisis together”.

**“Now, more than ever, Singaporeans must unite. NTUC promises to work together with you to emerge stronger and build a Singapore that we can be proud to call home.”**

# LABOUR MPS IN PARLIAMENT

The Singapore General Election 2020 saw the re-election of Labour Members of Parliament NTUC Deputy Secretaries-General Heng Chee How and Koh Poh Koon; and Assistant Secretaries-General Patrick Tay, Melvin Yong and Desmond Choo.

Also representing the voice of the Labour Movement is NTUC Enterprise Group CEO Seah Kian Peng, who is also the Deputy Speaker of Parliament and Member of Parliament (MP) for Marine Parade GRC.

With the inclusion of two first-time parliamentarians, NTUC Operations and Mobilisation Division Secretariat Director Mohd Fahmi Aliman, and U SME and Women & Family Unit Director Yeo Wan Ling, these eight Labour MPs were sworn in for the 14th Parliament of Singapore. (Parliament held its first sitting on 24 August 2020.)

“Our Labour MPs will be speaking in Parliament and sharing NTUC Singapore’s efforts to protect and support workers, whether young or young-at-heart, regardless of age, gender and collar. This year, we also have the addition of both Fahmi Aliman and Yeo Wan Ling, who will be giving their maiden speeches. Our 3Ps approach of Preserving Jobs, Protecting workers, and Providing care and support will feature centrally in these efforts, as we journey alongside our workers through these uncertain economic conditions and challenges together.”

**NTUC Secretary-General Ng Chee Meng wrote in a Facebook post on 30 August 2020**



Sister Yeo Wan Ling



Brother Koh Poh Koon



Brother Seah Kian Peng



Brother Patrick Tay



Brother Heng Chee How



Brother Mohd Fahmi Aliman



Brother Melvin Yong



Brother Desmond Choo

## Unanimous support for Brother Ng Chee Meng as NTUC Secretary-General

Despite losing his parliamentary seat at this year's General Election, members of the NTUC Central Committee threw their support behind NTUC Secretary-General Ng Chee Meng. The position of the NTUC Secretary-General is an elected position which stands independent of political appointment.

In his Facebook post, Mr Ng said that he will fulfill his elected role in NTUC. "I will continue to serve workers who have given me their trust and I remain undeterred as the day I first joined the Labour Movement – to be alongside our workers and to be their voice.

I am humbled and honoured by the strong support and encouragement from my sisters and brothers in the Labour Movement, in particular that of the NTUC Central Committee.

There will be tough days ahead with the COVID-19 challenges. Together with union leaders and my NTUC colleagues, we will stay the course to care for and do right by our workers."

In a media release, NTUC President Mary Liew explained that the NTUC Secretary-General has, over the last 40 years, also been a member of the Cabinet. It is upon the NTUC Central Committee's request and mutual agreement that a Cabinet Minister is seconded to NTUC.

Whilst the two roles have been inextricably linked, they are in fact independent of each other. The role of the NTUC Secretary-General is elected by union delegates once in four years at the national level.

The most recent National Delegates' Conference (NDC) was held in October 2019 whereby 21-member NTUC Central Committee was elected for the four-year term of 2019 to 2023.

"Brother Ng Chee Meng has played an instrumental role in pushing forth various initiatives to help secure workers' livelihoods," Sister Mary highlighted.

Brother Ng Chee Meng championed workers' training at the institutional level, through the setting up of Company Training Committees, where union leaders and management partners work hand in hand to ensure that workers' training needs are not forgotten. He also led the charge on providing timely assistance to at-risk workers through the NTUC Job Security Council. To date, some 12,000 workers have been matched to new roles.

"Time and again, he has shown his heart in caring for workers and proven his mettle...Brother Ng Chee Meng has over the last two years pushed for many good initiatives for workers and this is work that must continue. We stand in solidarity as we continue this journey together."



# SOS AND SEACARE'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID DRAWS POSITIVE RESPONSE

To fight against COVID-19 pandemic, not only did The Seacare Hotel open its door to exclusively house seafarers in transit, SOS came onboard to pledge S\$1.5m to defray the crew's accommodation and meals at the hotel. The initiative has garnered positive response from the maritime industry.

