

THE STATUTES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

NEWSPAPER AND PRINTING PRESSES ACT (CHAPTER 206)

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CHAPTER 206

Newspaper and Printing Presses Act

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An Act for the licensing of newspaper companies and for matters connected therewith.

[1st January 1975]

PART I

PRELIMINARY

Short title

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1. This Act may be cited as the Newspaper and Printing Presses Act.

Interpretation

- 2.—(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires
 - "chief editor" includes the executive editor, the managing editor and any other person who controls the policy of a newspaper;
 - "company" means a company incorporated or registered under the Companies Act (Cap. 50) or under any corresponding previous written law;
 - "declared foreign newspaper" means any newspaper published outside Singapore which has been declared by the Minister under section 24(1) to be engaging in the domestic politics of Singapore;
 - "document" means any printed newspaper or sheet of paper or other material and any printed pamphlet, leaflet, map, chart and plan, and includes any documents bound together;
 - "journalist" includes an editor, a sub-editor, an editorial writer, a reporter and any other person whose business it is to edit or write for a newspaper;
 - "newspaper" means any publication containing news, intelligence, reports of occurrences, or any remarks, observations or comments, in relation to such news, intelligence, reports of occurrences, or to any other matter of public interest, printed in any language and published for sale or free distribution at regular intervals or otherwise, but

- does not include any publication published by or for the Government:
- "newspaper company" means a public company limited by shares which has complied with section 10;
- "newspaper register" means the books which are to be kept by the Registrar under section 30;
- "officer of customs" has the same meaning as in the Customs Act (Cap. 70);

[4/2003 wef 01/04/2003]

- "place", in the phrases "place of business" and "place of residence", means the street, square or other place and the number or other designation of the house;
- "proprietor" includes the chief executive officer of a newspaper company;
- "Registrar" means the Registrar of Newspapers and includes any Deputy or Assistant Registrar of Newspapers appointed by the Minister under section 29:
- "senior officer of customs" has the same meaning as in the Customs Act.

[4/2003 wef 01/04/2003]

[22/86]

(2) For the purposes of this Act, expressions referring to printing shall be construed as including writing, lithography, photography and other modes of representing or reproducing words or objects in a visible form.

PART II

PRINTING PRESSES

Licence to use printing press

3.—(1) The Minister may in his discretion grant to any person in Singapore a licence to keep and use a press for the printing of documents and may at any time withdraw the licence either permanently or for such period as he thinks fit.

- (2) The licence shall be in the prescribed form.
- (3) Any person to whom a licence is refused or whose licence is withdrawn may appeal to the President whose decision shall be final.
- (4) No person shall keep for use or use any printing press without a licence.
- (5) For the purposes of this section, the occupier of any premises on which any printing press is found shall be deemed to have kept it for use until he proves the contrary.
- (6) Every licence granted under subsection (1) shall ordinarily be for one year from the date of its issue.
- (7) The withdrawal of any licence shall be deemed to be sufficiently communicated to the licensee if a notice of withdrawal is personally served on the person in charge of the printing press.

Register of printing presses

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- **4.** The Registrar shall keep a register of printing presses, in which he shall enter such particulars as may be prescribed relating to
 - (a) persons licensed under section 3 and to printing presses; or
 - (b) any document or class of documents exempted under section 44 from all or any of the provisions of this Act.

Documents

Printed document to bear name of printer and publisher

- **5.**—(1) Every document printed within Singapore shall have printed legibly on its first or last printed leaf the name of its printer and publisher.
- (2) No person shall print, publish, distribute or assist in distributing any document which does not comply with the requirements of this section.

Printer to keep copy of document and to produce it to an authorised person

6. Every person who prints any document shall, during 6 months from the date of the printing thereof —

- (a) keep one copy on which he shall write or print the name and place of residence of the person by whom he is employed to print it; and
- (b) produce the document to any person authorised by the Minister in that behalf if required to do so.

PART III

NEWSPAPER COMPANIES

Application and interpretation of this Part

7.—(1) This Part shall apply to any newspaper published at intervals not exceeding one week unless such newspaper has been exempted from the provisions of this Part.

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(2) Sections 11 to 18 shall apply to, and in relation to, all individuals whether resident in Singapore or not and whether citizens of Singapore or not, and to all bodies corporate or unincorporate, whether incorporated or carrying on business in Singapore or not.

- (3) In sections 11 to 18, unless the context otherwise requires
 - "arrangement" includes any formal or informal scheme, arrangement or understanding, and any trust whether express or implied;
 - "share", in relation to a newspaper company, means an ordinary share of the newspaper company;
 - "substantial shareholder" has the same meaning as in section 81 of the Companies Act (Cap. 50);
 - "voting share" has the same meaning as in section 4(1) of the Companies Act.

Г10 [20/2002]

Publisher of newspaper to be newspaper company unless exempted from this Part

- **8.**—(1) No newspaper to which this Part applies shall be published in Singapore except by a newspaper company unless the newspaper has been exempted from the provisions of this Part.
- (2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years or to both.

[20/2002]

(3) For the purposes of subsection (1), a newspaper shall be deemed to be published outside Singapore if its contents and editorial policy are determined outside Singapore and its sales or distribution are not intended primarily for Singapore.

[7 [22/86]

Memorandum and articles to be approved

- **9.**—(1) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Companies Act (Cap. 50), no memorandum or articles of association of a proposed newspaper company shall be presented for registration unless there is lodged with them the written approval of the Registrar.
- (2) The memorandum and articles of association of a newspaper company shall not be altered without the written approval of the Registrar.

