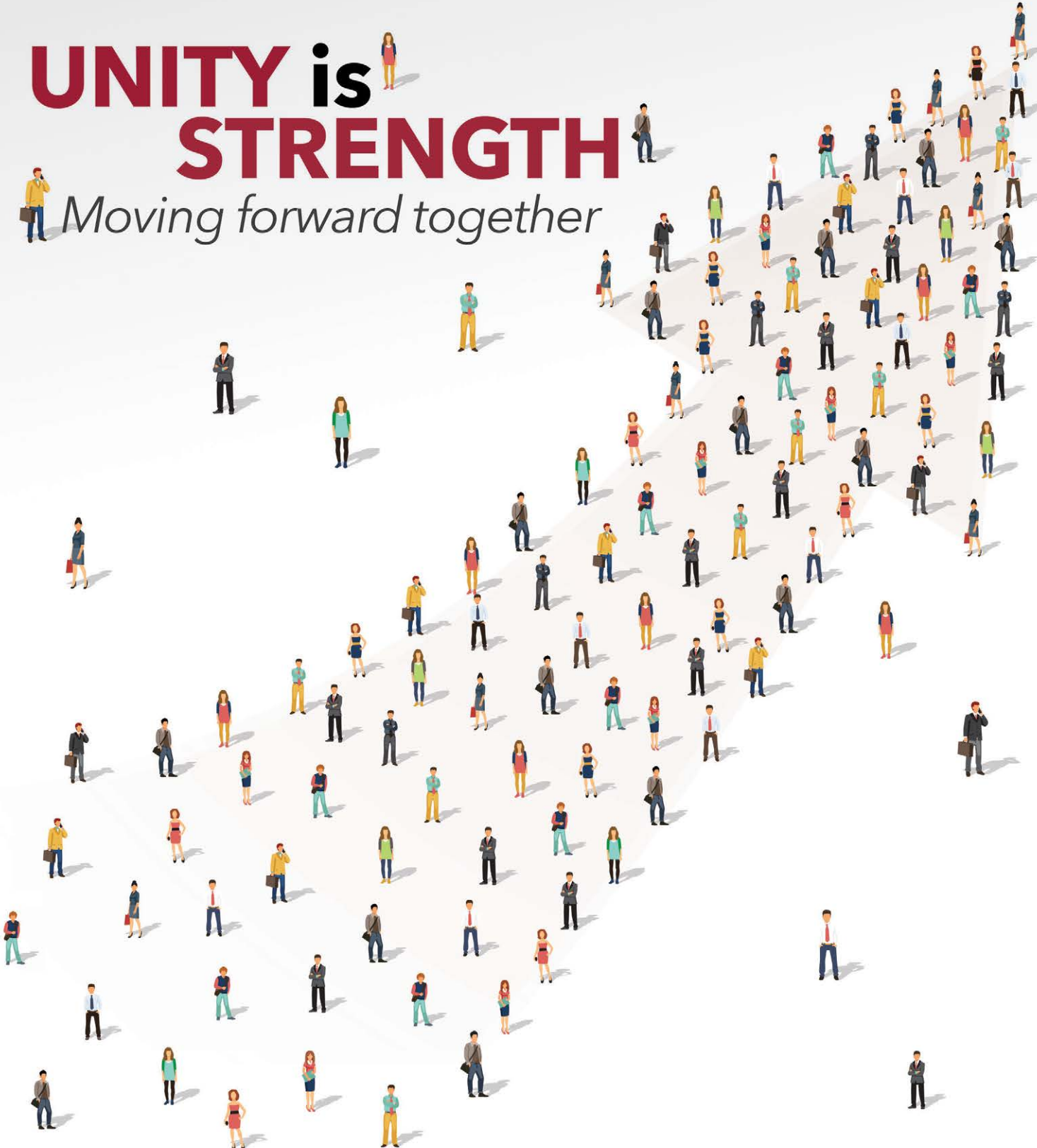


# THE ASSURED

A Quarterly Publication of The Singapore Insurance Employees' Union

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**The Executive Council  
of the Singapore Insurance  
Employees' Union**

*congratulates*

*Sister Halimah Yacob*

*on becoming*

**Singapore's  
Eighth President.**





# Having Your Interest *at Heart*

Sister Christine Lim

**S**afeguarding her members' interests at work has been the main motivation for Sister Christine Lim to be part of SIEU. This motivation over the years has also led our recently elected SIEU President to work closely with her company's management in ensuring that the outcomes or decisions made are beneficial to her colleagues.