“The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) expresses our deep appreciation to SOS for coming forward to provide a holding facility for crew change in Singapore. The Seacare Hotel holding facility provides a safe environment for seafarers to stay while waiting to go onboard the vessel or to their flight. It allows crew changes to take place in spite of the limited air connectivity. The MPA will continue to work closely with the industry and unions to review our processes to facilitate crew change through a ‘safe corridor’ so that crew change is carried out in a safe environment.”



“The Singapore Shipping Association (SSA) applauds the initiative by SOS to help defray the cost of accommodation and meals for seafarers staying in Seacare Hotel. This act of solidarity is a testament to their commitment to support maritime companies and enhance the wellbeing of seafarers amid these challenging times. Knowing that there is a safe haven for crew in between vessel calls and flights will boost the confidence for crew change here. To ensure the continuation of smooth and safe crew change in the port of Singapore, we strongly encourage all relevant parties – shipping companies, agents and crew – to do their dutiful part and comply with all stipulated requirements.”

**Mr Michael Phoon, Executive Director,  
Singapore Shipping Association**

Mr Phoon also pointed out to Samudra that without seafarers, ships cannot operate and deliver goods necessary for every part of our economy.

“First and foremost this is a humanitarian crisis that must be solved in order to protect seafarers who have been on ships for far too long. But the urgent need to solve this crisis also extends ashore,” he added.

“On the backdrop of a nationwide policy, the shipping industry has faced challenges in bringing seafarers into a safe ‘land transit’ between signing-on and signing-off their vessels. As one of the two authorised providers for designated holding facilities for seafarers, we are pleased that SOS have opened up The Seacare Hotel to provide additional accommodation for this purpose.”



**“I am happy to go home because I have not seen my family for almost a year. I miss my wife and two boys aged five and two years. I am thankful that there’s a holding facility that is clean, safe and there’s nice ‘chow chow’\* during my short stay before catching my flight home.”** - Jerryco Sain De Lima, Ordinary Seaman who served onboard a Hong Kong registered Container Ship, had his nine months contract extended by another three months. He could not sign off because of the pandemic.



To stay positive, he watched movies and participated in activities organised by his shipping company. He also regularly stayed in touch with his family through Messenger, as the ship had WiFi.

\* English-Chinese pidgin term “chow chow,” also means “food.”

**“For the safety and welfare of our fellow seafarers onboard, we were united in following all the rules and precautions prescribed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Though we had to stay onboard as countries went on lockdown, we tried to focus on doing our job and stay positive. I am just glad that all of us are safe and will be going back to be with our family.”** - Yang Peng, a cook, whose hometown is in Shandong. He left for Shanghai from Singapore after a night’s stay at The Seacare Hotel.



The Seacare Hotel is also making available demarcated areas, known as the transit lounge, for unanticipated early arrival or late departure of crew who are hotel guests. Shipping companies can book six-hourly blocks for their crew to wait in a cosy environment and have meals and free-flow beverages provided by SOS.



## GIFTING CARE PACKS TO SEAFARERS FOR KEEPING MARITIME SINGAPORE GOING

**D**uring this pandemic, seafarers have been working tirelessly to keep Singapore ports open and cargoes flowing. To show appreciation to the seafarers and to care for their mental and physical well-being, a day was dedicated towards presenting care packs to crew members of vessels berthed at the PSA Pasir Panjang Terminal.

On 22 July 2020, SOS Vice President Mohamad Abu Bakar was among representatives

from National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), Singapore Port Workers' Union (SPWU), Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU) and Mission to Seafarers, who walked the docks of Pasir Panjang and personally delivered care packs with the message - *"Thank You For Keeping Maritime Singapore Going #MaritimeSGSteadyLah"*, to a total of 18 vessels. The care packs contained sanitiser, masks, tonics and vitamins, non-perishable food and drinks, and toiletries.







Mr Mohamad was impressed with the safe and efficient way in which PSA arranged the care pack presentations. "As a former seafarer myself, I am aware as to how dangerous it can be to work and move around the port. I have personally witnessed a few accidents, near-misses, and even fatalities back in my days of seafaring. That is why I can appreciate the meticulous and conscious efforts made by PSA to keep the ground safe for the visitors."

Mr Mohamad observed how the port safety officers and crane operators worked hand-in-hand to stop what they were doing, when the visitors were near. Work continued once everyone was outside the premises.





# GUIDANCE ON SEAFARERS' RIGHTS TO CREW CHANGE

It has been more than two months since the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) has forewarned governments and the industry that after 15 June 2020, that it will no longer be acceptable that seafarers are forced to continue working.