[8]

Special features of newspaper company

- **10.**—(1) Subject to subsection (15), in every newspaper company
 - (a) all the directors shall be citizens of Singapore;
 - (b) there shall be 2 classes of shares, namely, management shares and ordinary shares; and

- (c) no management shares shall be issued or transferred except to citizens of Singapore or corporations who or which have been granted the written approval of the Minister.
- (2) No newspaper company shall refuse to issue or to accept the transfer of management shares to any person who has been granted the written approval of the Minister to purchase or hold the shares except for reasons to be given in writing acceptable to the Minister.
- (3) An appeal against any decision of the Minister under subsection (2) shall lie to the President whose decision shall be final.
- (4) As soon as practicable after 1st January 1975, every newspaper company shall issue such number of management shares as is equal to 1% or more of its issued and paid-up capital; and where any subsequent issue of shares is made by the newspaper company, 1% of every such issue shall consist of management shares.
- (5) Management shares issued under subsection (4) shall be for cash and in accordance with the terms specified in this section and —
 - (a) in the case of a newspaper company the shares of which are quoted on a stock exchange in Singapore or elsewhere, at a price that is equivalent to the market price of the ordinary shares prevailing at the date of the issue;
 - (b) in the case of a newspaper company the shares of which are not quoted on a stock exchange in Singapore or elsewhere, at such fair and reasonable value as may be determined by the Minister.
- (6) Upon the determination by the Minister under subsection (5)(b)of a fair and reasonable value to be placed upon management shares, a newspaper company shall be bound to issue the management shares as soon as practicable at that determined value.
- (7) No person shall continue to hold management shares of a newspaper company if the approval of the Minister given under subsection (1)(c) or (15) has been revoked, and upon such revocation —
 - (a) the person shall cease to have any voting rights under those management shares; and

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- (b) the newspaper company shall, as soon as practicable, arrange for the person to be issued with one ordinary share in exchange for each management share held by him.
- (8) The directors of a newspaper company shall, on the requisition of the holders of not less than one-quarter of its issued management shares, immediately proceed to convene an extraordinary general meeting of the company to be held as soon as practicable but in any case not later than 2 months after the receipt by the company of the requisition.
- (9) Section 210 of the Companies Act (Cap. 50) (other than subsection (1) thereof) shall have effect in relation to the requisition under subsection (8).
- (10) The holders of both the management and the ordinary shares of a newspaper company shall rank pari passu in respect of all dividends declared by the company and in respect of all bonus and rights issues made by the company as well as in the right to return of capital and to participation in all surplus assets of the company in liquidation.
- (11) The holder of management shares shall be entitled either on a poll or by a show of hands to 200 votes for each management share held by him upon any resolution relating to the appointment or dismissal of a director or any member of the staff of a newspaper company but shall in all other respects have the same voting rights as the holder of ordinary shares.
- (12) Voting on the appointment or dismissal of a director shall be by means of a poll and not by a show of hands.
- (13) The holder of management shares shall not deal in or in any way mortgage the shares except with the approval of the Minister.
 - (14) Management shares shall not
 - (a) be offered, before issue, to ordinary shareholders; or
 - (b) be quoted or dealt in on a stock exchange in Singapore or elsewhere.

[21/2005 wef 30/01/2006]

(15) The Minister may in writing grant his approval for the purchase or acquisition or the holding of management shares by any person

who is not a citizen of Singapore and for the appointment of any such person as a director of a newspaper company.

- (16) This section shall have effect notwithstanding the provisions of any other written law or anything contained in the memorandum or articles of association of a newspaper company.
- (17) In this section, "surplus assets" means all the assets of a newspaper company remaining after the liabilities of the company have been discharged and after the costs of the winding up have been paid or provided for, but before any capital has been paid to the ordinary shareholders or any profits distributed to them.

[9

Control of substantial shareholdings in newspaper companies

11.—(1) No person shall, on or after 2nd September 2002*, become a substantial shareholder of a newspaper company without first obtaining the approval of the Minister.

[20/2002]

(2) Subject to section 13(4), no person who, immediately before 2nd September 2002, is a substantial shareholder of a newspaper company shall continue to be a substantial shareholder unless he has, within 6 months after that date or such longer period as the Minister may allow, applied to the Minister for approval to continue to be such a shareholder.

[20/2002]

(3) No person shall, on or after 2nd September 2002, enter into any agreement or arrangement, whether oral or in writing and whether express or implied, to act together with any other person with respect to the acquisition, holding or disposal of, or the exercise of rights in relation to, their interests in voting shares of an aggregate of more than 5% of the total votes attached to all voting shares in a newspaper company without first obtaining the approval of the Minister.

[20/2002]

[21/2005 wef 30/01/2006]

(4) Subject to section 13(4), no person who, at any time before 2nd September 2002, has entered into any agreement or arrangement referred to in subsection (3) shall continue to be a party to such an

^{*}Date of commencement of the Newspaper and Printing Presses (Amendment) Act 2002 (Act 20 of 2002).

agreement or arrangement unless he has, within 6 months after that date or such longer period as the Minister may allow, applied to the Minister for approval to continue to be a party to such an agreement or arrangement.

[20/2002]

- (5) For the purposes of this section, a person has an interest in any share if
 - (a) he is deemed to have an interest in that share under section 7 of the Companies Act (Cap. 50); or
 - (b) he otherwise has a legal or an equitable interest in that share except for such interest as is to be disregarded under section 7 of the Companies Act.

[10A]

Control of shareholdings and voting power in newspaper companies

- **12.**—(1) No person shall, on or after 2nd September 2002, become
 - (a) a 12% controller; or
 - (b) an indirect controller,

of a newspaper company without first obtaining the approval of the Minister.

[20/2002]

- (2) Subject to section 13(4), no person who, immediately before 2nd September 2002, is
 - (a) a 12% controller; or
 - (b) an indirect controller,

of a newspaper company shall continue to be such a controller unless he has, within 6 months after that date or such longer period as the Minister may allow, applied to the Minister for approval to continue to be such a controller.

[20/2002]

(3) In subsections (1)(a) and (2)(a), "12% controller" means a person who alone or together with his associates —

- (a) holds not less than 12% of the shares in the newspaper company; or
- (b) is in a position to control voting power of not less than 12% in the newspaper company.

