

PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**OPENING REMARKS BY SM THARMAN SHANMUGARATNAM
ONE HEART, ONE PEOPLE COMCHEST NIGHT 2021
PRE-RECORDING ON 8 JANUARY 2021, FRIDAY, 6:05PM
LEVEL 3, JUBILEE BALLROOM C, SAFRA @ TOA PAYOH**

Minister Masagos Zulkifli, Minister Desmond Lee,

Mr Phillip Tan, Chairman, Community Chest,

Distinguished guests and valued partners,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Good evening, and a very happy 2021 to all!
2. Welcome to the One Heart, One People Comchest Night. This charity concert was first introduced by Community Chest in 2018 as Getai-Xinyao to celebrate the spirit of giving, with performances by celebrities, volunteers and social service users, and we are continuing with this tradition this year despite the pandemic.
3. We have even more to celebrate today, as the new year also promises some light at the end of the COVID tunnel, after many months of adjusting to new routines, and some difficult times for everyone, especially the vulnerable in our community. There is reason to be optimistic, but we will still have to remain vigilant and patient until a substantial majority of the world's population gets vaccinated, and even by optimistic estimates, this will take most of this year.

4. There are also massive positives from COVID that we should keep with us, even as we come out of this crisis.
5. The first is how we have reinvigorated our culture of solidarity. COVID has shone a spotlight on the inequalities in our society and the plight of our most vulnerable, but also on the generosity and empathy of our people. Many Singaporeans came together and contributed in various ways to ensure that no Singaporean is left behind, from repurposing laptops for disadvantaged children to sewing see-through masks so those with hearing disabilities can lip-read. The outpouring of effort and donations, and just that drive to do something for others when we see a need to be met, has been inspiring. Many of these initiatives will have momentum of their own even after COVID, and the networks that have been built will make us a stronger society.
6. A second positive is how our social services sector has also accelerated its digitalisation journey, as a way of serving its beneficiaries better, and engaging its partners. Over the past 14 weeks, Community Chest has partnered 19 local influencers, chefs and celebrities to present live streaming sessions to raise funds for Community Chest beneficiaries, in its 'Hearts as One' initiative. These sessions have collectively raised more than \$90,000 and garnered close to 120,000 views on Facebook.
7. One of the partners for this initiative is local celebrity and founder of the chicken rice eatery, 13 Stages, Mark Lee, who shared behind-the-scenes footage in his live streaming session, on how he prepares his signature chicken rice dish. Mark matched the amount raised during the 10-min live streaming session dollar-for-dollar, and also donated

50% of the sales proceeds from the eatery over three days in November, as well as 100 portions of chicken rice to the elderly served by Lions Befrienders.

8. I would also like to thank all those who have contributed generously to the One Heart, One People Comchest Night 2021. The event has managed to raise over \$2.7 million so far, to support Community Chest's many beneficiaries. Although this year's event is virtual, this is the highest amount we have ever raised through this concert, more than double the amount raised in the 2019 event (over \$1.1 million).

9. Lastly, to everyone who has made this virtual event possible, I would like to extend my appreciation for your time and effort.

10. Please enjoy the concert and once again, thank you for your support. Together, we can build a more cohesive society.

11. 谢谢您的支持!

Pronounced as: Xie Xie Nin De Zhi Chi!

12. Terima kasih atas sokongan anda!

13. உங்கள் ஆதரவுக்கு நன்றி

Pronounced as: Oon-girl a-tha-ra-vu-ku nan-dri!