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Eviction writ catches doctors by surprise

Hospital questions ethics of church

Adrian Wan

A hospital chief has questioned the ethics of the Hong Kong Anglican Church after it asked a court to force the non-profit operation out of premises in Central.

The church, also known as the Sheng Kung Hui, filed a writ against the Hong Kong Central Hospital on Thursday, claiming possession of the property on Lower Albert Road and damages for breach of its tenancy agreement.

Speaking publicly for the first time about the dispute yesterday, the hospital's medical superintendent, Dr Cheng Chun-ho, said he knew its tenancy had expired at the beginning of last month. The hospital was negotiating with the government over a new site, he said, though moving a hospital at a time when patient care and medical staff were stretched to the limit in the city might not be the best way forward right now.

"It is an ethical issue whether a church wants to pursue their new developments at the expense of a hospital, its patients and staff," Cheng said.

The private hospital, housed in a single building, operates an endoscopy centre, a special care unit with four beds and four operating rooms.

In February 2009, the church announced plans to spend HK\$800 million converting four historic buildings on the Central site into a museum and gallery and to open the long-closed site to the public. The hospital was told it would have to make way for the plan. At the time, the hospital had just spent about HK\$20 million on renovations because it expected its lease to be extended, as it had been for more than 50 years.



Several months later, the hospital told the government it wanted to rent the largely empty Tsan Yuk Hospital in Hospital Road, Sai Ying Pun. However, Cheng said no decision had been reached on this.

"The government has been very positive about this over the years. They were willing to explore the possibility," he said. "But I think they may have concerns about whether renting the place to us directly would come across as unfair to others who may also want to run a hospital."

Cheng called on the church to give the hospital more time, at least until the government came to a decision on whether it could move to the Sai Ying Pun premises.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau said the government had no arrangement yet for the hospital's relocation. The church could not be reached for comment.

If the government rejected its proposal, the hospital would have to close and lay off 130 staff, Cheng said.

"We aren't trying to use the space without paying," he said. "What we want is to serve the community, especially given the city's pressing need for more medical resources. Although we're a small hospital, I think we're still important and we'd love to go on running."

The church's provincial secretary general, Peter Douglas Koon, said on Thursday the lawsuit was "standard procedure" and that the church was on good terms with the hospital.

Cheng said: "The church has talked with us from time to time and kindly told us of their plans. But on Thursday we got the writ without having much prior knowledge."

The hospital has about a month to respond to the writ. "We're going to have a meeting with our legal consultants this week and come up with a way to respond," Cheng said.

The writ says the parties signed a tenancy agreement in June 2009 for a monthly rent of HK\$262,900. The hospital asked for it to be reduced to HK\$87,633 in March last year, and the church agreed. That same month the church gave the hospital three months' notice to vacate its premises, the writ says. By early last month three more notices had been served but the hospital had failed to vacate the building.



Saintly image. Workers take down a giant poster of Pope John Paul II to readjust it as people crowd St Peter's Square in the Vatican ahead of the late pontiff's beatification. Pope Benedict is to beatify his predecessor in the square today.

Photo: AP

Full report Page 7

Top ICAC investigator released on bail

Niall Fraser

Top ICAC investigator Raymond Yuen - arrested last week by his own colleagues on suspicion of corruption-related wrongdoing - has been released on bail as an investigation into his conduct gathers pace.

Officers from the Independent Commission Against Corruption's internal affairs unit, I group, were focusing on Yuen's "personal actions" and no other members of the organisation were being looked at



in connection with the inquiry, a person close to the investigation said yesterday.

Yuen (pictured), who is in his 40s, was the youngest officer to be promoted to the rank of principal investigator in the history of the ICAC and is considered a rising star in the organisation. He was arrested on Wednesday and suspended from duty.

"The investigation is purely focused on the officer concerned,"

the source said. "No other ICAC staff are involved. They are looking at allegations about the officer's personal actions and his suspected abuse of the ICAC's code of conduct."

A spokesman for the commission confirmed yesterday that Yuen had been released on bail.

The ICAC did not name Yuen when it announced the arrest of a principal investigator on Friday, but separate sources confirmed to the *Sunday Morning Post* that he was the officer involved.

He was arrested "on suspicion of breaching the law", according to a statement from the commission, which did not give any further details.

However, people familiar with the investigation said the breach referred to in the statement involved allegations of corruption.

Under the law, if an allegation of corruption is made against any one of its staff the commission is duty bound to investigate.