[20/2002]

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- (4) For the purposes of subsection (3)
 - (a) a person holds a share if
 - (i) he is deemed to have an interest in that share under section 7(6) to (10) of the Companies Act (Cap. 50); or
 - (ii) he otherwise has a legal or an equitable interest in that share except for such interest as is to be disregarded under section 7(6) to (10) of the Companies Act;
 - (b) a reference to the control of a percentage of the voting power in a newspaper company is a reference to the control, whether direct or indirect, of that percentage of the total number of votes that might be cast in a general meeting of the newspaper company; and
 - (c) a person, A, is an associate of another person, B, if
 - (i) A is the spouse or a parent, step-parent or remoter lineal ancestor, or a son, step-son, daughter, stepdaughter or remoter issue, or a brother or sister, of B;
 - (ii) A is a corporation whose directors are accustomed or under an obligation, whether formal or informal, to act in accordance with the directions, instructions or wishes of B, or where B is a corporation, of the directors of B:
 - (iii) B is a corporation whose directors are accustomed or under an obligation, whether formal or informal, to act in accordance with the directions, instructions or wishes of A, or where A is a corporation, of the directors of A:
 - (iv) A is a person who is accustomed or under an obligation, whether formal or informal, to act in

- accordance with the directions, instructions or wishes of *B*;
- (v) B is a person who is accustomed or under an obligation, whether formal or informal, to act in accordance with the directions, instructions or wishes of A;
- (vi) A is a related corporation of B;
- (vii) A is a corporation in which B, alone or together with other associates of B as described in sub-paragraphs (ii) to (vi), is in a position to control not less than 20% of the voting power in A;
- (viii) *B* is a corporation in which *A*, alone or together with other associates of *A* as described in sub-paragraphs (ii) to (vi), is in a position to control not less than 20% of the voting power in *B*; or
 - (ix) A is a person with whom B has an agreement or arrangement, whether oral or in writing and whether express or implied, to act together with respect to the acquisition, holding or disposal of shares or other interests in, or with respect to the exercise of their voting power in relation to, the newspaper company.
- (5) In subsections (1)(b) and (2)(b), "indirect controller" means any person, whether acting alone or together with any other person and whether with or without holding shares or controlling voting power in a newspaper company
 - (a) in accordance with whose directions, instructions or wishes the directors of the newspaper company are accustomed or under an obligation, whether formal or informal, to act; or
 - (b) who is in a position to determine the policy of the newspaper company,

but does not include any person —

- (i) who is a director or other officer of the newspaper company;
- (ii) who is a holder of any management share; or

(iii) in accordance with whose directions, instructions or wishes the directors of the newspaper company are accustomed to act by reason only that they act on advice given by the person in his professional capacity.

> [10B [20/2002]

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Approval of applications

- 13.—(1) The Minister may, in his discretion, approve an application made by any person under section 11 or 12 if the Minister is satisfied that —
 - (a) the person is a fit and proper person;
 - (b) having regard to the person's likely influence, the newspaper company will or will continue to conduct its business prudently and comply with the provisions of this Act; and
 - (c) it is in the national interest to do so.

[20/2002]

- (2) Any approval under this section may be granted to any person subject to such conditions as the Minister may determine, including but not limited to any condition —
 - (a) restricting the person's disposal or further acquisition of shares or voting power in the newspaper company; or
 - (b) restricting the person's exercise of voting power in the newspaper company.

[20/2002]

(3) Any condition imposed under subsection (2) shall have effect notwithstanding any of the provisions of the Companies Act (Cap. 50) or anything contained in the memorandum or articles of association of the newspaper company.

[20/2002]

- (4) Where the Minister does not approve an application made by any person under section 11(2) or (4) or 12(2), the person shall, within such time as the Minister may specify, take such steps as are necessary —
 - (a) in the case of section 11(2), to cease to be a substantial shareholder:

- (b) in the case of section 11(4), to cease to be a party to the agreement or arrangement; or
- (c) in the case of section 12(2), to cease to be
 - (i) a 12% controller; or
 - (ii) an indirect controller,

as the case may be.

[10C]

Power to make further transitional provisions

14. The Minister may, by order published in the *Gazette*, make such further transitional provisions as he considers necessary or expedient for the purposes of section 11, 12 or 13.

[10D [20/2002]

Objection to existing control of newspaper company

- **15.**—(1) The Minister may serve a written notice of objection on any person referred to in section 11 or 12 if the Minister is satisfied that
 - (a) any condition of approval imposed on the person under section 13(2) has not been complied with;
 - (b) the person ceases to be a fit and proper person;
 - (c) having regard to the person's likely influence, the newspaper company is no longer likely to conduct its business prudently or to comply with the provisions of this Act;
 - (d) it is no longer in the national interest to allow the person to continue to be a party to the agreement or arrangement described in section 11(3) or (4), or to continue to be a substantial shareholder, a 12% controller or an indirect controller, as the case may be;
 - (e) the person has furnished false or misleading information or documents in connection with an application under section 11 or 12; or

(f) he would not have granted his approval under section 13 had he been aware, at that time, of the circumstances relevant to the person's application for such approval.

[20/2002]

(2) Before the service of a written notice of objection, the Minister shall, unless he decides that it is not practicable or desirable to do so, cause to be given to the person concerned notice in writing of his intention to serve the written notice of objection, specifying a date by which the person may make written representations with regard to the proposed written notice of objection.

[20/2002]

(3) Upon receipt of the written representations of any person referred to in subsection (2), the Minister shall consider the written representations for the purpose of determining whether to issue a written notice of objection.

[20/2002]

- (4) The Minister shall, in any written notice of objection, specify a reasonable period within which the person to be served the written notice of objection shall —
 - (a) take such steps as are necessary to ensure that he ceases to be a party to the agreement or arrangement described in section 11(3) or (4), or ceases to be a substantial shareholder, a 12% controller or an indirect controller, as the case may be; or
 - (b) comply with such direction or restriction as the Minister may make under section 16.

[20/2002]

(5) Any person served with a written notice of objection under this section shall comply with the notice.

> [10E [20/2002]

Power to make directions

16.—(1) Without prejudice to section 17, if the Minister is satisfied that any person has contravened section 11, 12, 13(4) or 15(5) or any condition imposed under section 13(2), or if the Minister has served a written notice of objection under section 15, the Minister may, by notice in writing —

- (a) direct the transfer or disposal of all or any of the shares in the newspaper company held by the person or any of his associates (referred to in this section as the specified shares) within such time and subject to such conditions as the Minister considers appropriate;
- (b) restrict the transfer or disposal of the specified shares; or
- (c) make such other direction or restriction as the Minister considers appropriate.

