

Hong Kong Customs smashes counterfeiting syndicate (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (August 29) conducted a special operation and smashed a counterfeiting syndicate in Tung Choi Street, Mong Kok. One fixed hawker pitch and one storage facility of suspected counterfeit goods were raided. A total of about 2 600 items of suspected counterfeit goods, including handbags, wallets and belts, with an estimated market value of about \$4.3 million were seized.

Customs earlier received information alleging the sale of counterfeit goods at a fixed hawker pitch in Mong Kok. After an in-depth investigation with the assistance of the trademark owner, Customs officers took enforcement action yesterday and raided one fixed hawker pitch and one storage facility. The batch of suspected counterfeit goods and one tablet for displaying photos of suspected counterfeit goods were seized.

During the operation, one female syndicate head and one male member, both aged 46, were arrested.

Investigation is ongoing.

Customs will continue to step up inspection and enforcement to combat the sale of counterfeit goods.

Customs reminds consumers to procure goods at reputable shops and to check with the trademark owners or their authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt.

Customs also reminds traders to be cautious and prudent in merchandising since the sale of counterfeit goods is a serious crime and offenders are liable to criminal sanctions.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses for sale 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.

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).

