

## Opening Remarks by Minister for Communications and Information Mrs Josephine Teo at library@chinatown's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

Mr Ng Cher Pong, Chief Executive Officer, NLB

Distinguished guests

Donors, volunteers, and partners

Friends and colleagues

各位贵宾、同事和朋友，大家晚上好!

1. Good evening. I am happy to join you today at the tenth anniversary celebration of library@chinatown. This library sits within the Jalan Besar GRC, which I am MP for. It is precious for Jalan Besar GRC to hold such a treasure.

### A community space by the community

2. library@chinatown is a pioneer in the library space in two significant ways. Firstly, it is a fully sponsored partner library, thanks to the very strong support from the community since 2013. For the past 10 years, the Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple has generously sponsored the library's operating costs. I am very happy to share that the Temple has agreed to fund the library for another five years! The owner of this retail mall, CP 1 Pte Ltd, has also kindly provided the space for the library right in the heart of Chinatown.

3. Secondly, it is run by volunteers, and it is the first public library in Singapore to do so.

4. Allow me to highlight some of our volunteers here with us tonight. Madam Doris Choy, a retired pre-school teacher, is one of the pioneer volunteers for library@chinatown. Doris has volunteered in a wide range of activities, such as facilitating health programmes for seniors and storytelling. She continues to be active in library@harbourfront. Mdm Lee Hai Wee, an active member of an art-and-craft club, conducts handicraft sessions for members of the public at library@chinatown. During these sessions, she makes use of waste materials, which in turn, helps to spread the important message of recycling.

5. Thank you, Doris, Hai Wee, and all our volunteers. Your contributions are deeply appreciated. Together with NLB, you have facilitated various programmes and ensured the upkeep of the library. These, in turn, helped to enhance our patrons' knowledge and learnings, and enrich their minds.

### Engaging the Community

6. More importantly, the impact of your work is felt beyond library@chinatown. While this volunteerism model was first started at library@chinatown, it has since been adapted in different ways across some of our libraries. We see it in Tampines Regional Library, Choa Chu Kang Public Library, and the recently opened Punggol Regional Library.



7. As laid out in NLB's Libraries and Archives Blueprint 2025, we are fully committed to keeping this spirit of volunteerism in all our libraries. Hence, we will have more volunteering opportunities available with NLB, including at the latest Punggol Regional Library.

8. Unfortunately, during the pandemic, the number of active volunteers in our libraries fell to 2,000 in 2021. It has now increased to 3,500 active volunteers. Hopefully, with NLB's hard work, we will be able to increase our pool of active volunteers to our target of 6,500 by 2026. We want to share the love for libraries with more people, and do so in partnership with our volunteers. So, help us spread the word and bring more volunteers into our orbit.

### Expanded Collection and Programmes

9. Let me now share briefly, in Mandarin, the programmes and plans for the future. 唐城图书馆之所以这么特别，是因为它是本地首个完全民间资助的图书馆；更是本地首个由义工管理的图书馆，在这两方面算是先驱。

10. 从唐城图书馆今天欢庆10年的里程碑，我们可以看到它在社区中的重大意义。我们更要感谢观音堂佛祖庙、CP1私人有限公司和众多义工，多年来的强力支持。

11. 但，再好的项目，都需要我们的不断耕耘与更新。在这方面，我很高兴看到，唐城图书馆今年推出一系列加深国人对于华族文化了解的活动，包括中医药保健课程和华乐和华族戏曲工作坊。去年，图书馆也扩充和更新馆藏。例如，提供帮助乐龄人士加强数码技能的书籍，以鼓励更多国人爱上阅读，继续阅读。

12. 在此，让我再次祝贺唐城图书馆10周年快乐！唐城图书馆“10年耕耘，有您同行。未来10载，让我们再接再厉，共创佳绩！”

13. Once again, thank you all and I wish you a pleasant evening.

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