[20/2002]

(2) Any person to whom a notice is given under subsection (1) shall comply with such direction or restriction as may be specified in the notice.

[20/2002]

- (3) In the case of any direction or restriction made under subsection (1)(a) or (b), notwithstanding any of the provisions of the Companies Act (Cap. 50) or anything contained in the memorandum or articles of association of the newspaper company
 - (a) no voting rights shall be exercisable in respect of the specified shares unless the Minister expressly permits such rights to be exercised;
 - (b) no shares of the newspaper company shall be issued or offered (whether by way of rights, bonus or otherwise) in respect of the specified shares unless the Minister expressly permits such issue or offer; and
 - (c) except in a liquidation of the newspaper company, no payment shall be made by the newspaper company of any amount (whether by way of dividends or otherwise) in respect of the specified shares unless the Minister expressly authorises such payment,

until a transfer or disposal is effected in accordance with the direction or until the restriction on a transfer or disposal is removed, as the case may be.

[20/2002]

(4) In this section, "associate" has the same meaning as in section 12(4)(c).

> [10F [20/2002]

Offences, penalties and defences

17.—(1) Any person who contravenes section 11, 12(1)(a) or (2)(a)or 13(4)(a), (b) or (c)(i) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 and, in the case of a continuing offence, to a further fine not exceeding \$5,000 for every day or part thereof during which the offence continues after conviction.

[20/2002]

(2) Any person who contravenes section 12(1)(b) or (2)(b), 13(4)(c)(ii), 15(5) or 16(2) or any condition imposed under section 13(2) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years or to both and, in the case of a continuing offence, to a further fine not exceeding \$5,000 for every day or part thereof during which the offence continues after conviction.

[20/2002]

- (3) Where a person is charged with an offence in respect of a contravention of section 11 or 12, it shall be a defence for the person to prove that —
 - (a) he was not aware that he had contravened section 11 or 12, as the case may be; and
 - (b) he has, within 14 days of becoming aware that he had contravened section 11 or 12, as the case may be, notified the Minister of the contravention and, within such time as may be determined by the Minister, taken such actions in relation to his shareholding or control of the voting power in the newspaper company as the Minister may direct.

[20/2002]

(4) Where a person is charged with an offence in respect of a contravention of section 12(1), it shall also be a defence for the person to prove that, even though he was aware of the contravention —

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- (a) the contravention occurred as a result of an increase in the shareholding as described in section 12(4)(a) of, or in the voting power controlled by, any of his associates described in section 12(4)(c)(i);
- (b) he has no agreement or arrangement, whether oral or in writing and whether express or implied, with that associate with respect to the acquisition, holding or disposal of shares or other interests in, or under which they act together in exercising their voting power in relation to, the newspaper company; and
- (c) he has, within 14 days of the date of the contravention, notified the Minister of the contravention and, within such time as may be determined by the Minister, taken such action in relation to his shareholding or control of the voting power in the newspaper company as the Minister may direct.

[20/2002]

(5) Except as provided in subsections (3) and (4), it shall not be a defence for a person charged with an offence in respect of a contravention of section 11 or 12 to prove that he did not intend to or did not knowingly contravene section 11 or 12, as the case may be.

[10**G**

Power to obtain information

- **18.**—(1) The Registrar may, by notice in writing, direct any newspaper company to obtain from any of its shareholders and to transmit to the Registrar information
 - (a) as to whether that shareholder holds any share in the newspaper company as beneficial owner or as trustee; and
 - (b) if the shareholder holds the share as trustee, to indicate, so far as he can, the person for whom he holds the share (either by name or by other particulars sufficient to enable that person to be identified) and the nature of his interest,

and the newspaper company shall comply with that direction within such time as may be specified in the notice.

[20/2002]

- (2) The Registrar may, by notice in writing, require any shareholder of a newspaper company, or any person who appears from the information provided to the Registrar under subsection (1) or this subsection to have an interest in any share in a newspaper company, to inform the Registrar —
 - (a) whether he holds that interest as beneficial owner or as trustee, and if he holds the interest as trustee, to indicate, so far as he can, the person for whom he holds the interest (either by name or by other particulars sufficient to enable that person to be identified) and the nature of his interest; or
 - (b) whether any share or any voting right attached to the share is the subject of an agreement or arrangement described in section 11(3) or (4) or 12(4)(c)(ix), and if so, to give particulars of the agreement or arrangement and the parties to it,

and the person shall comply with that notice within such time as may be specified in the notice.

[20/2002]

- (3) Any person who
 - (a) fails to comply with a notice under this section; or
 - (b) in purported compliance of the notice, knowingly or recklessly makes a statement which is false in a material particular,

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years or to both and, in the case of a continuing offence, to a further fine not exceeding \$5,000 for every day or part thereof during which the offence continues after conviction.

> [10H [20/2002]

Funds from foreign source for the purposes of a newspaper other than commercial purposes prohibited

19.—(1) Subject to this section, no person shall, on or after the grant or renewal of a permit under section 21, receive on behalf or for the purposes of any newspaper to which this Part applies any funds from a foreign source without the prior approval of the Minister.

