

AFRO e-Newsletter (November 2009)

1 AFRO'S STATEMENT (30 Nov 2009)

Protest against Human Rights Abuse Committed by the Police and the Yau Tsim Mong District Council!

It was reported in the press on 27 Nov 2009 that district councilors and the media, facilitated by the Yau Tsim Mong District Council, were allowed to follow the police to the workplaces of sex workers, and to take videos and photos of those women who were suspected to have breached their conditions of stay. We consider this to be a severe humiliation against those arrested and a violation of their rights!

The police were already heavily criticised in June 2005 for detaining 40 mainland women suspected of "prostitution" in a crowded (14 square metre) "cage" exposed to outdoor heat and without any basic facilities. They have once again attempted to show the public their "accomplishments" by violating the privacy of those arrested and exploiting their dignity and basic human rights. Such abuse compares to the excessive force used by the Bureau of Public Security in Zhengzhou, Henan Province, who are believed to have allowed video and picture taking of sex workers during the large-scale raid carried out on 28 Oct 2009. Several of these photos and a video clip were published widely online and caused a major stir in China.

Such human rights abuse committed by the police and the Yau Tsim Mong District Council is outrageous! We are extremely worried about the deteriorating human rights condition of Hong Kong.

We demand the Police and the Yau Tsim Mong District Council to:

- 1) immediately apologise to those affected and give the public an explanation,**
- 2) promise that such human rights abuse will never be tolerated in the future, and**
- 3) launch an investigation into the case, announce the result to the public and take disciplinary action in case abuse of power was present.**

Action for REACH OUT (AFRO) will:

- 1) launch a petition among sex workers and the public to demand the Police and the**

Yau Tsim Mong District Council to apologise to the affected and give the public an explanation (<http://www.petitiononline.com/afro1234/petition.html>),

- 2) Gather signatures for the campaign at the International Human Rights Day Carnival (2009), which will be held on 6 Dec 2009 at the Pedestrian's Zone in Causeway Bay.
- 3) Organise a rally on 12 Dec 2009 (the weekend before the International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers) in Yau Tsim Mong district, to protest against the exploitation of dignity, privacy and human rights of sex workers and to arouse public concern on the human rights condition of sex workers. (Details to be announced.)

Action for REACH OUT

(Please also read Part 4 AFRO's NEWS READING)

2 WORK REPORT

2.1 Walk for Life – AFRO's Annual Walkathon

Our Annual Walkathon was held on 8 Nov 2009. 26 persons attended the event and the amount raised up to date is HK\$49281. Please be reminded to collect donations from your sponsors and send them back to us by 8 Dec 2009.

Donation receipts will be sent to you by the end of December. Kindly distribute them to the sponsors. Thank you very much!



2.2 Hong Kong Story

Angela, one of our volunteers, has recently been interviewed by RTHK to share her experience of working with AFRO. The programme is called Hong Kong Story and it was shown on ATV (Chi Channel) at 7:00pm on Nov 23 (Mon).

Please click the link below to view the episode (in Chi):

<http://www.rthk.org.hk/rthk/tv/hkstories10/20091123.html>

If you have any feelings or opinions to share after viewing the segment, please don't hesitate to contact us.

3 FUTURE WORK

3.1 Last Call for AFRO's Fund Raising Bazaar

See you on Sunday, 13 Dec 2010 (9 am - 6 pm)! Come shop for Christmas gifts and support AFRO!

3.2 Monthly Tea Gathering with Sex Workers

From Jan 2010, a tea gathering with sex workers will be organized by AFRO on a monthly basis. The topic for the first gathering will be "personal finance management".

4 AFRO's NEWS READING

Photo of naked sex worker attacked by Zhengzhou police sparks anger

<http://china.globaltimes.cn/society/2009-11/482856.html>

5-11-2009

Global Times

Several photos and a video clip that were published widely online by media have sparked criticism of excessive force by police on the Internet recently.

One of the photos (above) shows a plainclothes policeman forcefully pulling the hair of a naked female prostitute during overnight raids on anti-pornography and gambling dens on October 28 in Zhengzhou, capital of Henan Province.

Internet users query whether the police are entitled to treat suspected prostitutes violently and allow photographers to take photos on the scene. Some web users have even begun trying to find out the identity of the bald cop through the so-called "human-flesh search engine", or having someone acquainted with the person disclose his identity online.

The Bureau of Public Security of Zhengzhou would not comment on the matter, but has held a meeting on the issue to decide how to resolve it.

"You cannot insult a suspect's dignity because he or she broke the law," said Wang Lei, a law professor at Peking University. "Law enforcement units should protect suspects' privacy while allowing media reports."

Wu Changzheng, a professor in China University of Political Science and Law, said that the alleged prostitute should file an administrative lawsuit against the police for severe violations of her human rights and ask for an apology or damages.

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