In her efforts to uphold her members' interests, Sis Christine shares that disagreements with management are common place no matter how open or cooperative a management is. However, it is the ability and opportunity to find a common ground despite the differences that truly drives Sis Christine forward as a unionist and as President of SIEU.

"This fundamental belief and value doesn't change even after my recent election as President of the Union," she adds. Her gusto in representing our members and leading the new generation of office bearers are especially important in today's disrupted world. Technological and digital advancements paired with an ageing and educated workforce are changing the labour market. SIEU must be ready for these changes.

"So, is SIEU ready for the future? This is a question we must constantly ask ourselves. What must we do to remain relevant and be ready to ride the wave of change?"

Sis Christine explains that there is still much to do and it involves the collective efforts of the leaders and members of SIEU. As the employee profiles evolve, the union's scope of representation must also grow to include the PMEs. Besides ensuring the needs of these employees are looked after, the increased scope of representation also provides a more meaningful and robust partnership with various stakeholders such as the management teams for a more efficient business landscape.

In order to be able to represent this new generation of employees effectively, it is vital that the leaders are equipped with the right skills and mindset to tackle matters beyond the basic bread and butter issues.

"At the end of it all, my vision is to ensure SIEU will be a stronger union when I pass it on to the next generation of leaders and I will spare no effort to achieve this vision."

Sister Christine Lim has been with Great Eastern General Insurance Limited (previously OAC Insurance) since 1996. She became the Branch Chairman of OAC after its merger with Great Eastern in 2000 before being elected as the new SIEU President. When she is not busy meeting members and management, she finds quiet time to unwind with her adorable pets in the comforts of her home.

# SIEU Concludes Wage Increment Negotiations

By Bro Luke Hee

Since the 1950s, SIEU has been negotiating wage increments and bonuses, and have witnessed the evolution from a fixed payment system to a performance based one.

Although performance based wage system has become the norm these days, the change in the way wages are being measured tells a subtle yet sure shift. This shift is a result of the evolving business landscape and the increasing emphasis on performance.

So what do these all mean to us? Well, for a start, a certain recognition is needed. We need to recognise that times are different from 10 or maybe five years ago. Technological advancements create a more borderless world where competition intensifies. A clear example is the rise of Insurtech which spins into a web of other concerns including the need for new ways of operating a business, new skills and new mindsets (for both employees and employers). It is simply a fight for survival as the boundaries for competition are lowered.

Unions globally are responding to such a challenge. It can be issues in outsourcing, digitalisation or simply restructuring. Responses are mixed but can largely be in two categories. One - protect what we have and say no to changes. Two - understand the shifts and work towards a new breakthrough.

**This year, SIEU has successfully concluded negotiations on wage increments for our rank-and-file or junior staff. They range quite similarly to the previous year around 3.5% to 4%. While some companies have reached a marginally lower quantum, they have justified it with good reasons and facts.**

The latter is certainly more challenging but once a breakthrough is achieved, the results can be the silver bullet that progresses our interests as employees through collective representation.

So our newly elected leadership in SIEU has begun planning and part of the grander scheme of things is to move our scope of representation upwards to include executive staff. This is simply because we believe they too have similar concerns and clarity is needed especially in a performance based system.

This year, SIEU has successfully concluded negotiations on wage increments for our rank-and-file or junior staff. They range quite similarly to the previous year around 3.5% to 4%. While some companies have reached a marginally lower quantum, they have justified it with good reasons and facts.

This year's increment negotiations exercise clearly shows that despite changes in leadership, the current Executive Council is still able to hold its own while exercising flexibility where it is needed.

Moving forward, the changes may be hard to grapple with but SIEU pledges to be by your side. That said, we need our members to be by our side as well. Without your support, many things would not be possible.

On the same note, SIEU wishes to thank all the enlightened management we worked with. Their support and understanding has made this year's negotiations a lot easier. SIEU will work with you to progress the business for our common good.