- (2) The Minister may grant such approval if he is satisfied, on such information as he may require to be furnished to him, that the funds from a foreign source are intended for bona fide commercial purposes.
- (3) Notwithstanding subsection (1) where any funds from a foreign source are sent to a person without his prior knowledge, consent or solicitation and the funds are intended for or given by the donor for the purposes of the newspaper, that person shall, within 3 days of the receipt thereof, report the circumstances and particulars of the receipt of the funds and the purposes for which the funds were received to the Minister.
- (4) Where funds from a foreign source have been received by a person for the purposes of the newspaper under subsection (3) and the Minister refuses his approval for the retention of those funds, the person shall, within such time as is specified by the Minister
 - (a) return them to the sender thereof; or
 - (b) if the sender cannot be traced, the funds shall be donated to any charity specified by the Minister.
 - (5) In this section —

"foreign source" includes —

- (a) the government of a country outside Singapore or the agent of any such government, whether resident in Singapore or otherwise;
- (b) any company, association or society incorporated or constituted under any law in force outside Singapore whether or not it has a branch office or place of business in Singapore;
- (c) any person who is not a citizen of Singapore whether or not he is resident in Singapore;
- (*d*) any
 - (i) body corporate formed or incorporated in Singapore, one or more of whose members or

- directors are not citizens of Singapore, or in the case of a member being another company, where one or more of the members or directors of such company are not citizens of Singapore; or
- (ii) unincorporated association or body constituted under any law in force in Singapore, one or more of whose members or directors are not citizens of Singapore, or in the case of a member being another company, where one or more of the members or directors of such company are not citizens of Singapore,

as the Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, declare to be a foreign source for the purposes of this section; or

- (e) such other source outside Singapore as the Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, declare to be a foreign source for the purposes of this section;
- "funds" means money, securities, movable or immovable property or other valuable consideration;
- "funds from a foreign source", with its grammatical variations, includes funds provided by a foreign source indirectly through any agent of the foreign source.

[20/2002]

- (6) Nothing in this section shall apply to any dealing by any person in the shares of a newspaper company quoted on a stock exchange in Singapore.
- (7) Any person who contravenes or fails to comply with subsection (1), (3) or (4) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years or to both and the Court may, in addition to any other penalty that it may impose, order the forfeiture to the Government of any funds which are the subject of the charge.

[20/2002]

- (8) Any journalist who, having received any funds from a foreign source for printing or publishing any news item or article or for adopting a particular line or bias in respect of any news item or article, fails to report in writing within 7 days to the managing director of his newspaper company the receipt of those funds shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to the penalty prescribed by section 35.
- (9) Any funds received from outside Singapore by a journalist shall be presumed to be from a foreign source unless proved to the contrary.

Appeal to President

23

20. Any person aggrieved by any refusal by the Minister to grant his approval under any section in this Part may appeal to the President whose decision shall be final.

[12

PART IV

NEWSPAPERS

No newspaper to be published without permit

21.—(1) No person shall print or publish or assist in the printing or publishing of any newspaper in Singapore unless the chief editor or the proprietor of the newspaper has previously obtained a permit granted by the Minister authorising the publication thereof, which permit the Minister may in his discretion grant, refuse or revoke, or grant subject to conditions to be endorsed thereon.

[19/90]

(2) No permit shall be granted to the chief editor or the proprietor of any newspaper whose publication will constitute an offence under section 8.

[19/90]

- (3) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), the Minister may
 - (a) direct that the newspaper shall be printed in such language as may be specified in the permit; and

- (b) before granting the permit require the applicant to execute a bond with or without sureties to secure the payment of any penalties which may be imposed upon the newspaper company, proprietor or editor of the newspaper under this Act or under any other written law.
- (4) Every such permit unless sooner revoked shall ordinarily be for one year from the date of its issue, and may be renewed for further periods not exceeding 12 months in respect of each renewal.

[19/90]

24

(5) Notice of the withdrawal of a permit to publish a newspaper shall be published in the *Gazette*.

[6/77]

- (6) The Minister may make rules prescribing the particulars to be supplied by an applicant for a permit under this section.
- (7) A permit under this section shall be in addition to any licence granted under section 3 in respect of the printing press at which any newspaper is to be printed.
- (8) Any person dissatisfied with any decision of the Minister or with any condition imposed by the Minister under this section may appeal to the President whose decision shall be final.
- (9) Any person who contravenes this section or fails to comply with any condition attached to the grant of a permit under this section shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to the penalty prescribed by section 35.
- (10) This section shall not apply to any offshore newspaper within the meaning of section 23.

Γ14 [19/90]

Permit required for sale and distribution in Singapore of newspapers printed or published in Malaysia

22.—(1) No newspaper printed in Malaysia shall be published, sold, offered for sale or distributed in Singapore unless the proprietor of the newspaper or his agent has previously obtained and there is in force a permit granted by the Minister authorising the publication, sale or distribution of the newspaper in Singapore, which permit the Minister

may in his discretion grant, refuse or revoke, or grant subject to conditions to be endorsed thereon.

[19/90]

- (2) Nothing in this section shall affect the publication, sale, offer for sale or distribution of any newspaper in respect of which a permit has been granted under section 21.
- (3) Every such permit shall have effect only in respect of the proprietor to whom it was granted and shall unless sooner revoked ordinarily be for one year from the date of its issue, and may be renewed for further periods of 12 months.
- (4) It shall be a condition of the grant of any permit under this section that any newspaper to which it refers shall have printed legibly in the English or Malay language on its first or last printed leaf
 - (a) the name and address of its printer and its publisher;
 - (b) the place or places where it is printed and published; and
 - (c) an address within Singapore for the service of legal process upon the printer and the publisher or of a person or persons authorised by the printer and the publisher to accept service on their behalf.
- (5) The Minister may in his discretion impose as conditions of the grant of a permit that the proprietor shall
 - (a) establish and maintain a place of business within Singapore;
 - (b) appoint persons within Singapore authorised to accept service of any notice or legal process on his behalf and on behalf of the printer or the publisher; and
 - (c) furnish the Registrar with the names and addresses of the persons so appointed.
- (6) Notice of the grant, refusal or revocation of a permit to sell and distribute a newspaper shall be published in the *Gazette*.
- (7) Any person dissatisfied with the decision of the Minister as to the grant, refusal or revocation of a permit or with any condition imposed by the Minister as a condition of the grant of a permit under this section may appeal to the President whose decision shall be final.

Permit required for sale and distribution in Singapore of offshore newspapers

23.—(1) No person shall sell or distribute, or import for or possess for sale or distribution any offshore newspaper in Singapore unless there is in force a permit granted by the Minister to the proprietor of the newspaper or his agent authorising the sale or distribution of that newspaper in Singapore.

