



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1975

# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

## SALE OF CONFISCATED GOODS RAISES MILLIONS

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MORE THAN 3,700 KILOGRAMMES OF RAW OPIUM, WHICH COULD HAVE DONE UNTOLD HARM TO THOUSANDS, ARE NOW TO BE USED TO HEAL PEOPLE.

THE OPIUM, TOGETHER WITH SOME 240 KILOGRAMMES OF MORPHINE HYDROCHLORIDE, WERE SEIZED BY THE PREVENTIVE SERVICE AND POLICE AND WERE SOLD EARLIER THIS YEAR TO OVERSEAS PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURERS LICENSED TO TURN THE DANGEROUS DRUGS INTO MEDICINES.

THEIR SALE, WHICH WAS HANDLED BY THE GOVERNMENT SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT, FETCHED NEARLY \$2.23 MILLION.

NOT ALL CONFISCATED GOODS SOLD BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE GOVERNMENT HOWEVER WERE ON SUCH A LARGE SCALE.

ACCORDING TO MR. JOHN CHAO, SUPERINTENDENT OF GOVERNMENT SUPPLIES (GENERAL DIVISION), THE LARGER PROPORTION OF CONFISCATED GOODS SENT TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR DISPOSAL WERE PICKED UP DURING GAMBLING RAIDS CARRIED OUT BY THE POLICE OR RAIDS CONDUCTED BY INSPECTORS OF THE PREVENTIVE SERVICES'S COPYRIGHT UNIT.

WATCHES AND JEWELLERY, SURETIES PLEDGED FOR STAKES, AND EVEN RADIOS AND ELECTRONIC CALCULATORS TURN UP FOR SALE FROM TIME TO TIME. GAMBLING EQUIPMENT, SUCH AS DOMINOES AND SLOT MACHINES, ARE USUALLY DESTROYED.

FROM THE PREVENTIVE SERVICE COME FAKE WATCHES, PIRATED TAPES AND RECORDS, AND RECORDING INSTRUMENTS.

+THE INGENUITY OF THE IMITATORS IS SUCH THAT THE WATCHES CAN EASILY DECEIVE AN UNWARY CUSTOMER,+ MR. CHAO SAID.

+YET, EVEN THOUGH THE IMITATIONS HAVE A VALUE OF THEIR OWN, ALL ARE DESTROYED.

+THIS MAY SEEM WASTEFUL, BUT IT IS ONLY RIGHT THAT THE LAWFUL INTERESTS OF THE COPYRIGHT HOLDERS BE PROTECTED,+ MR. CHAO ADDED.

CONFISCATED SPIRITS AND TOBACCO, WHICH ARE DUTIABLE, ARE KEPT AND SOLD SEPARATELY BY THE PREVENTIVE SERVICE FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

VEHICLES OF ALL DESCRIPTIONS, ON THE OTHER HAND, CONFISCATED FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER, ARE DEALT WITH BY THE SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT, AND ARE SOLD BY PUBLIC AUCTION.

IN THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR, 990 OF THEM WERE DISPOSED OF, BRINGING IN A TOTAL REVENUE OF ABOUT \$179,800, OR ON AVERAGE ABOUT \$180 A CAR.

+OCCASIONALLY, SMALL VESSELS WHICH WERE USED FOR ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES ARE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY,+ MR. CHAO CONTINUED.

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+THESE VESSELS, IF SUBSEQUENTLY CONFISCATED AND FOUND TO BE SEA-WORTHY, MAY BE HANDED OVER TO TRAINING ORGANISATIONS OR TO WELFARE GROUPS WHICH NEED SEA TRANSPORT,+ HE SAID.

VESSELS WHICH CANNOT BE ECONOMICALLY REPAIRED ARE HANDED TO THE SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT SO THAT ENGINES AND OTHER FITTINGS WHICH ARE STILL OF SOME VALUE CAN BE RETRIEVED.

OTHER THAN CONFISCATED GOODS, THE DEPARTMENT HAS ALSO THE TASK OF DISPOSING UNCLAIMED GOODS, ESPECIALLY UNDELIVERED PARCELS WHICH CANNOT BE RETURNED TO THE SENDERS BECAUSE OF INSUFFICIENT OR INCORRECT ADDRESS.

THE NUMBER OF THESE ITEMS DEALT WITH IN THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR WAS 5,804, OR ABOUT HALF THE AMOUNT OF THE 11,608 ITEMS OF CONFISCATED GOODS HANDLED.

THE MAJORITY OF THE UNCLAIMED PARCELS CONTAIN CLOTHING OR FOODSTUFFS, BUT THERE ARE ALSO TOYS, MEDICINES, COMMERCIAL SAMPLES AND BOOKS.

+INEVITABLY IT WOULD HAVE BEEN QUITE SOME TIME SINCE THE UNDELIVERED PARCELS WERE FIRST PACKED. PERISHABLE ITEMS WHICH COULD PRESENT HEALTH HAZARDS ARE IN ALL CASES DESTROYED.

+THE CLOTHING AND TOYS AND SUITABLE BOOKS ARE GIVEN TO CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS, WHILE THE LENGTHS OF CLOTH ARE USED BY HOSPITAL LINEN ROOMS,+ MR. CHAO SAID.

THERE IS A LIST OF THE CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS AND THEY ARE INVITED BY TURNS TO VISIT THE UNCLAIMED GOODS STORE TO CHOOSE WHATEVER THEY NEED.

ITEMS WHICH ARE OF NO USE TO THESE ORGANISATIONS ARE SOLD BY PUBLIC AUCTION, ABOUT ONCE EVERY FORTNIGHT.

IN THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT RECOVERED NEARLY \$20,500 FROM THE SALE OF THESE PARCELS AND ANOTHER \$12,000 FROM OTHER UNCLAIMED GOODS.

+THE GOVERNMENT SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT IS KNOWN TO MOST PEOPLE AS A SUPPLIER AND BUYER OF MATERIALS FOR ALL THE OTHER DEPARTMENTS,+ MR. CHAO SAID.

+NOT MANY HOWEVER KNOW THAT THE DEPARTMENT IS ALSO A SELLER OF GOODS.

+ALTHOUGH THE AMOUNT HANDLED IS COMPARATIVELY SMALL, SELLING, JUST AS BUYING, REQUIRES CAREFUL SUPERVISION AND KNOWLEDGE OF MARKET CONDITIONS IN ORDER THAT THE BEST PRICE CAN BE OBTAINED FOR THE TRANSACTIONS,+ HE ADDED.

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