

Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade practices at medicine shop

Hong Kong Customs today (March 28) arrested a salesman of a medicine shop suspected to have engaged in unfair trade practices involving a misleading omission in the course of selling Chinese medicines, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

Customs earlier received information alleging that a salesperson of a medicine shop in Tsim Sha Tsui was suspected of misleading a customer to believe the unit prices of Chinese medicines were calculated per tael. It was only after the Chinese medicines were ground into powder that the salesperson revealed the medicines were priced per mace, making the charged price 10 times higher than what was expected.

After an in-depth investigation, Customs officers today arrested a 40-year-old salesman of the medicine shop concerned.

An investigation is ongoing and the arrested man was held for questioning.

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 person 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) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).