ITF estimates that there are now approximately 300,000 seafarers trapped working aboard ships due to the crew change crisis, with an equal number of unemployed seafarers waiting to join their ships who are ashore. That makes 600,000 seafarers affected by this crisis.

In a message to seafarers, ITF highlighted: "Seafarers, we know that you, your loved ones, and your friends have had enough. You have the right to return home. While many countries have slowly started to ease coronavirus pandemic restrictions after two to three months of lockdown and are now reopening stores and services and allowing people to meet friends and families, hundreds of thousands of seafarers (you) worldwide remain stuck on board, unable to go ashore, seek medical attention or return home."

"We are clear – if a seafarer wants off a ship, then the ITF, our affiliate unions and the ITF inspectorate will do everything we can to assist them. We know that you need to get off these ships, and we will help you to do so where we can."

ITF

ITF published a guidance on the right to crew change. Here are the excerpts.

## SEAFARERS' EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

The maximum period you can be expected to serve on board before being entitled to repatriation at the shipowner's expense is 12 months.

When your contract expires you can request to be repatriated.



If the flag State has agreed to an extension for the ship that you are on board, the company must issue a new contract, which must be agreeable by both parties. You can refuse any contract extension.

If you do not want to sign a new contract you are entitled not to do so, and the company CANNOT force you. If the contract is imposed on you, then you must report this immediately.

## REPATRIATION

You have a right to be repatriated at no cost to yourself under the following circumstances:

- your employment agreement expires while you are abroad;
- the shipowner terminates your contract;
- you terminate the contract for valid reasons such as exhaustion or fatigue;
- you are unable to carry out your duties for reasons such as illness, injury, shipwreck, trading in a war zone or if the shipowner fails to fulfil their legal obligations to you;
- you are deemed to have been abandoned by the shipowner.



### MANNING LEVELS



You have the right not to perform any work if you have completed your contract, but you should avail yourself for any safety and emergency work. Do not refuse to work while at sea, but wait until the ship is anchored or docked in port.

If you decide to no longer work on board this could reduce the manning level below what is prescribed by the flag State. In this case the ship should not be allowed to sail, and a report should be made to the Port State Control and the flag State.

### SHORE LEAVE



You are entitled to shore leave to benefit your health and well-being.

### HEALTH & SAFETY



You are entitled to live and work in a safe and hygienic environment. Safety and health on board has to be regulated by the laws of the flag State in accordance to international standards.

For ships with more than five crew there should be a designated safety committee or representative who should report to the company any health hazard or breach of safety, this can also include when seafarers are fatigued, shortage of manning etc. The company have to react accordingly.

### MEDICAL CARE



Whilst you are on board you must be able to protect your health and have prompt access to medical and dental care; necessary medicines, medical equipment and facilities for diagnosis and treatment as well as medical information and expertise.

The flag State is responsible for standards of health protection on the vessel and for promoting health education programmes onboard.

All States that have signed the Convention must give you access to medical care if you are in urgent need of it whilst in their territory. When in port you should be able to visit a doctor or dentist without delay; receive medical care and health protection free of charge, though the level of provision may vary according to national law.

You should have access to:

- Outpatient treatment for sickness and injury;
- Hospitalisation if necessary;
- Facilities for dental treatment, especially in cases of emergency hospitals and clinics for the treatment of disease.

You should be admitted promptly regardless of nationality or religious belief and, where possible and necessary, you should receive continuing treatment. Ships' Captains and medical personnel on board and ashore must use a standard medical report form which must be kept confidential.



## SEACARE MEDICAL SCHEME (SMS) FOR LOCAL MEMBERS

The Seacare Medical Scheme (SMS) was introduced on 1 March 2005 to provide members and participating shipping companies with medical-related benefits.

For SOS Local Members participating in the SMS scheme, you and/or your dependants are entitled to medical benefits such as free health screening and eye care reimbursement. Do take advantage of the current SMS benefits by 31 March 2021.





