



(Embargoed until 7.30pm 8 September)
REACH MEDIA RELEASE

Economy and Progress for All Tops NDR 2016 Feedback

Singapore's economy and ensuring progress for all garnered the most interest amongst Singaporeans who gave their feedback on Prime Minister (PM) Lee Hsien Loong's National Day Rally (NDR) speech recently. This topic accounted for one third of 1,600 feedback inputs on NDR 2016. Other topics of interest were the review of the Elected Presidency and terrorism.

2 The feedback was collated via REACH online platforms¹ and face-to-face² engagement sessions from 21 August to 4 September. Singaporeans also reacted to PM Lee taking ill during the delivery of his English speech. Many wished him well and urged him to take care of himself. Several said that there is an urgent need to focus on leadership succession.

Ensuring Progress for All

Disruption and Change

3. While Singaporeans recognise that a disruptive economy could be painful for businesses and will affect jobs, they acknowledged that it is necessary for Singaporeans to adapt and reskill to stay relevant. At REACH's Listening Points, an open concept booth to give feedback on national policies and issues, older workers conveyed their concerns about jobs being replaced by technology. But younger Singaporeans in their 20s and 30s are optimistic about the new opportunities.

4. Generally, Singaporeans felt that the Government should not leave behind those who fail to keep up with changes, especially the elderly who may have a steeper learning curve and lower job security.

Business Innovation and Promoting Entrepreneurship

5. Some called on the Government to play a bigger role in helping local firms innovate and "be the disruptor". They suggested the need for a more flexible business environment to promote innovation and guide businesses through the transformation process.

6. Others cited high operations costs, fear of failure, risk-averse attitudes, and

¹ Online feedback platforms included the REACH Discussion Forum, Facebook, Twitter, email, Whatsapp chat groups and Facebook Live chats (24 & 28 Aug).

² Face-to-Face engagements comprised a public forum (25 Aug) and Listening Points - (26 to 28 Aug), a REACH-938Live Talkback Townhall at Toa Payoh Hub (27 Aug).

Reaching Everyone for Active Citizenry @Home

140 Hill Street, #01-01A, Old Hill Street Police Station, Singapore 179369 Fax: (65) 6336-7926 SMS: 9773-2587

Toll-free: 1800-353-5555 Email: reach@reach.gov.sg Website: www.reach.gov.sg



business opportunities being “hijacked” by bigger government-linked companies as obstacles to entrepreneurship. There were hence calls for the Government to develop a culture of risk-taking and to support local entrepreneurs by adopting technologies by local start-ups. Singaporeans also highlighted the need for our educational system to shift from a “prescribed mould of success” to developing people who are willing to push the boundaries and are hungry to be “exceptional”.

Other Notable Feedback

Terrorism

7. Singaporeans were concerned over the threat of terrorism and urged fellow citizens to stay united and remain vigilant. A handful were sceptical as to whether Singapore’s multi-racial fabric could withstand the damage of a terror attack. However, most were positive that Singaporeans would rally together and preserve our social harmony when it comes to the crunch.

8. In addition to military defence, several opined that Singapore should build up its cyber defence capabilities in key installation sectors such as finance, power, telecommunications, transport and hospitals to ensure the smooth running of the country in the event of an attack.

Review of Elected Presidency

9. Feedback so far showed mixed sentiments on the review of the Elected Presidency, with the issue of ensuring opportunities for minorities to become President the most discussed. Some Singaporeans were in favour of having safeguards to ensure minority representation, whereas others felt that race was not an issue, and that the President should be elected based on meritocracy.

10. Several disagreed with the need to update the \$100 million paid-up capital which is used as a yardstick for selecting presidential candidates with experience in managing large companies in the private sector. They raised concerns that this would automatically narrow the pool of potential candidates. There was relatively muted interest on the role of the Council of Presidential Advisers (CPA). Those who commented felt that the selection of the CPA should be more stringent and transparent if the intention is to give them greater responsibilities.

11. To further gather views on the Elected Presidency scheme, REACH is organising a series of public engagement exercises starting with a public forum on Thursday, 29 September, 7pm to 9pm. Those interested may check out the Events page at www.reach.gov.sg for more details.

Reaching Everyone for Active Citizenry @Home

140 Hill Street, #01-01A, Old Hill Street Police Station, Singapore 179369 Fax: (65) 6336-7926 SMS: 9773-2587

Toll-free: 1800-353-5555 Email: reach@reach.gov.sg Website: www.reach.gov.sg



For media queries, please contact:

Adrienne Tan
HP No: 9692 8000
Email: Adrienne_TAN@mci.gov.sg

About REACH

REACH (Reaching Everyone for Active Citizenry @ Home) was launched in October 2006 when the Feedback Unit was restructured to move beyond gathering public feedback, to become the lead agency for engaging and connecting with citizens. This signifies its renewed commitment to encourage and promote an active citizenry through citizen participation and involvement. The three key roles of REACH are to: Gather and Gauge Ground Sentiments; Reach Out and Engage Citizens; and Promote Active Citizenry through Citizen Participation and Involvement

Issued by
REACH
8 September 2016

National Archives of Singapore

Reaching Everyone for Active Citizenry @Home

140 Hill Street, #01-01A, Old Hill Street Police Station, Singapore 179369 Fax: (65) 6336-7926 SMS: 9773-2587

Toll-free: 1800-353-5555 Email: reach@reach.gov.sg Website: www.reach.gov.sg