

Hong Kong Customs combats claw-machine shops offering counterfeit dolls (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs conducted a territory-wide operation codenamed "Octopus" from June 5 to yesterday (June 13) to combat claw-machine shops offering counterfeit dolls. A total of about 2 700 suspected counterfeit dolls and other relevant items with an 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 the market. Customs officers later conducted patrols in different districts. After further investigation with the assistance of a trademark owner, Customs officers raided six claw-machine shops in Chai Wan, Lam Tin, Mong Kok, Tuen Mun and Tin Shui Wai as well as a storage facility in San Po Kong during the period. A total of about 2 700 suspected counterfeit dolls and other suspected counterfeit goods, 15 claw machines and five token changing machines were seized.

During the operation, three men and three women were arrested, including three shop owners and three staff members, aged between 26 and 50.

Investigation is ongoing.

The Divisional Commander (Intellectual Property General Investigation), Ms Peggy Tam, said at a press conference today (June 14) that Customs would continue to step up inspection and enforcement to fight against the use of counterfeit goods for the purpose of trade. She reminded consumers to check with the trademark owners or their authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt.

She also reminded traders to be cautious and prudent in merchandising since the 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.

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Members of the public may report any suspected infringing activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