Benefits	Free Health Screening	Eye Care
Scope of benefit	Free health screening package 1. Medical Consultation and Complete Physical Examination 2. Biophysical Measurement 3. Office Tests 4. Imaging Studies 5. Lipid Profile 6. Liver Profile 7. Hepatitis Profile 8. Kidney Profile 9. Endocrine Profile 10. Bone & Joint Profile 11. 3 Cancer Markers 12. Veneral Profile 13. Urinalysis 14. Full Blood Count 15. Medical Review	Comprehensive eye examination 1. Eye Examination 2. Eye Check-Up 3. Consultation 4. Medication 5. Treatment 6. Related Costs (For Non-Cosmetic Purposes)
Entitlement	One health screening per member and *dependant per year from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.  * For single member, dependent refers to his mother or father. For married member, dependent refers to his legitimate spouse.	Eye examination reimbursement: up to \$100 (nett) per member per year from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.
Clinic	<b>Seacare Maritime Medical Centre Pte Ltd (SMMC)</b> 100 Tras Street #18-02/03 The Amara Corporate Tower Singapore 079027 Tel: (65)6222 7728 Fax: (65)6224 6387 Email: seacare@pacific.net.sg  Mondays to Saturdays from 9am to 12pm (closed on Sundays & Public Holidays)	<b>Any eye centre, clinic and/or hospital</b> For visits to New Optometry and Ocular Care Centre (NOOCC), pre-booking of appointment is required. Please contact (65)6471 1771 for more details.

For more information on SMS and appointment booking, please contact

SOS Membership Services  
 52 Chin Swee Road #05-00 Seacare Building  
 Singapore 169875  
 Tel: (65) 6379 5666 Fax: (65) 6836 3976 Email: sms@seacare.com.sg

# KEEPING IN MIND SEAFARERS' MENTAL HEALTH

**M**any seafarers are caught right in the centre of COVID-19 storm, facing unprecedented challenges onboard, either unable to be repatriated or to leave their ships. These challenges have resulted in a surge of mental health and well-being problems related to the pandemic. Where can seafarers find help to cope under such extraordinary times?

The following are some valuable resources from International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN), where seafarers can reach out for mental health assistance.

## COVID-19 Coping with stress during COVID-19

Feeling sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry during a crisis is normal. Talking to people you trust can help. Talk to your colleagues and contact friends and family.



When on board, maintain a healthy lifestyle - including proper diet, sleep, exercise and social contacts with other crew members and by email, social media and phone for family and friends.



Don't use smoking, alcohol or other drugs to manage emotions. When overwhelmed, talk to a colleague or contact SeafarerHelp. Have a plan, where to go to and how to seek help for physical and mental health needs if required.



Get the facts. Gather information to accurately determine risks and take reasonable precautions. Use a trusted credible source such as WHO or government agency website.



Reduce time spent watching, reading or listening to upsetting media coverage to limit worry and agitation.



Draw on past skills which helped you manage previous difficult situations to help handle your emotions at this time.



Contact **SeafarerHelp**, the free, confidential, multilingual 24 hour helpline for seafarers and their families, open 365 days a year for advice if necessary.

Dial **+44 20 7323 2737** or email **help@seafarerhelp.org**



International  
Chamber of Shipping  
Shaping the Future of Shipping

For more information, go to  
**ics-shipping.org/covid19**

## Steps to Positive Mental Health

<https://www.seafarerswelfare.org/assets/documents/ship/Steps-to-Positive-Mental-Health-English.pdf>

A self-help guide that details some skills, exercises and coping strategies to help seafarers deal with their emotions when life becomes stressful or their mood is low.



## Psychological First Aid

<https://www.seafarerswelfare.org/seafarer-health-information-programme/good-mental-health/poster-psychological-first-aid>

A poster that offers psychological first aid tips to help seafarers identify and cope with signs of stress in themselves and others. It also signposts a number of organisations providing support to seafarers around the world.



## Seafarer Centre Directory

<https://www.seafarerhelp.org/en/seafarers-directory>

A virtual platform for seafarers to find the nearest seafarers' centre where assistance can be sought.



## Managing your mental health during COVID-19

[https://youtu.be/rB\\_Nyk0LRSo](https://youtu.be/rB_Nyk0LRSo)

A video which provides advice to seafarers on how to stay mentally safe and well onboard and ashore during this pandemic.







## SQRT 70 ONLINE BETTERS ITSELF IN EVALUATION SCORE

Following the successful run of its first online 69th Seacare Quality Rating Training (SQRT) course in April 2020, the Singapore (Nantong) International Maritime Institute (SNIMI) improved on their teaching methodology with 15 ratings at the 70th SQRT, from 1 June to 26 June 2020.

