

# UOL CHANNEL

A PUBLICATION OF UOL GROUP LIMITED. VOL.01.2020



STRONGER TOGETHER:  
BATTLE AGAINST  
COVID-19  
#UOLUNITED





# STAYING UNITED AGAINST COVID-19

Since 7 February 2020 after Singapore raised its Disease Outbreak Response System Condition (DORSCON) level to orange amid the COVID-19 outbreak, UOL has stepped up its precautionary measures to keep everyone in its premises safe, as well as to ensure business continuity.

The Group has been following government guidelines to ensure good hygiene and health standards for the well-being of its building occupants, hotel guests and employees. It carried out temperature checks, health and travel declarations, safe distancing measures and frequent disinfection of buildings. When new regulations called for new measures, various departments across the Group worked collaboratively and swiftly to ensure everything was in order.

To minimise close contact and disruption to business operations, the Group implemented team segregation, staggered work hours and work-from-home arrangements for employees. Employees are also engaged and kept updated by the management on the evolving situation and measures carried out by the Group. UOL employee, Mr Heng Chin Hong, Assistant General Manager (Product Development), said: “Open communication and sharing is essential for us to get through this challenging period together. We should also not forget our colleagues who are doing their best in ensuring our welfare and safety - the cleaners, maintenance team and security personnel, and everyone else on the front line.”

Businesses are affected, but the Group remains committed to supporting its affected stakeholders. UOL launched the Tenant Assistance Package with tenant-support and marketing initiatives to encourage spending at its three malls. It also rolled out the Healthcare Appreciative Package comprising \$40,000 worth of shopping and dining offers to thank the 1,000 healthcare professionals in Health City Novena for working tirelessly against COVID-19. The Group’s hotel subsidiary Pan Pacific Hotels Group (PPHG) supported the government initiatives by having Pan Pacific Singapore and PARKROYAL COLLECTION Pickering as a dedicated facility for those returning from overseas to serve their stay-home notices. PARKROYAL on Kitchener Road and PARKROYAL on Beach Road responded quickly to provide temporary accommodation for Malaysian workers who were affected by the lockdown in Malaysia.

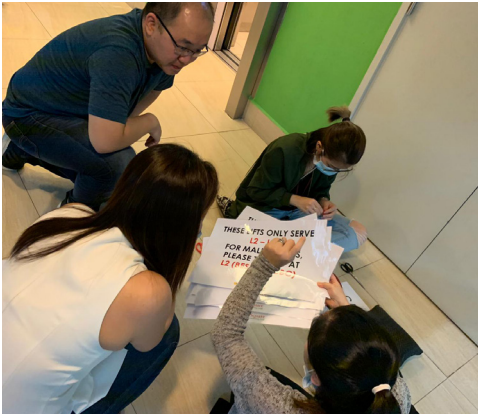
Hospitality is one of the most badly hit sectors, but PPHG employees have displayed high adaptability and unity. When PARKROYAL on Kitchener Road was expecting the arrival of Malaysian workers, employees from different departments answered the urgent call to prepare the rooms. Mr Benjamin Chen, Assistant Director of Finance at PARKROYAL on Kitchener Road, helped to make the beds.



> More frequent cleaning and disinfection works are carried out in the buildings for the safety of the occupants.

He said: “I am happy to lend a helping hand like we always do, especially when these arrivals are last minute and housekeeping cannot cope on their own. We are a family after all.”

UOL Group Chief Executive Liam Wee Sin expressed his confidence in the resilience of the Group and urged employees to look out for one another. Mr Liam said: “With the current environment where we are confronted with many business challenges including slowdown in business, cancellations, and other unexpected events, let us see beyond the current inconvenience, have empathy, be more appreciative and stay united.”



> The Group’s corporate office employees stepped in to help put up notices to direct traffic at United Square (left photo) and conduct temperature screening at PARKROYAL on Kitchener Road (right photo).



## DPM HENG LAUDED PPHG’S TRANSFORMATION EFFORTS

Impressed by how the Group’s management made use of the current downtime in hospitality to take care of its workers and stabilise the hotel operations, Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat called on other companies to follow the hotel’s footsteps when he visited PARKROYAL on Kitchener Road on 25 February 2020. He complimented the hotel in making use of the government’s job support scheme to raise the skills and capabilities of staff, and the quality of operations.

