

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**PRESS RELEASE
18 APRIL 2012, 7 PM**

Cases under Section 376B Penal Code

- 1 On Monday this week, the Prosecution tendered charges involving 44 persons accused of having commercial sex with an underaged person. The charges did not name the person involved. When the charges were first tendered and accepted by the Court, the premise was that the defence shared with the prosecution the objective of minimising the risk of disclosure of the identity of the person involved, whether inadvertently or otherwise, and that this would be achieved if the name of the person involved was not included in the charges tendered.

- 2 Recent press reports feature statements by some Counsel suggesting a preference for the previous practice of naming the person involved but procuring a gag order at the same time and also alluding to the possibility of prejudice to the defence if the person involved were not named in the charge despite the fact that the accused persons and their counsel would have known who the person involved was. Although the Prosecution does not agree that this would be prejudicial to the defence, the Prosecution has no objection to reverting to the previous practice as long as the person involved (who was underaged at the material time and is still below twenty-one) is suitably protected.

- 3 Accordingly, the Prosecution will be arranging for the charges tendered on Monday against the 44 accused persons to be amended to include the name of the person involved, but will also be applying for a gag order, to protect the identity of that person.

* * *

Media Contact:

Li Jin Haw (Ms)

Assistant Director, Corporate Communications Unit

Attorney-General's Chambers, Singapore

Email: li_jin_haw@agc.gov.sg

Tel: 6332 4693