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62nd Issue

Message from the Editor :

Based on the laws and policies addressing to human trafficking in different countries and areas, the US Department of State releases the Trafficking in Persons Report every year. This year, Hong Kong remains on Tier 2 Watch List. According to the Report, Hong Kong has not yet met the minimum standard in combating trafficking, like, criminalizing all forms of trafficking, insufficient protection of the rights of domestic workers.

At the same time, local groups concerning human trafficking and Legislative Councilors had started to push the Government to set up anti-trafficking law, so as to provide more protection for trafficked victims and to increase the punishment for the syndicates engaging in human trafficking.

It makes sense to protect trafficked victims and to penalize the syndicates behind, especially when we see that many migrant workers are exploited and wages reduced by the employers and agents. It is necessary to foster the protection and increase the punishment. However, when many people and the government in our society are not aware of the issue of human trafficking, wrongly conflate sex workers with trafficked victims, we will often see the situations where the law enforcement groups frequently raid sex workers in the excuse of combat trafficking or cutting off the income source of the syndicates. Sex workers will be exposed to more unnecessary suppression. Compared to legislations, it is more significant to increase the public awareness in human trafficking. If public awareness has not yet developed but legislation comes first, not only the victims of trafficking fail to receive help, more people are implicated and become victims.

Our work and movement:

Hong Kong

“Things to Know Before Working in Hong Kong”

We edited a new occupational health tips leaflet, and distributed to the non-Chinese speaking sex workers for free. The leaflet contains information such as the laws in Hong Kong, the working safety tips for sex workers, and basic legal rights. We initially translated it to 3 languages including English, Russian and Thai. We hope that sex workers who do not understand Chinese can also have some basic understanding in the working environment of Hong Kong and how they can protect them.

Arbitrary arrest

We received a call for help from Thailand recently. A man who spoke Mandarin asked us to help identifying his cousin who lost contact with him. He knew that his cousin went to work in Hong Kong, and he heard that she was arrested by the police and the Immigration Department for working illegally in Hong Kong.

Several days later, the man contacted us on the social media. He said he received his cousin's call,



who told him that she was not charged and bought a ticket to Thailand. According to his cousin, she was taken to the police station but the police released her afterwards. The police told her that they would not arrest her as they had enough number of people. The police even told her to visit Hong Kong again, and there would not be any problem when she entered the territory.

內地女子被帶走。(警方圖片)

(Newspaper clipping: AppleDaily)

From what the police said, it seems that the police do not arrest migrant sex workers for the reason of working in Hong Kong illegally, but because they are required to arrest a certain amount of people. We have always been receiving the complaints from migrant sex workers. They are charged for breaching the condition of stay, but when they are arrested by the police and the Immigration

department, they are often not working at the premises. If it is the reason of fulfilling the standards, it is understandable why arbitrary arrest of migrant sex workers are always resulted: in order to follow the instruction of the police team leader, the frontline police officers have to raid sex workers many times to arrest enough ‘criminals’; even though there is insufficient evidence, they need to catch the innocent ones to make up the numbers. In fact, most migrant sex workers are simply having a rest or having their meals but not working when they are arrested. Does it make sense for someone taking a rest or eating break the Immigration Ordinance in Hong Kong?

油尖「烽火」掃黃 警拘 27 內地女

星島晚報 (圖片: 0712 00:45)



警方拘捕多名內地女子。(警方圖片)

油尖警區特別職務隊聯同入境事務處人員，昨日上午約 9 時展開代號「烽火」(FIRESTORM)「雷霆一八」(THUNDERBOLT 18)的掃黃行動，突擊搜查上海街、西貢街、彌敦道、北海街、寧波街、庇利金街、文明里、佐敦道、加拿分道及金巴利道一帶多個單位、一間賓館及一間酒店，拘捕 27 名年齡介乎 18 至 55 歲持雙程證的內地女子，涉嫌違反逗留條件。所有被捕女子現正被扣留調查，稍後將交入境事務處跟進。

(Newspaper clipping: AppleDaily)

3From the cases below, we can see that 141 sex workers complained to us about arbitrary arrest in the past 4 months. We call for more public concern on the cases of arbitrary arrest.

<u>Police violence/abuse</u>		<u>Client/criminal violence</u>	
Free sexual service	5 cases	Intimidation	1 case
Free massage service before arrested	9 cases	Theft	3 cases
Police break into house without warrant	38 cases	Physical assault	2 cases
Arbitrary arrest	141 cases	Denial of payment	4 cases
Verbal threat and insult	6 cases	Candid camera	4 cases
Indecent assault	4 cases	Rape	2 cases
Obstructing the course of justice	12 cases	Grievous bodily harm	1 case
Force/coax into signing the statement	6 cases	Robbery	6 cases
Neglect of duty	1 case	Condom removed	1 case
Deprived of Basic rights	8 cases		

Stories/experiences of Migrant Chinese sex workers

Shenzhen

'I hate the way how police execute their duties'

Most sex workers feel reluctant to describe how police in Mainland China treat sex workers, but Darling (pseudonym) is an exceptional case. She was very angry when she mentioned her experience.



