

香港報販協會

Hong Kong Newspaper Hawker Association

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Members of the Legislative Council, Secretaries of all Government Departments and Ladies & Gentlemen, our Association (The HK Newspaper Hawker Association) is here to represent more than 30,000 of our fellow members to attend this special meeting which agenda is about the Control of Obscene and Indecent Articles Ordinance.

We assume the responsibility of news transmission in this I-T generation. While there must be a good circulation of newspapers, it is more important that people should never be deprived of their rights and opportunities to receive news and information. Why does the government revive the Obscene and Indecent Articles Ordinance proposed since 1995 without any amendments made, particularly when there is no foundation at all.

People in our industry have to deal with thousands and thousands of customers everyday. The problem is if the “Categorization System” is to be implemented, how could we possibly know that particular customer is over the legal age of maturity? Bearing in mind that people nowadays do have substantial rights of privacy, if we want to inspect the ID card of any customer who looks like under age, is the government prepared to confer us the necessary authority?

On the other hand, are there sufficient safeguards and statutory defences stipulated specifically for the protection of our fellow members in case of unintentional violation of the law?

Having the existing supervisory system over the publication of newspapers in the market, if this additional, if not redundant, Ordinance is to be inserted to our laws, are there clearly sufficient legal protections for our fellow members in the industry?

Without resolving all the above problems, the passing of the Control of Obscene and Indecent Articles Ordinance would be in every aspect unfair to all newspaper hawkers and people in our industry.