

Hong Kong Customs steps up anti-infringement enforcement on eve of FIFA World Cup matches (with photos)

Anticipating that the 2018 FIFA World Cup matches would provide opportunities for criminals to develop infringement business, Hong Kong Customs is undertaking a special operation codenamed "Goalkeeper", focusing on infringing items that may be trafficked through passenger and cargo channels at the airport, seaport, land boundary and railway control points on the eve of the matches. The operation started on April 30, and until yesterday (June 13) about 259 000 pieces of suspected infringing items valued at about \$15.3 million had been seized in 21 cases with five arrests also made.

Suspected infringing items seized so far include about 180 000 pieces of apparel and accessories, 50 000 pairs of shoes and 29 000 bags. The apparel seized includes some 57 000 pieces of suspected counterfeit jerseys, among which 50 000 pieces bear suspected forged FIFA trademarks.

The items were seized from 12 seaborne containers, four goods vehicles and a batch of air parcels.

The operation is ongoing.

Hong Kong Customs reiterated that it has all along been committed to combating infringing activities in various ways, and will step up mobilisation for stringent enforcement actions especially on the eve of and during mega international sport events.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who imports or exports any goods to which a forged trade mark is applied 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 infringing activities to the Customs 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

