

## **AFRO e-newsletter (March 2011)**

### **1 SEX INDUSTRY BIZ NEWS**

Recently, sex workers who own smartphones, such as iPhones, have been targeted. It has happened more than once that their phones were taken away by their customers when they were inside the bathrooms or when they had their attention diverted. We would like to remind fellow sisters that all personal belongings should not be left unattended. Instead, they should be put in a safe place where a customer cannot easily access.

We also heard from a sex worker that someone had approached her at her workplace and tried to sell her an iPhone 4 at a very cheap price. However, after she purchased it, she found that it was a fake iPhone 4. No matter whether it is at a cheap or not so cheap price, everybody please be reminded not to purchase a product with origin unidentified, as the quality of it is certainly not guaranteed, and we will have no idea whether it is an stolen item or not.

### **2 WORK REPORT**

#### **2.1 The 4th Hong Kong Sex Cultural Festival 2011 (13 March)**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Hong Kong Sex Cultural Festival was held at HKICC Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity on 13 March 2011. Although the venue was less convenient than Chater Road, people who chose to all the way go there to participate were with an intention to get more understandings on different issues of sex culture.

Magic and Megan, the two intern students of AFRO, designed a polling board for the public to participate in the scenario of the sex workers and vote for their response to certain incidents. Throughout the vote, most of the people regarded sex workers as any other people who have the freedom to choose their work. They expresses that they were willing to offer help if crime occurred. However, there were a few people who felt sex workers should have a better choice, such as working as a cleaner, or applying for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance, instead of “selling” their body.

After all, through the exhibition, we are pleased to see that most participants from Hong Kong and even some from China, respect sex workers’ freedom to choose their work.

#### **2.2 March Tea Gathering - Legal Information (28 March)**

For our March tea gathering, we invited Mr. Chan and Miss Kwok from the FONGS to come and explain the relevant legal information and general legal procedures in Hong Kong to the sex workers. What was highlighted include:

- It is advised to remain silent after the arrest and before the court trial.
- In general, a person who committed a minor offence and sentenced for imprisonment for no longer than three months or a fine below HK\$10,000 can claim himself/herself

with no criminal record, in case it is his/her first conviction and he/she does not commit crime within the following three years.

We were glad to see that sex workers who attended this event have gained better understandings on their rights and other legal procedures.



### 3 FUTURE WORK

#### 3.1 April Tea Gathering (27 April)

To commemorate the first anniversary of AFRO Club, and allow the members to gather together and get to know each other, AFRO is going to have a celebration gathering on 27 April. Please feel free to come and have some fun!

### 4 AFRO NEWS READING

Condoms Can Still Be Evidence of Prostitution in NYC

[http://blogs.villagevoice.com/runninscared/2011/03/condoms\\_law\\_nyc.php](http://blogs.villagevoice.com/runninscared/2011/03/condoms_law_nyc.php)

Mar 24, 2011

*Carrying a condom in New York City can be proof you're a prostitute. Yes, now, in 2011. Gothamist reports that along with the City Council push to rename the Queensboro Bridge after Ed Koch, a resolution was also on the agenda yesterday meant to pressure the governor and state legislator to pass a dormant bill, which would undo this archaic rule. As it stands, a rubber can be used "as evidence of prostitution, patronizing a prostitute, promoting prostitution, permitting prostitution, maintaining a premises for prostitution, lewdness or assignation, or maintaining a bawdy house."*

*The current resolution is sponsored by Jessica Lappin, who will likely see the no-brainer through to the Committee on Public Safety, though it's ultimately up to Albany to wipe away this nonsense. The Sex Workers Project has more details, as does the above public service announcement video.*

Comment:

While the Government is distributing free condoms to sex workers, Hong Kong has a similar policy which deters people from having safe sex. We are strongly against this policy. We believe that condom is one of the most effective ways to prevent sexually transmit diseases and HIV, and that everyone should have their rights to protect themselves.

*AFRO's website: [www.afro.org.hk](http://www.afro.org.hk)*

*Email: [afro@afro.org.hk](mailto:afro@afro.org.hk)*

*Tel: (852) 27701065*

*Fax: (852) 27701201*