Although there are some who remain quite unreasonable and dated in their HR practices, we hope that we can work towards better Labour Management Relations (LMR). Nonetheless, as a legitimate trade union, SIEU will not hesitate to bring any errant management to task.

Our primary loyalty still lies in the long-term interests of our members. This will never change. To sustain such interests however, our companies need to thrive. So while we grapple with all the rapid changes, the focus should remain common for both employers and employees.

# Exchange Programme



*Newly elected NUBE officials with the SIEU/SBEU delegates.  
Seen also the newly elected NUBE President, Bro ExieNidea. (front row, first from left)*

A strong delegation of four officials from SIEU, led by our newly elected President, Sis Christine Lim, and five officials from SBEU, led by President, Bro Max Lim, visited the Philippines between 6 to 12 August 2017. It was 26 years ago when the idea for a bilateral exchange programme between officials of National Union of Bank Employees (NUBE) and Singapore Banks Employees' Union (SBEU) was first mooted with SIEU subsequently included later. Union officials from both sides will take turns to visit each other every year with the primary aim of broadening the horizon and seeing other aspects of unionism beyond Singapore.

For our SIEU delegation, we were very much excited as it was our first visit to the Philippines. Our arrival at Manila Ninoy Aquino International Airport were warmly greeted with great fanfare by our counterparts from NUBE, a testament to the strong camaraderie that our unions have built over the years.

Our first visit was to NUBE office. Just like SIEU, NUBE recently concluded their election and have a new team of officers. We exchanged pleasantries with them and were updated of recent changes within NUBE.



*Secretary Silvester H. Bello III administers the Oath of Office ceremony of the newly elected officials of NUBE at the DOLE Central Office.*

For the next few days, we had back to back dialogue sessions with the management of Sun Life Grepa Financial, Philippine Savings Bank (PSBank), Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and Land Bank of the Philippines (LandBank). The various companies shared with us their corporate profiles, their manpower challenges, staff engagement activities and also how they build and maintain harmonious labour management relationship.

We noted that many, if not all of the staff engagement activities were fully funded by the companies. We also learnt that one must at least have a tertiary education to work in the bank but yet employed as a rank and file worker.

We were honoured to be able to witness the newly elected NUBE officials took their oath of office at the Department of Labour and Employment (DOLE). We also made a courtesy call to the Labour Secretary, Silvester H. Bello III.



# to the *Philippines*



*SIEU/SBEU Officials with BSP Governor*



*Visit to Money Museum*

Another highlight of the exchange programme was the visit to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), the equivalent of Singapore's Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS). We had a discussion with the newly appointed governor, Nestor A. Espenilla, Jr, who took office recently on 3 July 2017. We also had a guided tour to the Money Museum.

The exchange programme would be incomplete without experiencing firsthand the social and cultural aspects of the Philippines. We were brought to Payatas, a symbol of urban neglect where families live with the sight and smell of garbage and children as young as 4 years old scavenging for food when they should be in school and enjoying their childhood. We participated in a session of the School Based Feeding Programme, where meals are provided to children for the duration of the school year. The initiative aims to encourage these children to attend school instead of scavenging for food in the garbage dump.



SIEU/SBEU-NUBE exchange programme is one of the many exchange programmes that SIEU has within the ASEAN region and it continues to be an important platform for SIEU officials to experience the continuing struggles for bread and peace of other trade unionists. SIEU is also an affiliate to Union Network International (UNI), a global union representing 20 million workers over 150 countries.

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## SIEU IN 'LABOUR WARD'

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Dear Friends,

### UNION IS STRENGTH

We appeal to you to spare a few minutes and think over the following. You all know that our brethren the manual and other working classes, who have formed unions, have benefitted thereby and raised their standard of living. You all know that we, insurance workers who are toiling day in and day out, year in and year out, do not even know what we may expect from our employment. When we are stricken with serious illness or when lady clerks are pregnant most of us know not whether our employers will bear the medical expenses or give us confinement leave with pay respectively.

Even in a good many firms, employers do not observe:

- (a) The decent working hours of their employees - which should be from 9 to 4.30 p.m. on week days and from 9 to 12.30 p.m. on Saturdays;
- (b) Public holidays as gazetted by the Government;
- (c) Two weeks annual leave and three weeks annual leave every third year of employment.

