

Hong Kong Customs special operation combats sale of counterfeit perfumes, cosmetic and skin care products (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs on March 11 and 13 mounted special operations in Sheung Shui and Yuen Long to combat the sale of counterfeit goods activities and seized about 9 000 items of suspected counterfeit perfumes, cosmetic and skin care products, with a total estimated market value of about \$2 million. Five persons were arrested during the operations.

Customs earlier conducted inspections in various districts and detected the sale of counterfeit cosmetic products at some shops in Sheung Shui and Yuen Long. After comprehensive investigations and with the assistance of the trademark owners, Customs officers took enforcement action on the aforementioned dates and raided five retail shops in the above-mentioned districts. A batch of suspected counterfeit goods, including perfumes, cosmetic products and skin care products, was seized.

During the operation, one man and four women, aged between 27 and 47, were arrested. They comprised one person-in-charge and four staff members of the retail shops.

An investigation is ongoing and the likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out. Moreover, samples of the suspected counterfeit goods involved in the case were sent to the Government Laboratory for safety testing, and a preliminary result revealed the samples did not contain heavy metals above the allowed limit.

Customs will continue to step up inspections and enforcement to vigorously combat the sale of different kinds of counterfeit goods.

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 selling counterfeit goods is a serious crime and offenders are liable to criminal sanctions.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses for sale 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 182 8080 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).