SNIMI continued to conduct its online training with Tencent Conference, used WeChat video calls for interaction and communication during assessment; while the WeChat chat group facility was used by trainers and students to address queries.

Through these online platforms, SNIMI trainers were able to run various classroom activities and engage students in discussions, role-play and even conduct group work together. These helped students to understand the subject matter in a more thorough manner.

Leveraging on its experience of having conducted an earlier online course, SNIMI improved the way they manage classroom participation. In SQRT 70 students' facial expressions are monitored by trainers, so that they can watch over students' participation during lessons. The special attention paid towards the students, earned SNIMI a higher evaluation score of 4.84 out of a maximum 5 for the Effectiveness of Training Programme; and an overall score of 4.85, bettering the score of 4.75 for SQRT 69.

With the COVID-19 restrictions gradually easing around the world, the subsequent SQRT or SQCT courses are expected to resume in physical classes in Shanghai with the relevant safe distancing measures in place to ensure the safety of both students and trainers.



# SNIMI REOPENS WITH SQRT 71 AND SQRT 72

Life during the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging with many educational institutes having to shut down physical classes. Responding swiftly to the disruptions, Singapore (Nantong) International Maritime Institute (SNIMI) was one of the educational players that moved to online platforms to conduct its lessons.

Since the coronavirus measures have eased in the country, institutes have reopened. The 'return to school' is a much welcome step for many at a time when they are itching to get out of their house after facing the four walls of their rooms during the lockdown.

From 20 July to 14 August 2020, SNIMI opened its doors to some 33 ratings for the SQRT 71 and SQRT 72 course. The four-week training programme, which was conducted in Shanghai had a unique participation of three female ratings - a rare find in a predominantly male profession.

A female rating was among the 16 ratings in SQRT 71, while the SQRT 72 saw the participation of another two female ratings out of the cohort of 17 ratings. Ms Deng Xin Xin, aged 22 years old, hails from Sichuan. Fascinated since childhood with the idea of working at sea, she joined SQRT 71 and happened to be the only female participant. In her first initial assessment during the first week of the course, her trainer assessed her level of English

proficiency and found that she only attained a score of 37 per cent. Undaunted, Ms Deng worked hard at improving her English proficiency. At her final assessment, she attained an overall score of 63 per cent. **"After completing this course, I look forward to working on board vessels to show that women can perform at their work just as good, if not better than their male colleagues."**

In general, the mood in classes were positive as students were able to find some normalcy in life by being able to resume classes physically. The trainers were also glad to share more knowledge with the students after having done new research work to improve on the subjects being taught.

The SNIMI trainers are heartened to find that they have made a difference by improving the lives of these sea ratings by imparting them new skills such as leadership and motivation. More importantly, these ratings now have a renewed confidence to utilise English to communicate during the course of their stint onboard.

With the global COVID-19 situation uncertain and things subject to change in an instant, SNIMI stands ready to commit to the training of the ratings, and can adapt to different teaching platforms whenever required.



# NTUC CARE FUND (E-VOUCHERS)

## HELPING MEMBERS STRETCH THEIR DOLLAR ON DAILY EXPENSES

In view of the bleak economic outlook brought upon by the COVID-19 outbreak, NTUC introduced a new care and support programme - NTUC Care Fund (e-Vouchers) to help lower-income union members ease their burden on daily expenses.

The NTUC Care Fund (e-Vouchers) comes on the back of the NTUC Care Fund (COVID-19), launched in March 2020 to provide one-off cash relief for eligible NTUC union members whose incomes have been greatly impacted by the pandemic.

A total of \$6 million has been set aside under this scheme, contributed by NTUC, the Government and NTUC affiliated Unions and Associations. The NTUC Care Fund (e-Vouchers) offers eligible members up to \$100 worth of assistance on daily essentials and schools supplies, with an additional \$100 for each eligible school-going child. Around 29,000 members stand to benefit from this programme, which will be run yearly.

The NTUC Care Fund (e-Vouchers) allows greater flexibility for beneficiaries to use their

digital vouchers (received via SMS) on either daily necessities or school supplies, depending on their needs. The e-Vouchers can be used to offset the cost of purchases at participating merchants such as NTUC FairPrice supermarkets, FairPrice Xtra hypermarkets and participating school bookshops. Given that this fund will serve the needs of daily expenses and school supplies, the NTUC-U Care Fund's long-standing 'Back to School' and 'U Stretch' voucher programmes have been discontinued.