Every year we are held in suspense hoping that we may get good increases. Yet Government and City Council workers do not have to worry about this. So why should we tolerate the above and many other injustices?

In our old age when we retire most of us do not even know whether we will get our promised gratuity. There are many firms which stipulate that gratuity will be paid at the discretion of the Directors, etc., etc. What may we say is the meaning of this "strangulation clause?" Why should we allow ourselves to be bound by such vague promise?

Before we work we have a common right to know what we may expect from our employment, and we definitely cannot afford to trust the empty promises of employers. We are sure you have all come across cases where the employers promise you this and that, and when you are old and prospects are dim, and when you are in their clutches you realize in vain that they do not intend to fulfill their promises. All Government and City Council workers know what they can expect from their employment, but can we say that in our case? The answer is a definite NO!

Don't you think that it is about time that we put a stop to all these injustices and the suspense of hoping in vain? Certainly!

Can we achieve our legitimate and just aims and not allow ourselves to be treated like animals or machines? Yes!

We suggest that all employees of Insurance Companies, form a union and demand our legitimate and just rights. It would be superfluous for us to reiterate the benefits to be derived from such a union.

If you agree with our suggestion, we shall, with the help of 2 or 3 capable union leaders, arrange for the first meeting - the date and place of which will be announced later. If you are interested please have the perforated sheet duly completed, signed and returned to the undersigned on or before the 31st October, 1955.

*Sincerely yours,*

Mr. Ang Kim Thye,  
33, Kovan Road,  
Singapore, 19.

Mr Lim Eng Cheok,  
846, East Coast Road,  
Singapore, 15.



62<sup>nd</sup>  
Anniversary

# Founding of A Movement in Insurance

The word "Movement" in the Cambridge dictionary is defined as "a group of people with a particular set of aims". Putting "Labour" to it aptly suggests that unless ordinary folks come together to improve their employment conditions and lives, not much will happen. It is befitting to remember our roots as we set foot into the month of October this year.

It was some 62 years ago when a few good men decided that they would change the world. Their desire for better lives, better pay and fairer treatment drove them to take extreme sacrifices, eventually giving birth to a new Movement within the Insurance industry. It was then called the Singapore Insurance Companies Employees' Union. Few decades later, it would be changed to the Singapore Insurance Employees' Union, as it is called now. However, values doesn't change though form does.

Unlike yesteryears where chaos abound and regulations were weak, SIEU finds itself in an entirely different world and is still managing the transitions. It was not difficult to impress in one's mind how some help can make a lot of difference where injustices were an everyday affair. It is entirely more challenging to persuade one, who has tasted the better things of life, that all things good can disappear tomorrow. Vaguely putting it, as a trade union, we know better that a collected and strong voice is essential to ensure a good organised working environment. Though injustices still occur once in a while, new threats empowered by technology has made their ways to our shores. Commonly called Disruptions, they have the same ability to take away our livelihood. Responding to it is therefore necessary.

We can either choose to work with the changes or deny them. A wrong response is thus fatal. Leaving it to "market forces" or to the companies' discretion is also a response. It is however a response of not doing anything. It may not bode well. While some may benefit, many others may suffer. By giving up our legit rights to collectively organise ourselves, we are leaving our fates to the unknown. We should not do that and neither should you.

Our roots as part of the Labour Movement, is to organise ourselves in a collected voice and work towards a better life. How strong this voice is depends on how collected the ordinary folks working in our midst are. As we remember our Union's birthday on 31 October 2017, we must never forget the purpose which we were founded for in 1955.

Happy 62nd Birthday, SIEU!

The Executive Council of the Singapore Insurance  
Employees' Union wishes all Hindu Members



# Happy Deepavali



## Fostering Relationships,

# Broadening Minds

**'Two heads are better than one'** summed up the experience our delegates had as part of the Bilateral Exchange Program between the Singapore Banking Employees' Union (SBEU), Singapore Insurance Employees' Union (SIEU) and the Vietnam National Union of Banking Workers (VNUBW) held in Vietnam from 23 to 27 July 2017. The delegation was led by SBEU General Secretary, Bro Bobby Tay and SIEU Deputy General Secretary, Bro Noor Hasman where they visited Vietinbank (Hanoi Bank), Vietcombank and the new VNUBW offices to speak to the respective management, staff and union leaders.

