

# Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade practices at medicine shop

Hong Kong Customs today (January 14) arrested two salesmen of a medicine shop suspected of engaging in unfair trade practices involving misleading omission in the course of selling a Chinese herbal medicine, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

Customs earlier received information alleging that staff members of a medicine shop in Mong Kok were suspected to have misled a customer to believe the unit price of a Chinese herbal medicine was calculated per catty. After the Chinese herbal medicine was ground into powder, the staff members revealed that the medicine was priced per mace. The charged price was 160 times higher than what was expected.

After an in-depth investigation, Customs officers today arrested two salesmen, aged 31 and 33, of the medicine shop concerned.

An investigation is ongoing and the two arrested men were held for inquiry.

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

Customs reminded 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 trader who engages in a commercial practice that omits or hides material information or provides material information in a manner that is unclear, unintelligible, ambiguous or untimely, and as a result causes, or is likely to cause, an average consumer to make a transactional decision 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](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)) or online form ([eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002](http://eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002)).

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## **Red flag hoisted at Clear Water Bay Second Beach**

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (January 14) that due to big waves, the red flag has been hoisted at Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at the beach.

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## **18th round of computer ballot registration for submitting applications for Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles to open January 15 to 18**

The Transport Department today (January 14) reminded members of the public that the 18th round of computer ballot registration for submitting applications for Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles (the scheme) will be open from 10am tomorrow (January 15) to 11.59pm on January 18, and the ballot result will be announced on January 19.

Eligible applicants for the scheme can register for computer balloting through the designated website ([www.hzmbqfs.gov.hk](http://www.hzmbqfs.gov.hk)). Successful balloting applicants are required to submit applications for the scheme within the designated date and time randomly allocated by the computer system.

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## **Community space eases family stress**

The recently opened Sham Shui Po Community Living Room provides additional living space to grassroots families and enhances their

interpersonal networks, helping to improve their living standards.

News.gov.hk spoke with Ms Liang, a user of the Community Living Room, to learn more about how the facilities and services offered there are able to alleviate pressures and bring positive benefits to her household.

Meanwhile, Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Youth & Corrections) Chan Lai-chu explained the policy objectives behind the Government's Pilot Programme on Community Living Room.

The story is available at [www.news.gov.hk/eng/feature](http://www.news.gov.hk/eng/feature) today (January 14) in text and video format.

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## **Red fire danger warning**

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

The fire danger situation today (January 14) is red and fire risk is extreme. The countryside is extremely vulnerable to fire. If you are planning to spend the day in the countryside, please take pre-cooked food for a picnic and take all measures to prevent hill fires. The penalty for lighting fires illegally in the countryside is \$25,000 and a year's imprisonment.