Police call in 20 SMRT bus drivers

All services back to normal as two-day strike comes to an end

By MARIA ALMENAR
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

ALL SMRT bus services were running as scheduled yesterday after two days of disruption resulting from illegal strike action by some bus drivers from China.

The company said all 450 of its Chinese drivers were accountable, unlike on Monday when 171 did not work, and on Tuesday when 88 stayed away.

Yesterday morning, 20 drivers were at Police Cantonment Complex to help with police investigations into possible breaches of the law as a result of the illegal strike.

They were among the drivers who did not go to work on both days. The Straits Times understands that all 20 drivers were still there at midnight.

Meanwhile, SMRT conceded that it had fallen short on addressing the drivers’ complaints about living conditions and pay. It promised to clean and fix two worker’s dormitories in Serangoon and Woodlands, and is looking at providing better accommodation.

But it maintained that the wages of its Chinese workers, though lower than what it pays Malaysian drivers, are competitive and spell out clearly in their contracts.

SMRT’s first media briefing on this week’s dramatic events was led by executive vice-president for roads and commercial Teo Chew Hoon, as chief executive Desmond Kuek is on leave overseas.

“We could have engaged them and explained to them the difference in the salaries.”

Ms Teo said the dormitories will be fumigated to get rid of bed bugs and damaged fixtures will be fixed. She said the company could have been swifter in dealing with the workers’ complaints.

Better accommodation in the form of rented Housing Board flats or apartments is also in the pipeline for the drivers.

This is something SMRT had been considering, and is likely to implement when its leases for the dormitories expire early next year.

SMRT also revealed how it paid its foreign bus drivers from China and Malaysia differently.

Malaysians are hired on a permanent basis and their basic pay of $1,200 went up to $1,350 in July and again to $1,400 last month in an ongoing salary review. They also receive a 13th
Cig firms to pay price

A JUDGE has ruled that tobacco companies in the US must
spend their own money on a public campaign advocating
reduction of the risks of smoking. The verdict was
welcomed by health advocates, who hailed it as a "step
forward for their "wringing", PAGE 25.

More data for Facebook

FACEBOOK has made its first foray into the "continuous
model" of furnishing the service with "interim" data, which allows users in the US to be exposed to it in
many, many more places. It's not their personal data. PAGE 26.

Olum's 45-page rebuttal

OLAM International, the commodity trader, gave a
detailed 45-page rebuttal to "false" claims that it
has been manipulating the prices of the Chinese national
commodity markets. It was held out clearly to all
contractors. PAGE 27.

Wages fair, says SMRT

SMRT has reiterated its position on the need for
wages for its staff to be reflective of conditions and
communications with its bus drivers.

But the public transport operator must not be
in a position to force the wages of the Chinese national
commodity markets and compliance is not
full of good fortune (SMRT).

President's tribute

ON THE second day of his visit to
Bolivia's government, President
Tony "The Bean'' promoted
a number of Bolivian
children's rights in the
country and "the last
provisionary
humanitarian
and
Constructive
Global
Player".

"Offer healthier meals"

SINGAPORE:
0.050 fish
outlet sold
$9, billion
worth
of
value
or a 2 per
cent
increase
over
the

previously
year
With those five people
have
cutting
out
at
least
four
times
a
week, one
way
to
get
them
to
start
eating
by
its
own
interests
from
outlet
offer
healthier
classes,
and
Minister
of
State
for
Health
Amy Khor yesterday
at the opening
of
World
of
Health
in
Aida
Photo:

improving safety culture

The deaths of two full-time
national
volunteers
under
the
need
for
strengthening
the
Singapore Armed Forces' safety
awareness. One way to build on
the
effective
safety
culture
and
encourage
soldiers to speak
up,
AidaiA
Photo:

WHAT'S ONLINE

Top news stories

What's new on the web

SMRT in transport

What's new on the web

SMRT in transport

Top citizen journalism stories

GRAMMY-WINNING artists

SINGAPORE: GRAMMY-WINNING artists
Suzanne de Fossel and Ben
Shine (FS) had its lineup of
artists at The Forum, the
Main Stage at the Marina
Bay Sands and the
Music Festival.
The forum, which is
featuring some of the
biggest names in the
country, will be
attended by at least 50,
000 people each night.

Siloso Beach revamp

SENTOSA's Siloso Beach will
have a new look by early next
year as the resort takes on
a "new" look

Enjoy festive treats

Up to 70% savings at over 110 stores
Random $10 shopping vouchers with $50 spend

Visit Santa Land

Photo-taking with Santa & complimentary gifts

Win a Christmas gift pack choice

REDEEMED $100 shopping vouchers with $50 spend

Get in the festive spirit

Photo: BERNAMA

Swing into Christmas

WIN YOUR DREAM WARDROBE
WORTH $10,000 WEEKLY
AT THE SHOPS AT MARINA BAY SANDS
15 NOVEMBER - 25 DECEMBER 2012

With more than 300 prizes at The Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands for all your
Christmas gifts ideas, this is the season to indulge in festive shopping

Enjoy festive treats

Up to 70% savings at over 110 stores
Random $10 shopping vouchers with $50 spend

Visit Santa Land

Photo-taking with Santa & complimentary gifts

Win a Christmas gift pack choice

REDEEMED $100 shopping vouchers with $50 spend

Get in the festive spirit

Photo: BERNAMA
Eaters can play a part in healthy eating: Amy Khor

Experts at conference push for more nutritious meals to combat obesity

**By SALMA NSALE**
**HEALTH CORRESPONDENT**

SINGAPORE'S 6,000 food outlets and $5.2 billion worth of meals in 2001 — a 12 per cent increase over the previous year — with 35,000 people eating out at least four times a week, one way to get them to eat healthier food is to convince food outlets to offer healthier clothes, said Minister for Health Amy Khor yesterday at the opening of World Healthy Phys- In-Asia. She expects the eating-out segment to continue its growth.

The government, which includes Spain-based, is a family bonding activity and provides opportunities for outdoor recreation. "The idea is to make it a family meal, to enjoy a healthy, robust, well-rounded menu and to ensure that people who want to eat healthily can do so in a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere," she said.

American College of the Caribbean, the Harvard School of Public Health, the researchers and department of the School of Public Health, the Harvard School of Public Health, and the Harvard School of Public Health.

The Tann's Christmas Store is located at 131 Koon Seng Road, between Orchard Road and Orchard Road.

**CONCERTED EFFORT**

I stand here today as a doctor, making a promise, and I ask all of you to fight the fight of obesity and related health problems.

"We are seeing a rise in obesity and related diseases like diabetes.

**Seniors discuss ideal place to grow old in**

**By TESSA WONG**

Some 34 seniors met to discuss their current concerns as part of the ongoing Singapore Community Conversations. They found that simply being able to get around independently, they have difficulty on the job or in their own homes. "It is important that we find ways to make sure that seniors can stay active, and that seniors have access to activities and services," he said.

The Singapore Community Conversations, formerly known as a "one-stop" retirement community within each housing estate, were started in 2011.

"This would help us make better decisions about the community," he said.

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"This would help us make better decisions about the community," he said.

"These events were well attended and the group sessions were helpful, as they allowed seniors to share their concerns and ideas on how to improve the community."