The discussions revolved around the activities held by the banks and unions and how to actively engage the employees and members with the union. An idea that resonates well with the delegates is involving the union membership team in projects ranging from community-based to industry-specific, especially since these events would usually draw a major turnout and support from employees.

The exchange of ideas was not one-sided as our delegation also shared their views and

experiences on the flow-up and flow-on leadership strategy in Singapore. They also shared on the shift in the industry towards the automation and digitalisation of the financial sector and its challenges on the union.

It was not all serious business as the delegates from both nations bonded over activities throughout the visit. This included a cultural immersion at the picturesque Sapa Town, located at Hoang Lien Son Mountains – a 320 km drive

“ We are honoured to be selected in the Bilateral Exchange Program to Hanoi, Vietnam. It was a great opportunity for us to learn and exchange ideas with Vietnamese trade unionist and expose our leaders to the international union work. ”

– Bro Noor Hasman, Deputy General Secretary SIEU.



from Hanoi, where the hill tribes of Hmong, Tay and Dao resides. The town overlooks the terraced rice fields of Muong Hoa Valley and boasts beautiful views all around.

Overall, the delegation from Singapore had an enriching experience and would like to thank VNUBW, Vietinbank and Vietcombank for their warm and gracious hospitality.

SIEU has been joining SBEU in the Bilateral Exchange Program since August 2008. The recent trip to Vietnam was the fifth time Singapore sent their delegation to Vietnam.



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2 30 critical illnesses coverage is only applicable under the Deluxe cover. Please refer to the list of 30 critical illnesses on our website.

This is for general information only. You can find the usual terms and conditions of LUV plan in the master policy contract issued to National Trades Union Congress ("NTUC"). The cover for LUV plan will automatically end upon the termination of the master policy by either Income or NTUC. All our products are developed to benefit our customers but not all may be suitable for your specific needs. If you are unsure if this plan is suitable for you, we strongly encourage you to speak to a qualified insurance adviser. Otherwise, you may end up buying a plan that does not meet your expectations or needs. As a result, you may not be able to afford the premiums or get the insurance protection you want. This plan does not have any cash value.

This plan is underwritten by Income

Information is correct as of 1 October 2016

Sister Jessica Tan with SIEU Executive Council members



# A visit to SIEU

**SIEU** welcomed Sister Jessica Tan to the July Exco meeting and her visit came after adviser Brother Patrick Tay in May 2016. Sis Jessica is also an MP for the East Coast GRC. Hailing from the IT industry, her visit was timely as SIEU rides the wave of constant change with the slew of technological disrupters that are reshaping the Insurance business landscape.

Sis Jessica was introduced to the newly elected Exco members and also was given updates about SIEU. Sis Jessica shared with the Exco on one of her biggest challenges in her career when she successfully turned around a failing business unit into the pink. The story of daring to do what no one did was a message of courage, determination and dedication to a cause. In more ways than one, it's also a story our leaders can relate to as we serve the union and its members.



# SIEU Evolving With the *Insurance Industry*



The largest Insurance industry dialogue between SIEU and managements from various insurance companies held on 16 August 2017 sets the direction where the Union is moving towards.

In full view of disruptions and distractions, SIEU remains focus in furthering the interests of an evolving Insurance workforce. To do this, the Union is banking in on it's strong Labour-Management Relations built over 6 decades.



The leadership of SIEU firmly believes that progression is the best form of protection and having a job is the the first welfare any employee needs. This is in the Union's DNA as it collectively represents the voices of the people.

## Insurance Industry: Tackling Challenges Ahead

*By Ramesh Subbaraman*

A dialogue with nearly 100 human resource personnel from the leading insurance companies in Singapore was held with the Singapore Insurance Employees' Union (SIEU) as part of the Financial Services Career Week from 14 to 23 August 2017.

### **Future-proofing Workers**

During the three-hour dialogue, both employers and union officials talked about the disruptions affecting insurance industry workers.

The dialogue participants also identified some of the jobs at risk and uppermost in their minds is to work hand-in-hand to address workers' concerns in this area.

Explained Aviva's People Development Manager Jeremy Cai: "We talked about the resources that we can all bring together in order to better look at what the future needs are from the capability point of view. This way, we can help our workers not just plug the short-term gaps but have a longer view of what the future looks like and what they need to build on in order to get there."

