

Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade practices at medicine shop

Hong Kong Customs today (February 5) arrested a salesman of a medicine shop suspected of having applied a false trade description in the course of selling a Chinese herbal medicine, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

Customs earlier received information alleging that a salesman of a medicine shop in Tsim Sha Tsui claimed that the total price of a Chinese herbal medicine amounted to a certain price. However, after the Chinese herbal medicine was ground, the salesman revealed that the total price was another price, which was 80 times higher than what was expected.

After an in-depth investigation, Customs officers today arrested a 54-year-old salesman of the medicine shop concerned.

An investigation is ongoing.

Customs has all along been concerned about visitors being misled to make purchases by unfair trade practices and has established a Quick Response Team to handle urgent complaints lodged by short-haul visitors. The complaints will be promptly referred to investigators to handle with priority.

With the Lunar New Year approaching, Customs will continue to step up inspection and enforcement to vigorously combat unfair trade practices.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TDO and consumers to purchase products from reputable shops. Consumers should also be cautious about the unit price and ask for more information, including the total price of the goods selected, before making a purchase decision.

Under the TDO, any person who in the course of any trade or business applies a false trade description to any goods commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TDO to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).