

Hong Kong Customs special operation combats use of counterfeit devices by beauty parlours to provide beauty and slimming treatments (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs today (December 20) mounted a special operation to combat the use of counterfeit devices by beauty parlours to provide beauty and slimming treatments. Six suspected counterfeit beauty and slimming devices with an estimated market value of about \$360,000 were seized at four beauty parlours. Five persons were arrested.

Customs earlier received information alleging that suspected counterfeit devices were being used by beauty parlours to provide beauty and slimming treatments for customers. After an in-depth investigation and with the assistance of the trademark owner, Customs officers took enforcement action and raided four beauty parlours in Mong Kok, Lai Chi Kok, Tsuen Wan and Shek Mun today. Six suspected counterfeit beauty and slimming devices were seized at the beauty parlours.

During the operation, five women aged between 32 and 49 were arrested for being suspected of contravening the Trade Descriptions Ordinance. One of them is a shop owner and four are beauticians. An investigation is ongoing and the likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out.

With the Christmas and New Year holidays approaching, Customs will continue to take stringent law enforcement action and collaborate with relevant trademark owners to closely monitor the market situation with a view to fighting against the use of counterfeit goods for the purpose of trade before and during the holidays.

Customs reminds traders to 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. Consumers are also reminded to make purchases at reputable shops and to check with the trademark owners or their authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt.

Under the Ordinance, any person who 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).