Ex-colleagues expressed shock at Yuen's arrest, saying it would deliver

a body blow to the organisation at a time when it was in enough trouble.

In November, police arrested three commission officers on suspicion of perverting the course of justice during an unprecedented raid on the ICAC headquarters in North Point.

The three investigators are accused of coaching witnesses.

One former colleague said yesterday: "This situation poses so many questions and it can't be good for the ICAC."

Casinos get a whiff of dollars and scents

Lana Lam

Forget TV ads and giant billboards, the next time you feel an urge to shop or gamble, your nose may be controlling your wallet and there's nothing you can do about it.

The use of perfumes to attract and keep customers in a shop or on the gaming floor is not new to Europe or the US, but in Hong Kong and Macau the phenomenon is in its infancy.

While patronage at Macau casinos needs little encouragement, the use of perfumes inside the premises poses questions about the power and ethics of scent marketing.

Olfactory stimuli, or scents, are unlikely to affect a pathological gambler so it's the occasional casino visitor that is most at risk, says Sudhir

Kale, who has researched the impact of smells on consumer behaviour and is a marketing consultant for major Macau casinos including City of Dreams and Star World.

"The interesting thing is that our sense of smell is the only one that circumvents our rational sense of thinking and connects directly to the emotions. The olfactory lobes connect directly to the limbic system in the brain and that's where all our moods and emotions come from."

An experiment in Copenhagen 15 years ago shed light on the link between perfumes and punting.

"It found that with one particular perfume, people stayed about 30 per cent longer in the slot machines area," Kale said.

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Inside News

National

Human rights lawyer taken away
Li Fangping (李方平), the defence lawyer for tainted-milk activist Zhao Lianhai (趙連海), is missing. Li was taken away by "state security officers" in Beijing on Friday, his wife says. His disappearance follows the release of two other rights lawyers in recent days. **Full report Page 5**

Sport

All hopes on the Dragon
Derby winner Ambitious Dragon hogs the spotlight ahead of today's HK\$14 million QE II Cup. Champion jockey Douglas Whyte hopes he has the horse to break a 13-year barren spell. **Full reports Sport Page 1 and Racing**

Hong Kong

Checks on sex offenders in schools up in air
The Education Bureau cannot commit to how, or when, it will begin using a new scheme that lets it check teaching applicants for any sex conviction. The bureau has no records on the number of convicted sex offenders working in schools or the number of teachers deregistered because of an accusation or conviction. **Full report Page 2**

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A nose for business, or just fragrant exploitation?

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Dr Alan Hirsch, neurological director of the US-based Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Foundation, oversaw one of the world's first experiments with smells in a casino at the Las Vegas Hilton in 1994.

He documented the findings in a 1995 paper that found an average 45 per cent revenue increase from slot machines in areas exposed to a pleasant aroma, with one machine showing an 89 per cent increase.

The smell emitted was at a "supra threshold" – meaning it was noticeable. When the dose was increased, the revenue followed suit.

Since the 1994 experiment, Hirsch has conducted dozens more in Las Vegas, Atlantic City and Indian reservations with similar results. The researchers insisted that pleasant smells were not typically used to attract new gamblers, but to encourage people to linger longer.

"Scents enhance risk-taking behaviour, and make people feel better about themselves and feel more lucky. [But] the odours had no effect on pathological gamblers because they gambled it all away anyhow."

Certain smells also evoke a sense of nostalgia, which can induce a sense of security and risk-taking.

"It works in the area of the brain called the amygdala that covers fear, aggression and risk-taking... so it can reduce a fear of loss."

Cultural references play an important factor in smells so importing aromas from the US to Macau was not a smart move.

"The odours that work for us in Las Vegas, Atlantic City and Indian reservations may not work in China because of different cultural perspectives of smell. We know the odours that the Japanese prefer are very different to those Americans prefer."

Hirsch said scent marketing in general was becoming more common at US casinos.

"The big change that we've seen over the last 20 years is a major change towards vanilla," he said, because it was a smell prevalent in the memories of many Mexican Americans, a group that has grown steadily in the US.

"In Mexico, vanilla is used so much more than chocolate [both are native to Mexico] because the weather is warmer in Mexico and vanilla doesn't melt."

Success in the air It's said scents can alter one's mood – and aversion to risk

The average increase in slot machine revenue when a perfume was used in the Las Vegas Hilton in 1994

45%

Chinese casinos in the future might smell like jasmine tea or cooked rice, Hirsch said.