PARKROYAL on Kitchener Road had embarked on its transformation plan in March last year to improve productivity and guest experience. The transformation was accelerated when the hotel sector was badly impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. After the renovation, most rooms now have built-in rollaway beds for quicker response time. The hotel’s Luggage Management System also leveraged technology to trace and retrieve guest bags easily using QR codes. In place of a mini bar in each room, there are centralised vending machines and ice dispensers to reduce wastage and minimise costs.



Credit: Ministry of Communications and Information  
> Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat (left) checking out the vending machines during the tour of the hotel with Mr Richard Ong, General Manager of PARKROYAL on Kitchener Road.



> Signages, barriers and floor markers were put up quickly in the Group’s premises to comply with the authorities’ regulations.







## COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVE HIRING

On 11 March 2020, PPHG launched its central kitchen programme in conjunction with the President's Challenge 2020 at Enabling Village, an integrated community space that provides services for persons with disabilities (PWD).

President Halimah Yacob, who was the guest-of-honour, thanked the hotel industry for being the first private sector employer to enable employment for PWDs and highlighted PPHG as one of the hospitality groups for setting an example for other industries to follow.

Addressing close to 300 senior executives from both the public and private sectors, including the Singapore Hotel Association, UOL Group Chief Executive Liam Wee Sin said: "We are delighted to be able to create a supportive environment for persons with disabilities to realise their potential. We will continue to play a part, however big or small, in creating social inclusiveness, providing livelihood and building a caring nation."

Partnering Extra•Ordinary People and social enterprise Samsui Kitchen, the central kitchen programme is designed to address manpower challenges in the culinary team while enabling employment for PWDs. The programme currently supplies dim sum items to Si Chuan Dou Hua Restaurant at UOB Plaza and the restaurants at four of the Group's hotels in Singapore.

During the event, President Halimah Yacob also launched the President's Challenge Enabling Employment Pledge, which saw 106 hotels including PPHG, pledge their commitment towards inclusive hiring. As a champion of inclusive hiring in the hospitality industry, PPHG will continue to do its part in building inclusivity.



> President Halimah Yacob (centre); Mr Liam Wee Sin, UOL Group Chief Executive, (seventh from right); and Ms Wee Wei Ling, PPHG Executive Director (Asset, Lifestyle & Corporate Social Responsibility) (sixth from right), were among the attendees at the launch of PPHG's central kitchen programme.



## TWO ACQUISITIONS IN FIRST QUARTER 2020

UOL acquired a residential site in Singapore and a 154-key hotel in Jakarta, Indonesia.

On 9 March 2020, UOL was awarded a residential site at Canberra Drive for \$270.2 million or about \$650 psf ppr. The 99-year leasehold land has a total site area of 27,566.1 sqm and is a 50:30:20 joint venture with UOL, UIC and Kheng Leong. Located close to the newly opened Canberra MRT station, the site can yield about 450 units.

On 23 January 2020, UOL acquired a 154-key hotel in Thamrin Nine's Tower 2 for a purchase price of US\$50 million (approximately \$67.5 million). The hotel is under construction and will be branded as Pan Pacific Jakarta. Thamrin Nine is a 5.2-hectare mixed-use development located in Jakarta's financial district. With this acquisition, UOL completed its brand presence in Jakarta. It will own/manage four hotels and serviced suites in Jakarta, offering about 700 rooms.



Credit: National Arts Council



## 'HUG THE TREE' AT KINEX

Hug the Tree, a live puppetry show by Paper Monkey Theatre, enthralled children and families on 14 March 2020 with its inspiring story of villagers standing united to protect trees.

KINEX sponsored the venue for the performance, which was an Arts in Your Neighbourhood initiative by the National Arts Council (NAC), to connect the community through arts. NAC's Deputy Director, Engagement & Participation, Ms Tan Sin Nah, said: "We are grateful for KINEX's support to bring the arts to the Geylang Serai neighbourhood."