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(2) The Minister may grant the permit subject to such conditions as he may impose or may refuse to grant or revoke the permit without assigning any reason.

[19/90]

- (3) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (2), the Minister may in imposing conditions under that subsection —
 - (a) specify that the maximum number of copies for each issue of the newspaper which may be sold or distributed in Singapore shall be determined from time to time by the Minister;
 - (b) require the proprietor of the newspaper to appoint a person within Singapore authorised to accept service of any notice or legal process on his behalf and on behalf of the publisher and to furnish the Registrar with the name and address of the person so appointed; and
 - (c) require the proprietor of the newspaper to furnish to the Registrar a deposit or some other form of security of such amount as the Minister may determine for the purpose of meeting any liability or costs arising out of any legal proceedings in connection with the publication of the newspaper.

[19/90]

(4) Every such permit shall have effect only in respect of the proprietor to whom it was granted and shall unless sooner revoked ordinarily be for one year from the date of its issue, and may be renewed for further periods not exceeding 12 months in respect of each renewal.

[19/90]

(5) Notice of the grant or revocation of a permit to sell or distribute an offshore newspaper shall be published in the *Gazette*.

[19/90; S 92/97]

(6) In any proceedings under this section, it shall be presumed, until the contrary is proved, that any person found in possession of more than 5 copies of the same issue of an offshore newspaper had possession of them for sale or distribution.

[19/90]

(7) In this section —

27

- (a) "offshore newspaper" means a newspaper published outside Singapore at intervals not exceeding one week which contains news, intelligence, reports of occurrences, or any remarks, observations or comments, pertaining to the politics and current affairs of any country in South-East Asia, except where the circulation of every issue of the newspaper in Singapore is less than 300 copies;
- (b) for the purposes of paragraph (a), a newspaper is published outside Singapore if, and only if, its contents and editorial policy are determined outside Singapore.

[19/90]

(8) This section shall not apply to any newspaper in respect of which there is in force a permit granted under section 22 or to any copy of a newspaper reproduced with the approval of the Minister under section 25.

[16

Declared foreign newspapers

24.—(1) The Minister may, by order published in the *Gazette*, declare any newspaper published outside Singapore to be a newspaper engaging in the domestic politics of Singapore.

[22/86]

(2) No person shall, without the prior approval of the Minister, sell or distribute or import for or possess for sale or distribution any declared foreign newspaper.

[22/86]

(3) The Minister may grant his approval under subsection (2) subject to such conditions as he may impose or may refuse to grant or revoke such approval without assigning any reason.

[22/86]

28

(4) The Minister may restrict the sale or distribution of each issue of any declared foreign newspaper granted approval under subsection (2) to such number of copies as he thinks fit, and may require such copies to be marked in such manner as he may direct.

[22/86]

(5) Any person who contravenes subsection (2) or fails to comply with any of the conditions imposed under subsection (3) or who sells or distributes any copy of a declared foreign newspaper which is not marked in accordance with subsection (4) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both.

[22/86; 20/2002]

(6) In any proceedings under this section, it shall be presumed, until the contrary is proved, that any person found in possession of more than 5 copies of the same issue of a declared foreign newspaper had possession of them for sale or distribution.

> [17 [22/86]

Prohibition on reproduction of declared foreign newspapers for sale or distribution

25.—(1) No person shall reproduce for sale or distribution in Singapore any copy of a declared foreign newspaper without the prior approval of the Minister.

[4/88]

(2) The Minister may grant his approval under subsection (1) subject to such conditions as he may impose or may refuse to grant or revoke such approval without assigning any reason.

[4/88]

(3) Any person who has been granted approval by the Minister under subsection (2) to reproduce copies of a declared foreign newspaper shall not make any profit as a result of the sale or distribution of copies of the declared foreign newspaper so reproduced

but shall be permitted to recover the cost of production and services connected with the sale and distribution of such copies.

[4/88]

(4) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) or (3), or fails to comply with any of the conditions imposed under subsection (2), shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both.

[4/88; 20/2002]

(5) Copies of a declared foreign newspaper reproduced with the approval of the Minister under subsection (2) shall not constitute an infringement of copyright.

[18 [4/88]

Examination of persons entering Singapore

- **26.**—(1) Any person entering Singapore shall, if he is required to do so by the Registrar or any authorised officer
 - (a) declare whether or not he has with him any declared foreign newspaper; and
 - (b) produce such declared foreign newspaper for examination. [22/86]
- (2) The Registrar or any authorised officer may examine or search any person entering Singapore or any article which the person has with him for the purpose of ascertaining whether he has in his possession any declared foreign newspaper and may seize any such newspaper which is not marked in accordance with section 24(4).

[22/86]

(3) Any newspaper seized under subsection (2) may be detained for so long as the Registrar or authorised officer considers necessary.

[22/86]

- (4) The Registrar or authorised officer may, if any newspaper seized under subsection (2) is a declared foreign newspaper
 - (a) confiscate such newspaper; and

(b) in his discretion, destroy it or cause it to be destroyed or permit it to be sent to a destination outside Singapore.

[22/86]

30

(5) Any person who fails to comply with any requirement made by the Registrar or authorised officer under subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both.

[22/86; 20/2002]

(6) In this section, "authorised officer" means any person authorised by the Registrar or any police officer or officer of customs.

> [19 [22/86]

Power to examine packages

- **27.**—(1) Any
 - (a) officer of a postal licensee not below the rank of postal superintendent;

[34/2007 wef 24/08/2007]

- (b) officer of customs;
- (c) police officer; and
- (d) other officer authorised in that behalf by the Minister,

may detain, open and examine any package or article which he suspects to contain any declared foreign newspaper and if such newspaper, which is not marked in accordance with section 24(4), is found in the package or article, the whole package or article may be impounded and retained by the officer who shall deliver it to the Registrar.

[22/86; 12/92]

(2) The Registrar may destroy any declared foreign newspaper delivered to him under subsection (1) or may dispose of such newspaper in such manner as may be directed by the Minister.

