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WORLD news

SINGAPORE

Access to the Singaporean gay publication *Manazine* has become severely restricted after "parents" complained to the Media Development Authority that it was too easy to acquire, *The Straits Times* reported Aug. 28.

About 10,000 copies of the bimonthly had been distributed free at bars, art galleries, restaurants and theaters. Now it will be available only by subscription.

Subscribers can either receive it in the mail or present a specially issued card at selected retail outlets to obtain their copy. Publisher Arjan Nijen Twilhaar said the government also told him to tone down some of the homosexual content.

"We were also told to be sensitive to society's reactions to the gay issue," Twilhaar said. "We listened to the advice and made sure that we do not cross the line."

Media Development Authority spokeswoman Casey Chang said the agency also told Twilhaar that magazines should not promote homosexuality as a lifestyle. Singapore has a complete ban on publications such as *Playboy*.

AFGHANISTAN

A U.S. citizen working for Afghanistan's Finance Ministry in Kabul has been arrested for engaging in gay sex, *The Pak Tribune* reported Sept. 1. An 18-year-old Afghan man, whom the unnamed American allegedly was paying for sex, gave the American's name to police after they questioned the Afghan's comings and goings from the American's upscale hotel.

"Islam doesn't allow homosexuality," said Abdul Halim Samadi, a prosecutor handling the case. He added that the American could be jailed for 15 years. Police said charges also may be filed against the Afghan, pending the results of medical tests.

INDIA

India's Delhi High Court turned down a petition seeking legalization of gay sex Sept. 2.

The court ruled that the law criminalizing homosexuality could be challenged only by people who have been prosecuted under it. The case was filed by the gay and AIDS organization Naz Foundation, which plans to appeal the decision.

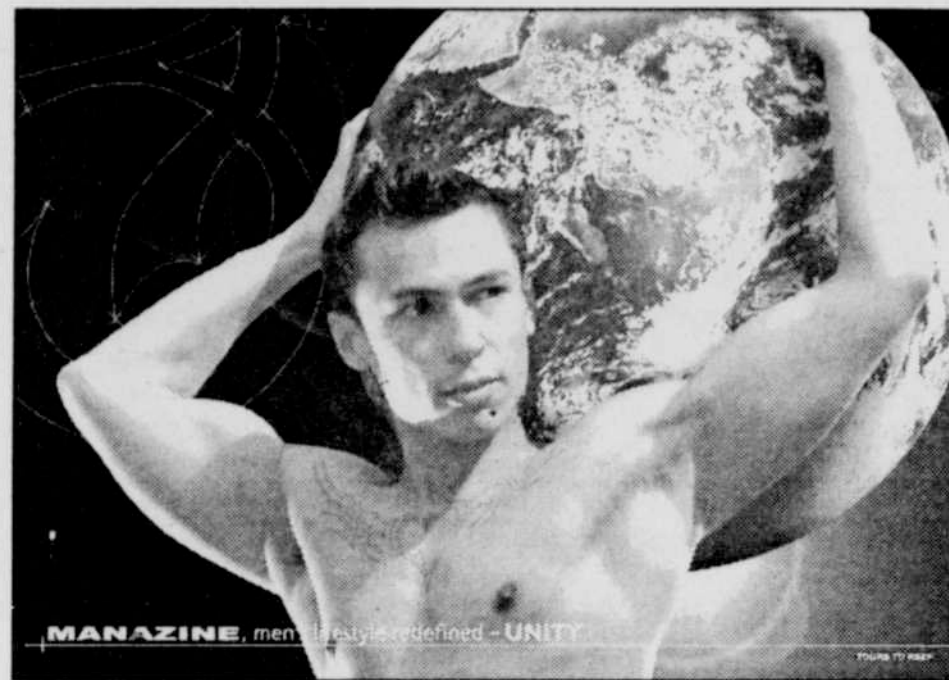
Government lawyers argued against legalization of gay sex on the grounds that society disapproves of it. They also said, "While the right to respect for private and family life is undisputed, interference by public authority in the interest of public safety and protection of health and morals is equally permissible."

AUSTRALIA

Students at University of Wollongong in New South Wales staged a two-day sit-in at a university office in late August demanding that the



University of Wollongong students stage a sit-in to protest campus hate crimes



Singapore is cracking down on the gay publication *Manazine*

administration take action against anti-gay attacks and death threats on campus.

Members of the Queer Collective declared the office "queer space" and insisted the university establish a "safe house" for gay students who feel threatened. The sit-in ended when the administration called in police who arrested the queers for trespassing.

"I'm absolutely outraged that the university would consistently ignore requests for a safe space," the Queer Collective's Sophie Williams told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. "When the students try to reclaim some of that power themselves and take it into their own hands, the university continues to ignore the demands and the requests, fails to negotiate and then just brings in the heavies."

HONDURAS

The government of Honduras granted legal recognition to three gay groups in late August.

Approval was given to the Violet Collective, Sampedrana Gay Community and Kukulcán Group. It allows them to act officially before courts and government agencies.

The organizations first applied for recognition in 1989. Several religious groups denounced the development, saying it amounts to government legitimization of homosexual behavior.

FIJI

The director of Fiji's Human Rights Commission supports police plans to recognize and support gay cops, *The Fiji Times* reported Aug. 28.

Shaista Shameem said the Fiji Constitution guarantees all citizens equal rights under the law. "If the Fiji Police Force was to deny access to employment to police officers based on their sexual orientation, this would be a violation of Section 38 of the 1997 constitution."

Police commissioner Andrew Hughes called the issue of gay cops "sensitive."

"But we have to deal with it," he told the *Times*. "I am preparing a paper for my board of management to endorse. Obviously, any sort of relationship cannot be brought into the workplace."

CANADA

The government of Ontario has given the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives \$113,000.

The money came through the Ontario Trillium Foundation, which is an agency of the Ministry of Culture. The foundation is financed by state-run casinos.

An archives spokesperson said the money will help the organization relocate to the heart of Toronto's gay neighborhood and hire its first full-time employee.

Manitoba will not defend the federal marriage laws in a court case where three