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SMG and NUJ ink new agreement

16th deal reaffirms commitment to staff welfare and progressive practices

By BENJAMIN LEE
benkjh@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: Star Media Group Bhd (SMG) has signed a new collective agreement (CA) 2025 with the National Union of Journalists (NUJ), reaffirming its dedication to ensuring its employees' security and welfare for the 16th time with the union.

The signing of the new CA was witnessed by Human Resources Minister Steven Sim, who praised SMG's ability to not only negotiate a deal with the union quickly but also its commitment to retaining its talent with progressive practices.

"The fact that SMG managed to negotiate and reach a consensus with NUJ in just three meetings shows true ability without the need for government intervention.

"I was also told that many SMG staff have been here for over 25 years and the spirit of this new CA shows why this is the case.

"It shows why people stay in SMG because when you pay your workers well and treat them well, talents will stay with you," he said in his speech after the signing ceremony of the CA at Menara Star yesterday.

Sim also praised SMG for being the guardians of truth to counter the rising use of artificial intelligence in spreading fake news.

He pointed out the rising trend of "citizen journalists" who would



Working together: (From left) Mahendraraj, Ng, Terence, Wang, Trade Union Affairs Department Director-General Mohd Asri, Chan, Sim, Low, Industrial Relations Department deputy director-general Meriam Mohamed Noor, NUJ general secretary Teh Athira Yusof, NUJ deputy general secretary Lydia Sheena Nathan and Trade Union Affairs Department Director Azzal Abu Talib posing for a group photo during the signing of the 16th CA between SMG and NUJ at Menara Star in Petaling Jaya. — AZMAN GHANI/The Star

circulate supposedly "breaking news" to others before checking whether it is true.

"That's why journalism is more important than ever because in a world flooded with misinforma-

tion, there are people that still say "if it's not reported by *The Star*, it's probably not true," he added.

SMG group chief executive officer Chan Seng Fatt said the CA represents SMG's commitment to

promote an employee-first culture amid the changing media industry landscape.

"This agreement is more than just a document; it represents our shared belief and vision to nur-

ture a culture that values our employees, strengthens collaboration with unions and ensures that our organisation continues to evolve.

"Beyond the technical details, this renewal also embodies our shared belief in fairness, transparency and continuous improvement.

"It is a reaffirmation of our commitment to the welfare and professional growth of our journalists," he said in his speech.

NUJ president Low Boon Tat said the CA is yet another milestone to protect the future of journalism.

"This agreement is about ensuring that our journalists — the voices who inform, question and connect our communities — are supported with stability, recognition and the rights they deserve.

"This CA also plays a vital role in allowing us to foster professional growth through seminars, workshops and training sessions to help our members enhance their skills and stay relevant in the rapidly evolving media landscape," he said in his speech.

The signing ceremony was also attended by SMG chief operating officer Datin Paduka Esther Ng, group people senior general manager Terence Raj, managing editor Brian Martin and group people senior manager Mahendraraj Mariappan.