(image: <https://www.shutterstock.com>)

One day when she was working, police came to her working place. She was taken to the police station. Darling believed that the police did not obtain much evidence, so she thought of denying the accusation. However, other 'sisters' (coworkers) who were arrested pleaded guilty and told the police everything about her, such as her services, the transactions on mobile apps, how many condoms she has. Darling was disappointed by her 'silly sisters'. She admitted guilty reluctantly, paid RMB5000, signed the statement and provided her fingerprints. Suddenly, Darling found something strange on the statement, "Huh? Why is it written here that the police retain the right to report the case to the family?" She immediately asked the police officer next to her if they would send the statement to her home. The police officer told her it depended on the situation. Darling still felt worried. Another plain-cloth police approached and tried to get advantage from her. He told Darling that the statement would not be posted to her family if she agreed to sleep with him. Darling ignored him and left the police station.

Darling also said that the police officers in some areas might use electric stick or electric cable to beat sex workers when they execute their duties. She said, "I hate the way how police execute their duties. If it is not safe, I don't mind earning less. I will not conduct the business. It is important for every "sisters" to remain alert, and guard against harm from others. We can live better only when we are able to protect ourselves.'

Linking with the world

England

Government Survey

In 2016, the Home Affairs Committee of the Parliament published a report on prostitution, which recommended the decriminalization of working on the street and sex workers working in the same premises. This means that it is no longer illegal to solicit for immoral purposes, and sex workers can share a flat with others for the business.

To respond to the report, the Home Office and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales commissioned the University of Bristol Center for Gender and Violence Research to investigate the nature and prevalence of sex work in England and Wales.

Since the University of Bristol Center for Gender and Violence Research supported the criminalization of clients, and the person-in-charge of the research also supports criminalizing clients, in order to provide more different viewpoints for the Parliament, ECP (English Collective of Prostitutes) urged their allies in different areas to fill in the survey designed by the University of Bristol for Gender and Violence Research, to give our own experiences and findings.

Without any doubt, we responded to ECP's appeal. We provided the situation of sex workers facing violence in Hong Kong and the findings of the research on the working situation of Mainland sex workers in the survey. We hope to let the UK Parliament understand that no matter it is the criminalization of clients, or the prohibition of online advertisements, or the criminalization of sex work, sex workers will only face more social isolation and dangers.



What is happening in sex workers community?

UK

Queen's Birthday Honours

Queen's Birthday Honours is awarded to those who have distinguished contribution to the United Kingdoms and the member states of the Commonwealth of Nations. The Queen's Birthday Honours for the United Kingdom were announced on June 9, and the one for New Zealand was announced on June 4. The honours for Australia were announced on June 11. This year, we found Catherine Healy and Julie Bates in the Birthday Honours List. Catherine was made a Dame whereas Julie was awarded the Order of Australia.

Catherine and Julie were awarded for their efforts in fighting for the rights of sex workers.

When Catherine first entered the sex industry, she experienced much unfair treatment from the society and the police. Finally in 1986, as one of the founders, she formed the New Zealand Prostitutes Collective (NZPC). Catherine has been working for the rights of sex workers for more than 30 years. She also succeeded to push for the decriminalization of sex work in New Zealand in 2003, which reduced the discrimination faced by sex workers and gained fairer treatment for sex workers from the public. Recently, NZPC demanded for an amendment to the Prostitution Reform Act of 2003 so as to include migrant sex workers in the Act, provided them with same legal protection as the locals.



(image: <http://www.theweek.co.uk>)

Similarly, Julie has been participating in sex workers right movement for 35 years. She helped setting up the Australian Prostitutes Collective, which later became the Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP). She also contributed much to the decriminalization of sex work in New South Wales in 1995. Julie realizes that there are still bad laws regulating sex work outside New South Wales, and her next goal is to win anti-discrimination protection.



(Image: <https://www.themorningbulletin.com.au>)

List of Donors (5/2018 – 8/2018)

May	Anonymities	20,100		譚若梅	1,000
June	Anonymities	11,300			
July	Anonymities	16,000		Esther Hui	2,800
August	Anonymities	6,400			

We apologize for any omissions!!

Application for Membership

Name: _____ Age: _____

Occupation: _____ Gender: _____

Telephone: (H) _____ (O): _____

e-mail: _____

Address: _____

I am willing to join the following activities:

Publication Data Collection Research Others

I would like to donate monthly:

\$100 \$200 \$300 \$500
\$1,000 or once

My donation is paid by:

Cheque: (cheque number) _____

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Zi Teng

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