To ensure that timely assistance is provided to lower-income members amidst this uncertain economic backdrop, some 17,500 beneficiaries of NTUC-U Care Fund's 2019 voucher programmes will automatically be eligible for NTUC Care Fund (e-Vouchers).

Some 86 SOS members benefitted under this auto-inclusion category and had already received their e-Vouchers in end August 2020.

To ensure you receive them, do update your mobile number by logging in to NTUC U Portal [www.ntuc.org.sg](http://www.ntuc.org.sg), and click E-services.

More details on NTUC Care Fund (e-Vouchers) are available at [www.ntuc.org.sg/CareFundEVouchers](http://www.ntuc.org.sg/CareFundEVouchers).



NTUC Secretary-General Ng Chee Meng said, **"During such challenging times, NTUC is glad to do our part to provide some relief for members in need. The e-Vouchers will help members stretch their dollar on basic necessities, enabling them to continue to provide for their families during uncertain times. We have pooled together a bigger sum this year so as to help more members, and hope that this added boost can encourage members to stay safe and strong as we continue our fight against COVID-19."**





SEACAREFocus

SEACAREFocus



# THE SEACARE HOTEL'S HOSPITALITY AT ITS BEST

For more than two months since July 2020, The Seacare Hotel has been the designated venue to accommodate seafarers who are unable to transfer directly to his/her vessel or flight and require a temporary rest area of up to 48 hours.

Inevitably, it has been a hectic period for hotel staff, attending to various seafarers arriving and departing at different times of the day, sometimes, at odd hours in the night. Despite that frequency and unpredictability, the hotel's hospitality remained at its best, having implemented safety protocols to safeguard the health and safety of seafarers and hotel staff. Always ready to meet the accommodation needs of every seafarer.



# TRANSIT LOUNGE IN CLUB@52

Since 2 July 2020, The Seacare Hotel has been solely reserved to accommodate crew changeovers requiring stays of up to 48 hours. In situations where sign-off seafarers have less than 12 hours transition time, the hotel created a transit lounge - an alternative safe venue for seafarers to rest while waiting for their connecting flight.

The transit lounge, located in Club@52, can hold up to 30 seafarers at any one time, with social distancing measures put in place. At the lounge, seafarers are able to rest comfortably on single seat sofas, surf the web with free WiFi connection, and help themselves with complimentary food and refreshments.

For transit durations longer than 12 hours, shipping companies are advised to arrange for accommodation in the hotel. However, it's good to know there is a transit lounge available for short stays. We've got seafarers' needs covered.



▲ Crew resting at the transit lounge.



"I'm having a nice, relaxing time in this transit lounge. The food and staff are great and the WiFi here is fast. I will be here for about five hours before heading to the airport to catch my flight home to Myanmar. I'm lucky to be going home after serving eight months and 20 days out of my nine months contract."

**Ko Ko Thet, Able-Bodied Seaman of Singapore registered Bulk Carrier**

"It's good for us seafarers to have a transit lounge where we can get a bite, snacks, free flow of drinks, and more before catching our flight home. It's a four-hour wait for us before heading to the airport. Not every port allowed us to even leave the vessel. So we are happy that we are able to go home from Singapore and to be taken care of here at the lounge."

**Sibal Arvin, Chief Cook of vessel under SOS CBA**



# THE SEACARE HOTEL RANKS IT UP

The Seacare Hotel has been awarded a 'Very Good' rating from Hotels.com, a leading provider of hotel accommodation worldwide.

Ratings are the official Hotels.com indicator of the general quality and standard of a particular hotel. The assessment is done annually and taken from verified guest reviews based on location of hotel, value for money, local experience, hotel service, hotel cleanliness and facilities.

For the excellence and dedication of its staff and management, The Seacare Hotel received a rating of 8.2/10.



Suplah, IE  
1 night trip

Exceptional 10.0  
**Clean & comfortable**

It was great & the staff are friendly & helpful.

Verified Hotels.com guest review

Aug 25, 2019



Kivril, US  
2 night family trip

Very good 8.0

Rooms are really narrow, hotel is located near china town, where sometimes some celebrations are held and gets a bit loud. About 10 min walk from subway.

