

Four chain vegetable and fresh meat shops at Lane-Square in Tai Po convicted for repeatedly causing noise nuisance

Four chain vegetable and fresh meat shops at Lane-Square in Tai Po, comprising two vegetable shops operated by Bonnie Vegetables and Fruit Wholesale Limited on Kwong Fuk Road and Heung Sze Wui Street, a vegetable shop operated by Ka Wo Farming Limited, and a fresh meat shop (a-Ya-Yé®ä"è±é®è,%) on Tai Kwong Lane, caused noise nuisance to nearby residents by persistently playing promotional recordings loudly. They were fined a total of \$29,100 by Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (January 8) for contravening the Noise Control Ordinance (NCO).

A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said that the department had stepped up enforcement action in July last year against excessive noise generated by chain stores to peddle goods in the vicinity of Lane-Square in Tai Po. During a series of inspections, it was found that the above vegetable and fresh meat shops played promotional recordings loudly and continuously using loudspeakers, thus causing noise annoyance. The department subsequently prosecuted the operating companies concerned in accordance with the NCO. Among these shops, a fresh meat shop (a-Ya-Yé®ä"è±é®è,%) on Tai Kwong Lane was prosecuted twice on the same day as it refused to turn down the volume of its loudspeakers, disregarding the warning given by the department.

After a series of enforcement action taken by the EPD, the number of noise complaints against the shops in the vicinity of Lane-Square in Tai Po has largely reduced. The EPD will closely monitor the situation and conduct stringent enforcement against such irregularities. The spokesman reminded the responsible persons of retail shops and market stalls that when they play promotional recordings to sell goods, they should contain the noise level within their shop area and should not cause annoyance to people outside their shops or nearby residents. Otherwise, it constitutes an offence. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000 for each offence. For repeat offenders, the operator himself will also be criminally liable for the offence once convicted.