### **Boosting PME Representation**

Reaching out to professionals, managers and executives (PMEs) was another topic discussed.

"As the industry evolves amidst technological disruptions, for the unions to continue to be relevant, not only do they have to evolve in understanding the needs of the PMEs as the majority of the workers in our industry are PMEs, their role in representation would also have to evolve to working with employers to future proof their members through skills development," said Mr Cen Hong Siu Ming, Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) Insurance Industry Group Chairman and a Senior Vice President with Great Eastern Life Assurance.

Over the next few months, SIEU will be broadening its outreach to encourage more PMEs in the industry to become union members.

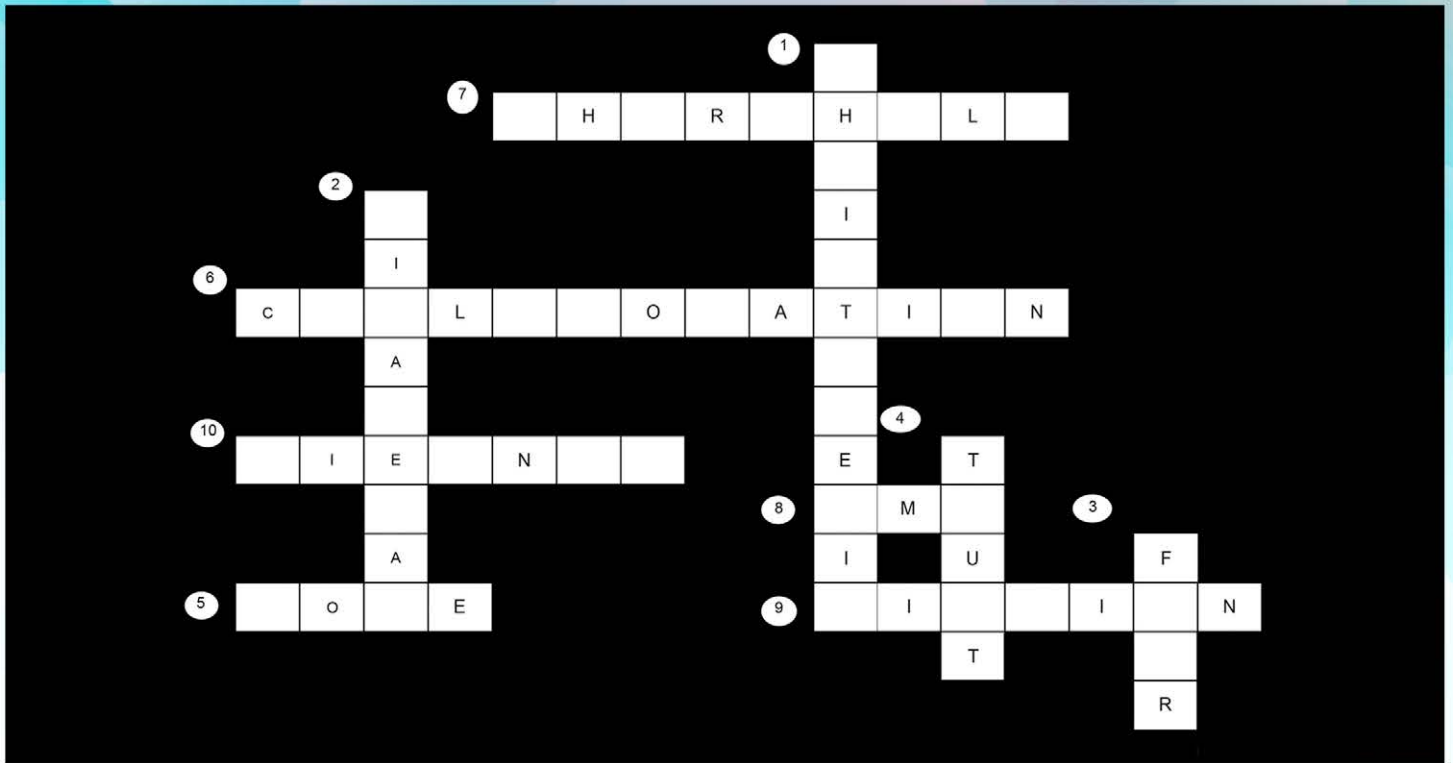
"Our collective agreement with the rank-and-file workers is expiring at the end of the year and it is a good time to start talking to them. Different companies want to move at different speeds and this is a good opportunity to engage them about organising and union membership," said SIEU General Secretary Luke Hee.