Verified Hotels.com guest review

Aug 20, 2019



May, MY  
1 night family trip

Exceptional 10.0  
**Awesome hotel conveniently located near Chinatown**

The hotel is conveniently located near Chinatown. The staff are friendly and helpful. Rooms are clean and comfortable. Only downside is the room is slightly dim at night but during the day its okay if we open the curtains and let the sun in.

Verified Hotels.com guest review

May 2, 2019



“We are humbled and yet thankful to achieve 8.2 point out of 10 from Hotels.com which is commendable as Hotels.com is the world's leading travel and online accommodation site. We commend all staffs for their dedication and hard work. We wish to express our gratitude to those who have stayed and enjoyed their stay with us. We strive to provide excellent guest experience and to be one of the leading hotels in Singapore.”

**Mr Vincent Ng,**  
Assistant General Manager of The Seacare Hotel







# UK HOTELS READY TO REOPEN

Since 4 July 2020, hotels and hospitality businesses in the United Kingdom have started to open their doors. Hotels were among the first to shut down when lockdown restrictions were introduced in March 2020.



During the lockdown period, the Ivy Bush Royal Hotel remained open to provide safe and secure accommodation to National Health Service (NHS) junior doctors from the Glangwili General Hospital and supported NHS with 1634 room nights. The hospitality team did such an excellent job in taking care of the health care professionals that their efforts were lauded by district government office Carmarthenshire Council.

As hotels in UK are given the go-ahead to reopen, all 11 Seacare owned/co-owned properties – Columba Hotel, Crown Spa Hotel and Citrus Hotel Eastbourne, just to name a few – have opened their rooms and facilities to local and international tourists. More than ever before, they are stepping up their game to take extra measures in keeping guests staying in the hotel safe.



The hotels have undertaken a number of additional safety measures to minimise the spread of COVID-19 and to ensure its hotels are safe for everyone. It has invested in the training and development of its team members under the Compass GUARD health and hygiene programme.

Guests may notice some safety measures in place. For instance, digitising all hotel room keys and restaurant menus; opening up hotel facilities for pre-books only, and adopting strict staff health and temperature checks.

Barring any restrictions or limitations to a guests' stay experience for health and safety, the opportunity for a staycation after spending the entirety of lockdown facing four walls is a welcome respite. The Seacare hotels are ready to receive guests in a post-COVID world.

Find the list of Seacare owned/co-owned properties at <https://seacare.com.sg/>

For latest guidelines on travel to UK, please refer <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-corridors>.



▲ One of the best four-star hotels in Inverness, the Columba Hotel combines a variety of lovely rooms with a terrific restaurant and bar in a beautifully traditional setting, surrounded in natural and historical highlights in every direction.



▲ The four-star Crown Spa Hotel in Scarborough, is the oldest purpose built hotel on the Yorkshire coastal resort, with many of the original architectural features still in their prime.



◀ The 50-bedroom designer limited service Citrus Hotel Eastbourne, offers visitors fantastic value for money stays in resplendently designed interiors along with the sight of beautiful sea views.





## STAYING CONNECTED IN POST-COVID TIMES

One of the greatest impact COVID-19 has made in the world is pushing companies to undertake what has been described as the world's largest remote working experiment.

Remote working, tele-commuting or work-from-home (WFH), was required of most employees (with the exception of essential workers) in order to guard against potential COVID-19 transmission when Circuit-Breaker (CB) started in early April.

As the nation entered into Phase One after the end of CB on 30 May, employers have been advised to continue WFH as the default work arrangement unless employees have a demonstrable need to return to the workplace.

The Connect Centre, a multi-channel contact centre, adopted a flexible working culture and implemented technology that enabled its employees to work from anywhere effectively, safely and securely.

Through a flexible work arrangement, employees could either choose to WFH or work-in-office. Whichever choice they make, their personal well-being or work efficiency are not compromised amid the COVID-19 social distancing regulations.

For those who prefer to work-in-office, social distancing measures are enforced in the office space – twice daily temperature checks, the wearing of face masks at all times, cleaning of work stations and equipment before and after work. Office teams are grouped into two teams, each team comprising a team manager, team leader and two to three team members. The two office teams are to work separately and if there's a need to meet other team members not within the assigned group, it is conducted virtually via mobile or Zoom app. Employees who feel unwell are required to see a doctor and issued a Stay-Home-Notice (SHN).