"We anticipate that there would be something culturally specific that may remind people of their childhood or induce a feeling of safety and security that would be more appropriate for Macau than Las Vegas."

On the ethics of using perfumes in casinos, Hirsch said it was only a problem if the perfumes were used subliminally.

"The reality is the casinos are a form of entertainment, not a place to make money," he said. "No one can force you to do something you don't want to do."

David Schwartz, director of the Centre for Gaming Research at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, said

The odours that work in Las Vegas may not work in China because of cultural perspectives of smell

Dr Alan Hirsch, the Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Foundation



Perfumes in casinos can do more than get rid of tobacco smells.

it was "impossible to quantify" the impact of perfumes on gambling.

"Last year, the Palms casino in Las Vegas introduced a scent that actually drove players away; after a month, they had to stop using it," Schwartz said.

"I've personally known many people who are repulsed by the scent at the Venetian, which is extremely strong. On the other hand, places with pleasant scents are more amenable to staying and playing. I've seen some retail studies referenced, but never on actual game play."

In Macau, most of the major casinos confirmed the use of perfumes throughout their properties, with some using custom-made scents.

A spokeswoman for Wynn Resorts said: "Wynn Macau has a unique scent, China Rain, which is injected into the property's air conditioning system. It was chosen to refresh the senses as soon as guests enter the property, and has been used since our opening in 2006. It is the same scent as used at Wynn Las Vegas and guest feedback is consistently positive."

The MGM in Macau had used natural floral scents for about three years, a spokeswoman for the casino said. Aromas that filled the gaming floors and the Grande Praca, a large central plaza, were mild, light and changed regularly.

"We change the essence according to seasonal change or festival or events happening at the Grande Praca to match with the themes," she said. "In the casino, we adopt also natural floral essences with a mild and light essence."

She said MGM's use of perfumes was to "even out the polluted air from smoking, to help turn the atmosphere into a comfy environment and also one that's healthy for both guests and our employees". Any links between perfumes and gambling revenue were "two different issues and sort of irrelevant".

MGM properties in Las Vegas had different systems "in terms of using floral essences" and there had been no complaints about the perfumes, she said.

A Melco spokesman said its City of Dreams and Altira Macau properties were "continually looking for a comprehensive approach... including the use of scent delivery systems that can bring new and unique gaming experiences to visitors to Macau".



Headmistress Coco Wong has replaced the smell of bleach with the scent of green apples at her Mong Kok kindergarten. Photo: David Wong

Perfumes make cents for HK companies

Next time you walk into the Mira hotel in Tsim Sha Tsui, prepare to be assaulted – through your nose.

The lobby is filled with the smell of baby powder and fresh floral essences but it's not by accident – the hotel has enlisted the help of Sky Work Design, a new scent-marketing company that opened in Hong Kong in February.

Marketing director Daniel Fong is hoping to bring this trend of aromatic branding to the city, and while he is hoping to move into the casino market, before that he's got his eyes and nose set on local businesses.

Coco Wong, headmistress of the Little Academy kindergarten in Mong Kok, is one such client. She started

using a green apple scent at the school a few months ago after the school switched to chemical-free cleaning products and some parents were questioning the cleanliness of the school because it no longer smelt of bleach.

"We think it gives that refreshing smell and it's very easy to recognise. It also projects a healthy image because as a school we want our students to be healthy," Wong said.

"So far, we haven't had any negative comments from parents, students or staff. Some people also say it's nice for the staff to have their work environment slightly scented."

Kenneth Chan is another convert to

the green apple scent. He sells Apple computer-related products and used the scent at his booth at a recent electronics trade fair in Wan Chai.

"Many people said they were very surprised and came over to ask why we had the apple smell, so it did attract more customers," he said.

Fong said that before a client chose a scent to use in their branding campaign, staff would discuss the company's objective.

A pleasant smell in a retail setting can create a nicer shopping experience.

"If you are relaxed, you will stay longer in the shop and decide to buy something and feel good about it," he said.

"Scent marketing has been popular in Europe, the US and Japan for 15 years. Now seems like a good time to bring it to Hong Kong."

Fong said local clients included a chiropractor and dentist, and that another major city hotel was trying out one of his scents. The company hoped to expand into the mainland, Korea, Malaysia and Indonesia, but Hong Kong was the focus for now, Fong said.

All the scents are approved by the International Fragrance Association and it costs HK\$3,000 to HK\$5,000 a month for the perfumes and a machine that dispenses the aromas.

