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Blossom Seeds Tribute to the Seniors Charity Lunch

After three years, Blossom Seeds, a Charity with IPC status, resumed a large-scale physical charity luncheon to pay tribute to the elderly, inviting about 1,200 community partners, grassroots leaders, seniors and volunteers from different religious organizations to enjoy a series of multicultural song, dance performances, and lucky draw.

Blossom Seeds celebrated its 10th anniversary with its annual charity lunch on Sunday (February 19), with 500 beneficiaries and 250 volunteers invited to attend the feast at Fairmont Hotel Singapore. The last charity lunch organised by Blossom Seeds was in December 2019 before the Covid-19 pandemic.

The theme of this year's luncheon is to promote **Social Cohesion** and encourage seniors to care for each other, while building cohesion among different races and religions.

Minister for Health, Mr Ong Ye Kung attended the event as the Guest of Honour. In his speech, he called on everyone to pay more attention to the elderly around them, especially to identify lonely elderly living alone.

Minister Ong Ye Kung, who is also the Adviser for Sembawang GROs, encourages people to gradually get in touch with the elderly through food and other means. He called on people to encourage the elderly to step out of their houses, introduce them to more activities, and most importantly encourage them to go for simple health screening checks and keep in touch with their GP.

Dr. Lim Wee Kiak, Adviser for Sembawang GRC (Canberra) and Ms Mariam Jaafar, Adviser for Sembawang GRC (Woodlands) were also special guests at the meeting. Together with Minister Ong, they distributed red packets to 50 tables of multi-ethnic seniors. Minister Ong also personally wrote calligraphy on stage and gifted it to the donors.

Led by the three of them, they sang "Friends" and "The Moon Represents My Heart" with their community partners from different religious organisations. Along with the music, the audience waved their mobile phone flashlights, creating a warm atmosphere.

Mdm Hu (74 years old, retired) started attending Blossom Seeds Senior Activity Centre about a year and a half ago. She moved to Canberra about two years ago to live alone. Since her eldest son has passed away and her younger son lives far away, he could only visit her once a week. As a result, she was prone to having wild thoughts, experiencing emotional pain and even having suicidal thoughts.

Fortunately, not long after, Blossom Seeds' volunteers learned of Hu Yawen's situation through the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC), and introduced her to the Senior Activity Centre under the organization, which helped her slowly emerge from sadness and loneliness. Today, she visits the Senior Activity Centre five days a week, actively interacts with other seniors, participates in activities such as Tai Chi, yoga and board games, and sometimes has meals with the staff.

She said: "It was the first time I participated in a large-scale Blossom Seed's activity today. I am really happy. I am very excited to see so many familiar faces. Being able to make friends of different races at the Senior Activity Centre is like returning to the Kampung days when I was a child, where everyone plays together."

The public can go to the crowdfunding platform Giving.sg to donate to Blossom Seeds, and the money will be used for Blossom Seeds' operation, including their plan to open a second Senior Activity Centre in the north in the future.