

Newspaper: The Straits Times

Date: 23 February 2007

Title: Friendly, helpful bus driver spread cheer

ON BEHALF of my family, I would like to thank an SBS driver whose friendliness and enthusiasm for his job made our bus journey really pleasant while doing our Chinese New Year visits.

On the second day of the new year, we boarded service 166 (SBS 975 M) in Ang Mo Kio at about 11.30am. As we boarded, the Indian bus driver greeted us with a cheerful 'Happy New Year'.

He greeted all his passengers, regardless of race, similarly as they boarded. Sometimes he even greeted Chinese passengers in Mandarin. I was especially impressed when he managed a brief conversation in Hokkien with an older passenger.

When a Caucasian couple boarded the bus with a baby pram that slightly blocked the passage, he gently reminded them of the inconvenience it might cause other passengers, while asking the rest of us if we were 'okay' with it. (To their credit, the couple later folded the pram and carried the baby in their arms.)

The driver also reminded all his passengers that for our own safety, we should not alight from the bus hastily. He assured us that as long as we pressed the buzzer in advance, and the 'bus stopping' light was on, he would wait for us to alight.

As we reached our stop, my mother thanked the driver and her thanks were met with: 'It's my pleasure.'

I commend this driver for going the extra mile to provide excellent service. It was a pleasure to meet a driver so keen to spread festive cheer - especially when he could have griped about having to work on a public holiday instead.

Chong Chun Lian (Miss)

Reply from SBS Transit

I refer to Miss Chong Chun Lian's letter 'Friendly, helpful bus driver spread cheer' (ST, Feb 23).

We are pleased to learn of her positive experience with our Bus Captain on service 166 who had provided passengers, including Ms Chong and her family, with excellent service. Indeed, we are proud to have a Bus Captain like Mr Chandra.

At SBS Transit, we invest efforts to train our Bus Captains to provide good service. Our efforts were recognised at the national Excellent Service Award 2006 where SBS Transit topped the list of all companies in Singapore with 985 of our staff, mostly Bus Captains, honoured for rendering quality service to customers.

We will continue to improve on the service provided by our Bus Captains as we recognise the important role they play in contributing to making our passengers' journey a pleasant one.

We thank Miss Chong for her kind letter which serves to further encourage our Bus Captains.

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