Lana Lam

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South China Morning Post
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Wan Chai landmark closes after landlord pulls lease

John Carney

One of Wan Chai's landmark watering holes has closed its doors for the first – and last – time. The Bridge in Lockhart Road, which was open around the clock, closed last week after a dispute between the landlord and the bar's owners.

Police said the landlord had had enough of some of the more "colourful" behaviour alleged to have gone on in the early hours of the morning.

"We carried out a serious drugs case there – an undercover officer was sold cocaine," a police source said. "When this happens on the premises we put a notice on the landlord, so if another incident happens within the next 12 months, the magistrate will close the premises."

"It will also mean that you'll not be able to use the premises for the next six months, and we would actually close it and seal it off. The landlord was worried that his premises was being used for purposes he wasn't happy with and there was a dispute with the people leasing it."

Once a drugs case occurs, a magistrate can issue an order to the landlord, which serves as an official warning to the landlord that under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, if a drug offence happens again the place can be closed down.

"The landlord just said enough is enough, and did not want to continue the lease," the police source said.

Recently the bar's licensing conditions had also changed from being open 24 hours to serving alcohol on the premises until 4am. An insider with knowledge of the situation said it was this combination of things that forced the management to close the bar, but that they were leaving with a big smile on their face.

"They have made plenty of money from the Bridge and could have walked away sooner if they wanted to," the insider said. "The lease was not up until January and they were not losing any revenue. They still run

The landlord just said enough is enough, and did not want to continue the lease

A police source, on the closing of the Bridge in Wan Chai



Bar 109, which is just two doors down from the Bridge and is a popular bar as well. It's not like they'll be that worried about what happened."

For nearly eight years the Bridge has long been a haven for all things that go bump in the night. Depending on what ungodly hour revellers went there, they could be greeted with the thumping sounds of techno music or a scene from Michael Jackson's *Thriller* video – sometimes both. Either way, they'd probably be too full of beer to care.

However, things took a turn for the worse as alleged tales of drug use and prostitution became known. In February the *Post* was contacted by four drinkers who said they had been drugged and robbed while in Wan Chai; each one said they had visited the Bridge in the early hours before later blacking out.

The Bridge was a huge fixture of Wan Chai nightlife and its demise will be mourned by many. Its closure follows that of other well-known watering holes in the area, such as the Laguna Music Club and Bar on Fenwick Street, which closed in September.

That place, where for 10 years some of the city's domestic helpers let their hair down on a Sunday afternoon, was bought by the group that owned the nearby Escape (formerly Fenwick's) and Traffic nightclubs. It is understood the deal involved between HK\$50 million and HK\$60 million.

Now TV tipped to show rugby cup

John Carney

PCCW's Now TV has emerged as the clear frontrunner to broadcast this year's Rugby Union World Cup in Hong Kong.

IMG, the tournament's official broadcasting rights company, confirmed to the *Sunday Morning Post* that PCCW had gained the rights to televise the competition, but then retracted the statement saying a decision was still pending.

Despite this U-turn, the Setanta Sports Channel is confident PCCW will obtain the broadcasting rights since it will not show the World Cup in Hong Kong itself. Setanta, a 24/7 international rugby channel, was launched on January 26 on Now TV for a monthly fee of HK\$128.

"To our knowledge, PCCW has obtained the rights for the World

Cup, and it has just to be confirmed," a spokesman for Setanta Sports Channel said. "I would be gobsmacked if the deal hasn't already been done – it's just that it hasn't been announced yet."

"It would have been agreed upon at an early stage, because everybody else's broadcast rights have been and they are all promoting the event on their channels."

"The very fact that it's not being shown in Hong Kong by the likes of ESPN Star Sports, which is showing it in the rest of Asia, would clearly indicate that somebody has definitely already secured the broadcasting rights."

ESPN Star Sports has recently been promoting the fact it will be broadcasting the showpiece event in Macau and on the mainland, but it will not screen it in Hong Kong.

"It may well be simply the case that PCCW has not yet decided exactly how much it is going to charge for showing it and on which of its channels it will broadcast it," the Setanta spokesman said.

PCCW said it would not comment because discussions about the rights were continuing.

The Setanta channel has, for the first time, brought Hong Kong viewers a comprehensive line-up of rugby from both the northern and southern hemispheres, including live coverage of the RBS Six Nations and the Super Rugby, and seemed the most obvious channel to show the World Cup.

"The deal for the World Cup would have been done a long time ago, most likely before we would have been 100 per cent certain to even be in the market for it in Asia," the Setanta spokesman said.