

City's largest prostitution website 'paralysed' say police

HONG KONG: Hong Kong authorities have shut down the city's largest prostitution website and dozens of people including sex workers have been arrested, officials said on Thursday, 5 December. However, a check of the website shows it is still running.



Hong Kong's largest prostitution website - supposedly closed down by police - is still running.
Image: berc [Fotolia](#)

The website directory offered a comprehensive guide to the city's sex trade and solicited prostitutes who often came from outside Hong Kong.

Police said they had broken up a criminal syndicate believed to have controlled the website.

"When they knew there were sex workers coming to Hong Kong, the syndicate would arrange a make-up service and photographers," police officer Au Chin-chau told a press conference.

"We discovered the syndicate provided a comprehensive service to sex workers and organised prostitution groups," he said.

The website, [Sex141](#), which also has foreign editions, displayed pictures and videos to solicit clients and provided detailed information such as prices charged and the locations of brothels.

Prostitution is legal

Prostitution is legal in the southern Chinese semi-autonomous city, but soliciting or living off the earnings of prostitutes are criminal offences.

During a three-day crackdown that started on Tuesday, 3 December, and involved the city's anti-triad (organised crime gangs) unit, various locations were raided, including homes and offices.

So far 114 people have been arrested, including 78 prostitutes aged between 17 and 31.

Police said the prostitutes, mainly from mainland China, had been arrested for charges such as overstaying or breaching the conditions of their visitor visa.

"About HK\$15m worth of assets related to the group, including HK\$3.2m in cash, had been frozen," Au said.

He said the operators of the website would be charged with money-laundering and living off earnings of prostitutes.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of sex workers ply their trade in one-room brothels, hotel rooms, saunas and bars throughout the city of seven million people.

Some operate independently but many, especially those from mainland China, are controlled by the city's notorious triads.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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