*Source: NTUC This Week, 27/08/2017*

# “SIEU & YOU”

Quiz Contest 112th Issue 2017  
Closing Date: 16 November 2017

# WINNERS ONLY



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NRIC No: \_\_\_\_\_

Co's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_



## Questions:

1. New president of SIEU 2017.
2. Negotiations, meetings or agreements involving two groups or countries concerned.
3. How many officials from SIEU went on an exchange programme to the Philippines?
4. Stephen Covey, an author, quoted one of the most essential ingredient in effective communication.
5. Department of Labour and Employment in short.
6. The action of working with someone to produce something.
7. A famous prime minister quoted this: "The price of greatness is responsibility."
8. Labour Management Relations in short.
9. One word to describe this sentence - an important assignment.
10. SIEU joined SBEU in the Bilateral Exchange programme to this country.

## Rules:

- The contest is open to all members excepts Officials and Executive Council Members (Branch Chairman) of the Union.
- Only ONE (1) entry per person. Any attempt or suspected attempt to enter more than once per person, shall be deemed as tampering and will void all of your entries.
- The first 20 correct entries drawn by the Executive Council will each receive \$30 FairPrice Gift Voucher from the Union.
- Closing date for contest is **16 November 2017**

## Winners for the 111th Issue 2017. Each winner will receive NTUC FairPrice Voucher worth \$30. Congratulations!

- |                                    |   |                                  |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Lau Mei Lan (Tokio Marine Life) | 8. Eslin Yeo (Lonpac)                       | 15. Ngai Sok Fong (NTUC Income)  |
| 2. Jacqueline Ho Jet Choo (UOI)    | 9. Seow Chui Yoon (Manulife)                | 16. Lim Suat Pheng (NTUC Income) |
| 3. Chew Wee Jia (Aviva)            | 10. Chua Ai Ling (Manulife)                 | 17. Foo Tok Foon (NTUC Income)   |
| 4. Norizah Asaad (First Capital)   | 11. Yazidah (Liberty)                       | 18. Corrine Hoo (NTUC Income)    |
| 5. Roszannah Abdol Latiff (AIG)    | 12. Lynna Tan Keng Piak (Liberty)           | 19. Tan Siew Bee (NTUC Income)   |
| 6. Poh Guat Bee (QBE)              | 13. Sarah Tan Choon Hua (Tokio Marine Ins.) | 20. Azhari Afidi (NTUC Income)   |
| 7. Lim Soo Fen (Etiqa)             | 14. Tan Leh Sa (Tokio Marine Ins.)          |                                  |

## Answers to the Quiz Contest 111th Issue, 2017

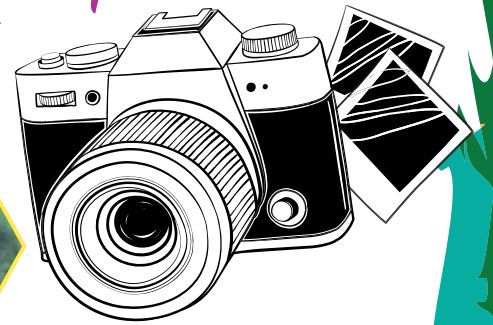
1. Tampines Hub 2. Ho Chi Minh 3. AVIVA 4. Reflection 5. Halimah Yacob 6. Magenta 7. Sixty Four 8. Union 9. Vivek Kumar 10. Bread

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Ms Daphne Soh  
Lee Peng,  
AIG Asia Pacific  
Insurance



# STRIKE A POSE



## *"I am so pretty!"*

Child of Nur Asyikin  
Bte Osman, AIG



## *"All Smiley cause I saw FOOD!"*

Child of Haslinda Bte  
Kamal, Tokio Marine  
Life Insurance

## *"To Child Care..."*

Child of Matthew Pan  
Tau Juan, AIA



.....  
Send in your child's  
photo (5 years old  
and below) or your  
recent wedding photo  
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# National Day Observance Ceremony 2017

