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Polytechnic Forum 2022 brings together 300 students to share ideas on building a more caring, inclusive and equitable Singapore

SINGAPORE, 16 SEPTEMBER 2022 – Making Singapore a more equitable, inclusive, and cohesive society. This was the focus of the discussions between 300 students from the five polytechnics and representatives from key ministries and partners at the first in-person Polytechnic Forum since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Forum, themed “**Building A Caring Nation – One People, One Nation?**” and held between 9 and 16 September 2022, was led and organised by Republic Polytechnic (RP) this year. It consisted of a series of educational workshops for students, and culminated in a main dialogue session at RP today chaired by **Minister, Prime Minister’s Office and Second Minister for Education and Foreign Affairs Dr Maliki Osman**.

Under the overarching theme, this year’s dialogue tackled four main issues: (1) the Socioeconomic Divide; (2) Physical and Mental Health Challenges; (3) Gender Equality; and (4) the Race Divide.

The annual Polytechnic Forum, first started in 1996, provides a platform for polytechnic students to gain a deeper understanding of national issues through discussions and engagement with government and industry leaders. Participants also proposed ideas on how youths can help shape Singapore’s future.

Chairman of the Polytechnic Forum 2022 and Director of RP’s Office of Student and Graduate Affairs Mr Ganesh Kalyanam said, “COVID-19 has highlighted fault lines and inequalities within Singapore’s society and it is imperative for Singapore to address these gaps. Polytechnic students are an integral part of the next generation of young leaders. They have the ability and responsibility to shape our nation’s future. Through this Forum, we aim to create a safe space that embraces a multitude of ideas, viewpoints and initiatives from our youths.”

Building a Caring Nation – One People, One Nation?

For a week leading up to the main dialogue session on 16 September 2022, the participating students explored these issues through keynote speaker sessions, learning journeys, experiential activities, discussions and self-reflection. They also deliberated solutions and developed posters and presentations on these ideas, which they presented to Dr Maliki just before the main dialogue session.

Dr Maliki emphasised the need to celebrate and harness diversity and inclusivity through deeper community interactions. He also shared on how each individual could play their part to provide a more conducive space for all.

The discussions were facilitated by student delegates who were equipped with skills on collaboration and conflict mediation during workshops held earlier in the week.

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About Republic Polytechnic

The first educational institution in Singapore to leverage the Problem-based Learning approach for all its diploma programmes, Republic Polytechnic (RP) has seven schools and one academic centre offering 36 full-time diplomas in Applied Science, Engineering, Management and Communication, Hospitality, Infocomm, Sports, Health & Leisure, and Technology for the Arts.

RP is committed to nurturing professionals with strong problem-solving capabilities through an innovative and entrepreneurial learning environment, based on a holistic and industry-relevant curriculum. RP's Academy for Continuing Education also offers a comprehensive suite of lifelong learning programmes to provide adult learners with skills upgrading opportunities. For more information, visit <http://www.rp.edu.sg>.