

Hong Kong Customs special operation combats claw-machine shops offering counterfeit goods (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (August 23) mounted a special enforcement operation in To Kwa Wan and Tai Po to combat claw-machine shops offering counterfeit goods. A total of about 1 600 suspected counterfeit goods and a batch of business-operating equipment, with a total estimated market value of about \$300,000, were seized.

Customs earlier received information alleging that counterfeit dolls were being offered at claw-machine shops in Tai Po. After an in-depth investigation and with the assistance of trademark owners, Customs officers took enforcement action yesterday and raided seven claw-machine shops in To Kwa Wan and Tai Po. A total of about 1 600 suspected counterfeit dolls and toys, 44 claw-machines and seven coin changing machines were seized.

During the operation, two male shop proprietors, aged 19 and 29, were arrested. An investigation is ongoing.

Customs will continue to step up inspection and enforcement actions to fight against the use of counterfeit goods for the purpose of trade.

Customs reminds consumers to procure goods at reputable shops and to check with the trademark owners or their authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt. Traders should also be cautious and prudent in merchandising since possession of counterfeit goods for any purpose of trade is a serious crime and offenders are liable to criminal sanctions.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses for the purpose of trade any goods with a forged trademark 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 counterfeiting activities 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).