Leveraging on the automation, scale, and ubiquity of cloud technology, digital workspaces give employees access to applications and information needed to come together virtually and get work done from their homes in a productive and secure manner. So, this works out perfectly for employees who prefer to WFH.

To maintain close collaboration between work teams, Zoom meetings are held daily with the operational teams or as and when required. The team managers and leaders organise meetings to provide/ask for frequent updates on the happenings from home/office.

Throughout this experience, Connect Centre has been able to demonstrate agility, speed and efficiency to manage resources in dynamic ways that unpredictable business environments in a post-COVID world demands. At the same time, staying connected with clients whenever and wherever.





# Cairnhill 16

## A LEGACY FOR THE PRIVILEGED FEW

There's a freehold posh property that is rising in the heart of the city. Cairnhill 16, an exclusive 15-storey luxurious residential development at 16 Cairnhill Rise, is nestled in the prime residential district of Cairnhill Rise. It sits within an exclusive and tranquil site, yet is central and well connected to Singapore's premium shopping belt.

Registration of interest has begun for this boutique residential project, a collaboration between TSky Development Pte Ltd, Ocean City Global Limited, Seacare Property Development Pte Ltd and Min Ghee Investment (2018) Pte Ltd.

Cairnhill 16 boasts a contemporary and aesthetic architectural style. To further distinguish itself from other properties around the district, residents will find all 39 units reflect serene elements of nature as it is surrounded by lawns, trees, and shrubberies.

The sleek lines of the curtain wall are juxtaposed with the distinct and interesting play of timber inspired lattice and bronze coloured aluminium screens in harmonious composition; the cool steel edging contrasting tastefully with the warm timber toned surfaces. The combination expressed in a geometric modernist form appeals to a discerning and sophisticated clientele.

### Shared private spaces/facilities

The grand and lush entrance lobby at the first storey exudes elegance and sophistication. The entrance drop-off features 16 water candles as a strong focal and memorable impression of Cairnhill 16.

The surrounding greenery filters into the covered garden, subtly merging the indoor and outdoor spaces. Welcoming cascades of water hint of the mesmerising 20 metre azure pool that spans the length of the site, gently vanishing over an infinity edge blending into the surrounding softscape. Next to the children's pool, a sculptural play structure is designed around an impressive feature tree. A well-equipped indoor gym fronts the idyllic landscape and pool.



Two sky terraces present distinctive enclaves for different activities. Whether it is indulging in a book at the reading lounge landscaped area or working out at the outdoor fitness terrace, one is always surrounded by lush greenery.

Besides offering panoramic views of the surroundings, the roof-top garden deck provides two generous event decks equipped with teppanyaki-theme or barbeque charcoal grill facilities for private dining and gatherings. A linear water feature with bubblers and planters offer visual interest and a touch of class.



### 39 well-crafted apartment units

Each unit is distinguished by its functional and efficient space planning and is served by private lift. The living and dining area opens out to a wide expanse of views beyond.

Movable sliding privacy screens at the balcony space for west facing units effectively screen off the afternoon sun and seamlessly extend the living room space, creating an endless possibility of usage. Well-designed bathrooms with designer fittings and elegant cabinetry works complement the luxurious stone finishes. The carefully selected materials and finishes achieve a timeless and elegant interior environment.

For a full experience of what it feels like living in luxury, do register your interest with Martin Quek @ 97955675 [Martin.quek@tsky.com.sg](mailto:Martin.quek@tsky.com.sg) and arrange an appointment for an exclusive tour around the show room.

Legacy awaits the privileged few.





**ATTENTION**



**seAcare**  
Seacare Thrift Pte Ltd

## **ALL SOS Seafarers' Provident Fund (SPF) Members!**

With the termination of the SPF Scheme, all SOS SPF members can come forward to apply for withdrawal from their SPF account. Deadline for submission of Withdrawal Form and Supporting Documents are to reach SOS Singapore Office by:

**31 AUGUST 2021**

All applications received after the above date **WILL NOT BE PROCESSED NOR ENTERTAINED.**

Withdrawal Application Form is available at [www.ispf.org.sg](http://www.ispf.org.sg)  
You may also contact us at:

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**SPREAD THIS MESSAGE TO ALL YOUR SEAFARING  
FRIENDS WHO HAVE SAILED ON SOS CBA VESSELS\***

**\*NOTE: SPF IS NOT APPLICABLE FOR SAILING PERIOD AFTER 30 JUNE 2012**