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/ Written Reply to Parliamentary Questions on Matters Related to Human Trafficking, By Mr K Shanmugam, Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law

## WRITTEN REPLIES TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

# Written Reply to Parliamentary Questions on Matters Related to Human Trafficking, By Mr K Shanmugam, Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law

Published: 10 May 2021

### Question No. 578:

Mr Christopher de Souza: To ask the Minister for Home Affairs whether he can provide an update on the training given to frontline police officers to assist them in detecting possible situations of human trafficking.

### Question No. 579:

Mr Christopher de Souza: To ask the Minister for Home Affairs what has been done to enhance the protection of victims of human trafficking such as to encourage them to come forward to report their plight to the police.

### Question No. 580:

Mr Christopher de Souza: To ask the Minister for Home Affairs whether more support can be given to employers to incentivise them to employ survivors of human trafficking.

### Question No. 583:

Mr Christopher de Souza: To ask the Minister for Home Affairs (a) between 2015 and 2020, what is the number of investigations that have been conducted involving offences of trafficking in persons; (b) how many of these investigations have led to prosecutions; and (c) of these prosecutions, how many have been for labour trafficking and sex trafficking respectively.

### Answer:

1. Since the Prevention of Human Trafficking Act (PHTA) was enacted in 2015, the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and the

Singapore Police Force (SPF) have investigated 260 cases of alleged sex and labour trafficking till date, of which 12 cases were prosecuted. Of these 12, 7 cases concluded with convictions under PHTA (1 labour trafficking case and 6 sex trafficking cases); 1 case of alleged sex trafficking was convicted under the Women's Charter; and another case of alleged sex trafficking was acquitted. The remaining 3 cases (2 labour trafficking cases and 1 sex trafficking case) are still undergoing court proceedings.

2. Frontline service and enforcement officers from the SPF, MOM and Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) are trained to detect potential cases of human trafficking, and to manage the victims in a sensitive manner. SPF, MOM and ICA officers also received training on the identification of potential trafficking victims conducted by international partners such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and INTERPOL.

3. Under the PHTA, there are a suite of protective and assistance measures to protect the trafficked victims, as well as the informers. To protect the identity and safety of the victims and informers, in-camera court proceeding is made mandatory for child victims. For non-child victims, in-camera court proceeding has to be available as an option. Media gag orders for proceedings involving sexual exploitation are also issued to protect the identity of victims and informers, to encourage more to come forward to report human trafficking activities.

4. To ensure that the victims continue to be protected and cared for after being rescued, the Government supports and funds non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that provide victim support services such as shelter, sustenance and counselling. Examples of such NGOs include HAGAR and the Good Shepherd Centre. When required, the Singapore Inter-Agency Taskforce on Trafficking in Persons (TIP Taskforce) supports the NGOs in working with their overseas counterparts to help the victims return safely to their home countries and reintegrate smoothly into society.

5. While the victims remain in Singapore to assist with investigation and prosecution, arrangements are made through the Temporary Job Scheme for employers to hire those who are able and willing to work. To achieve better job matches, the Government engages potential employers to understand their requirements before facilitating the emplacement of the victims. NGO partners also provide basic conversational English lessons, and relevant job skills training, to help victims find a job and adjust to the workplace.

6. The TIP Taskforce will continue its efforts to combat human trafficking by working in close partnership with the NGOs and employers; reviewing the support given to employers; and participating in TIP training with international partners such as UNODC, INTERPOL, overseas law enforcement agencies, and foreign embassies.



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- How the Home Team Works Together
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- Our Heritage

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- Ensuring Civil Defence and Emergency Preparedness
- Keeping Singapore Drug-Free
- Maintaining Law and Order

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