> [20] [22/86]

Subscription of declared foreign newspapers

28.—(1) No person shall subscribe to any declared foreign newspaper except through a distributor who is authorised by the Minister.

[22/86]

(2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both.

[21 [22/86; 20/2002]

Registrar of Newspapers

- **29.**—(1) The Minister may appoint a Registrar of Newspapers and such Deputy Registrars and Assistant Registrars of Newspapers as he thinks necessary for the proper administration of this Act.
- (2) The Registrar shall be charged with the general administration of this Act and the exercise of functions imposed upon him by this Act.
- (3) The Registrar may authorise or appoint any person to assist him in the exercise of his functions and duties under this Act whether generally or in any particular case.
- (4) The Registrar and any person authorised or appointed by him under subsection (3) shall be deemed to be public servants for the purposes of the Penal Code (Cap. 224).

[22

Newspaper register

30. The Registrar shall keep a newspaper register in books consisting of copies of the applications for permits and of the permits granted under section 21.

[23 *[6/77]*

Right to inspect newspaper register

- **31.**—(1) Any person may search and inspect the newspaper register during normal working hours on payment of a fee of \$1 for every such search and inspection.
- (2) Any person may obtain a copy of any entry in the newspaper register certified by the Registrar on payment of a fee of \$2 for every such copy.

[24

Copy of entry in register to be evidence

- **32.**—(1) Every such certified copy shall be received as conclusive evidence of the contents of the entry of which it purports to be a copy.
- (2) Every such certified copy shall in all proceedings, whether civil or criminal, be accepted as sufficient evidence of all the matters and things thereby appearing, until the contrary is proved.

[25

PART V

GENERAL

Offences

- 33.—(1) Any person who publishes, sells, offers for sale or distributes or abets the sale, offer for sale or distribution of any newspaper the printing, publication, sale or distribution of which is unlawful under any of the provisions of this Act shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both.
- (2) No person shall be convicted of any offence under subsection (1) if he proves that the newspaper in respect of which he is charged was published, sold, offered for sale or distributed, as the case may be, without his authority, consent and knowledge and without any want of due care on his part.

[20/2002]

- (3) Any person who, without lawful excuse, has in his possession, custody or control for the purpose of publication, sale or distribution any newspaper the printing, publication, sale or distribution of which is unlawful under any of the provisions of this Act shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to the penalty prescribed by section 35.
- (4) It shall be presumed until the contrary is proved that any person found in possession, custody or control of any such newspaper had it for the purpose of the publication, sale or distribution thereof.
- (5) Where any person is convicted of any offence under this section, any newspaper to which the proceedings relate shall be forfeited and shall be destroyed or otherwise disposed of as the court directs.

[26

Power to seize and detain illegal newspapers

34.—(1) Any —

33

(a) officer of a postal licensee not below the rank of postal superintendent;

[34/2007 wef 24/08/2007]

(b) senior officer of customs; or

[4/2003 wef 01/04/2003]

(c) police officer not below the rank of Inspector,

may detain, open and examine any package or article which he suspects to contain any newspaper which is being or has been brought into Singapore for the purpose of publication, sale or distribution in contravention of any of the provisions of this Act or of any condition imposed in respect of any permit.

[12/92; 20/2002]

(2) Any police officer or any officer of customs may seize and detain any newspaper found in the possession of any person which the police officer or the officer of customs has reasonable cause to believe has been printed, published, sold or distributed or is intended to be printed, published, sold or distributed in contravention of the provisions of this Act or of any conditions imposed in respect of any permit.

- 34
- (3) Any such newspaper which has been so printed, published, sold or distributed shall, whether or not any person has been convicted of any offence in respect thereof —
 - (a) be forfeited by order of a court; and
 - (b) be destroyed or otherwise disposed of as the court directs.
- (4) A District Judge or a Magistrate may issue a warrant empowering any police officer not below the rank of sergeant to enter upon and search for any newspaper the printing, publication, sale or distribution of which is unlawful under any of the provisions of this Act in any premises where any such newspaper is known or reasonably suspected to be.
- (5) Where it appears to any police officer not below the rank of Inspector that there is reasonable cause to believe that in any premises there is concealed or deposited any newspaper the printing, publication, sale or distribution of which is unlawful under any of the provisions of this Act and he has reasonable grounds for believing that by reason of the delay which would be entailed by obtaining a search warrant the object of the search is likely to be frustrated, he may enter and search the premises as if he were empowered to do so by a warrant.

[27

Penalty

35. Except as otherwise provided in this Act, any person who fails to comply with any of the requirements of this Act shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction before a District Court or a Magistrate's Court to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both.

> [28 [20/2002]

Jurisdiction of court

36. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary in the Criminal Procedure Code (Cap. 68), a District Court and a Magistrate's Court shall have jurisdiction to try any offence under this Act and shall have

power to impose the full penalty or punishment in respect of any offence under this Act.

[28A *[20/2002]*

Consent for prosecution

37. No prosecution shall be instituted under this Act without the consent of the Public Prosecutor.

[29

[15/2010 wef 02/01/2011]

Presumption

35

38. For the purpose of any proceedings under this Act, a newspaper shall be presumed, until the contrary is proved, to have been printed or published at the place, if any, at which it is stated in any printing thereon to have been printed or published, as the case may be.

[30]

Persons to act for company or firm

39. For any of the purposes of this Act, a company may act by a director or its secretary, and a firm may act by any of its members.

[31

Search for unlicensed printing presses

- **40.** Any person authorised by the Minister in that behalf who has reason to believe that any printing press is used or kept for use
 - (a) in any place without a licence granted under this Act; or
 - (b) in any place not mentioned in that licence,

may, with such assistance and by such force as may be necessary by night or day, enter into and search any such place and seize any printing press and all the types, documents and other articles found therein.

[32

Search when requirements of this Act not complied with

41. Any person authorised by the Minister in that behalf who has reason to believe that any of the provisions of this Act is not being complied with by a person who is in possession of a licensed printing press may, with such assistance and by such force as may be necessary by night or day, enter into and search any place where he believes the printing press to be kept and may seize any documents which do not comply with the provisions of this Act.

