A Chinese Newspaper Publishing House in Malaysia

By

TAN ANNG
HT00-4047H

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a reaction to the recent take-over of two of the main privately-owned Chinese newspaper, “Nanyang Siangpau” and “China Press” by the government body. This caused much upset to the Chinese community in Malaysia. Many believe that the take-over was politically motivated by the government to control the freedom of the Chinese press. Despite public uproar, the take-over still proceeded. The monopoly of the press by the government could potentially suppress public opinion and alienate the minorities (in this case, the Chinese). The loss of either “Nanyang Siangpau” or “China Press” is the loss of a representative voice of the Chinese community.

As most of the newspapers in Malaysia represents the governmental point of view, the proposed Chinese newspaper publishing will serve to represent the public point of view in the hope of reflecting and exposing many societal problems concealed by the government. At the same time, it will serve as a watchdog to safeguard the interest of the public, in particular the minorities and opposition parties in Malaysia Though the Chinese forms about 25% of the total population, many of the government policies have been unfair and unfavorable to them.

However, a balanced and fair reporting will sometimes act against the interests of certain groups of people. The consequence of such reporting might invite attacks from the affected party or group, in the form of physical acts of violence and vandalism. Therefore security becomes an important factor in the architecture. For a media industry and a public-oriented building which advocates transparency and openness, the issue of security presents a paradoxical problem. The architectural challenge is the balance between the qualities of security and transparency.