

Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade practices at ginseng and dried seafood shop

Hong Kong Customs today (July 16) arrested a male director and a male salesperson of a ginseng and dried seafood shop suspected of engaging in aggressive commercial practices in the course of selling Chinese herbal medicine, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

Customs earlier received information alleging that staff members of a ginseng and dried seafood shop in Mong Kok were suspected to have used coercion when selling Chinese herbal medicine to a customer who was forced to procure Chinese herbal medicine valued at about \$7,000.

After investigation, Customs officers today arrested two men, aged 28 and 42.

Investigation is ongoing and the arrested men have been released on bail pending further investigation.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TDO and consumers to procure products at reputable shops.

Under the TDO, any trader commits an offence of engaging in aggressive commercial practices if harassment, coercion or undue influence is used to impair consumer's freedom of choice or conduct, causing the consumer to make a transactional decision. 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).