[33

Composition of offences

- **42.**—(1) The Minister or any officer authorised by the Minister may, in his discretion, compound any offence under this Act which is prescribed as a compoundable offence by collecting from a person reasonably suspected of having committed the offence —
 - (a) a sum of money not exceeding \$1,000 in the case of an offence punishable on conviction with a fine not exceeding \$5,000 (whether with or without imprisonment); or
 - (b) a sum of money not exceeding \$5,000 in the case of an offence punishable on conviction with a fine exceeding \$5,000 (whether with or without imprisonment).

[20/2002]

(2) On payment of such sum of money, no further proceedings shall be taken against such person in respect of the offence.

[20/2002]

(3) The Minister may make rules to prescribe the offences which may be compounded and the method and procedure by which those offences may be compounded under this section.

> [33A [20/2002]

*Payment of fees, etc.

43. All fees, composition fines and other moneys collected under this Act shall be paid to the Media Development Authority of

^{*} Section 43 came into operation on 1st January 2003 [S 640/2002].

Singapore established under the Media Development Authority of Singapore Act 2002 (Act 34 of 2002).

[33B [34/2002]

Exemption

37

- **44.**—(1) The Minister may, subject to such terms and conditions as he may impose, by order published in the *Gazette*
 - (a) exempt any class or description of shares or interests in shares from section 11 or 12 or both; or
 - (b) exempt
 - (i) any person or class of persons;
 - (ii) any document or class of documents; or
 - (iii) any class or description of printing presses,

from all or any of the provisions of this Act.

[34 [20/2002]

(2) Nothing in this Act shall extend to the impression of any engraving or to the printing of any visiting or business card, bill-head or letter heading.

[35

Rules

- **45.** The Minister may make rules
 - (a) for fixing the fees to be charged for permits and licences;
 - (b) for prescribing the forms for permits and licences to be used under this Act; and
 - (c) generally for carrying into effect the provisions of this Act.
 [36]

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

NEWSPAPER AND PRINTING PRESSES ACT (CHAPTER 206)

This Legislative History is provided for the convenience of users of the Newspaper and Printing Presses Act. It is not part of the Act.

1. Act 12 of 1974 — Newspaper and Printing Presses Act 1974

Date of First Reading : 14 March 1974

(Bill No. 9/1974 published on

15 March 1974)

Date of Second Reading : 28 August 1974

Referred to Select Committee : Parl 3 of 1974 presented to

Parliament on 17 August 1974

Date of commencement : 1 January 1975

2. Act 6 of 1977 — Newspaper and Printing Presses (Amendment) Act 1977

Date of First Reading : 27 May 1977

(Bill No. 14/1977 published on

2 June 1977)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 29 June 1977

Date of commencement : 18 July 1977

3. Act 9 of 1981 — Newspaper and Printing Presses (Amendment) Act 1981

Date of First Reading : 6 March 1981

(Bill No. 35/1980 published on

11 March 1981)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 26 March 1981

Date of commencement : 24 April 1981

4. Act 22 of 1986 — Newspaper and Printing Presses (Amendment) Act 1986

Date of First Reading : 5 May 1986

(Bill No. 27/1985 published on

6 May 1986)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 1 August 1986

Date of commencement : 1 September 1986

5. 1985 Revised Edition — Newspaper and Printing Presses Act

Date of operation : 30 March 1987

6. Act 4 of 1988 — Newspaper and Printing Presses (Amendment) Act 1988

Date of First Reading : 11 January 1988

(Bill No. 31/1987 published on

13 January 1988)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 27 January 1988

Date of commencement : 12 February 1988

7. Act 19 of 1990 — Newspaper and Printing Presses (Amendment) Act 1990

Date of First Reading : 18 July 1990

(Bill No. 26/1989 published on

19 July 1990)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 30 August 1990

Date of commencement : 1 December 1990

8. 1991 Revised Edition — Newspaper and Printing Presses Act

Date of operation : 1 March 1991

9. G. N. No. S 92/1997 — Revised Edition of the Laws (Rectification)
Order 1997

Date of commencement : 1 March 1991

10. Act 20 of 2002 — Newspaper and Printing Presses (Amendment) Act 2002

Date of First Reading : 23 May 2002

(Bill No. 20/2002 published on

24 May 2002)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 8 July 2002

Date of commencement : 2 September 2002

11. 2002 Revised Edition — Newspaper and Printing Presses Act

Date of operation : 31 December 2002

12. Act 34 of 2002 — Media Development Authority of Singapore Act 2002

Date of First Reading : 1 October 2002

(Bill No. 37/2002 published on

2 October 2002)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 31 October 2002

Date of commencement : 1 January 2003

13. Act 4 of 2003 — Customs (Amendment) Act 2003

(Consequential amendments made to Act by)

Date of First Reading : 10 March 2003

(Bill No. 6/2003 published on

11 March 2003)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 21 March 2003

Date of commencement : 1 April 2003

14. Act 21 of 2005 — Companies (Amendment) Act 2005

(Consequential amendments made to Act by)

Date of First Reading : 18 April 2005

(Bill No. 11/2005 published on

19 April 2005)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 16 May 2005

Date of commencement : 30 January 2006

15. Act 34 of 2007 — Postal Services (Amendment) Act 2007

(Consequential amendments made to Act by)

Date of First Reading : 21 May 2007

(Bill No. 22/2007 published on

22 May 2007)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 16 July 2007

Date of commencement : 24 August 2007

16. Act 15 of 2010 — Criminal Procedure Code 2010

(Consequential amendments made to Act by)

Date of First Reading : 26 April 2010

(Bill No. 11/2010 published on

26 April 2010)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 19 May 2010

Date of commencement : 2 January 2011

COMPARATIVE TABLE

NEWSPAPER AND PRINTING PRESSES ACT (CHAPTER 206)

The following provisions in the 1991 Revised Edition of the Newspaper and Printing Presses Act have been renumbered by the Law Revision Commissioners in this 2002 Revised Edition.

This Comparative Table is provided for the convenience of users. It is not part of the Newspaper and Printing Presses Act.

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