

DUBAI CUSTOMS

September 12, 2007

Dubai Customs confiscate 5 million pills of counterfeit medicines and expired food products

(Press Release) This confiscation comes in a series of successful similar operations carried out Dubai Customs in which they succeeded in seizing large quantities of fake drugs and materials and destroying them under controlled environmental conditions.

Dubai Customs announced today that it has successfully confiscated five million tablets of sexual stimulants and sedative drugs worth more than AED 20 million, in addition to thousands of expired food products packs, during a raid carried out by Dubai Customs' inspectors in a warehouse of a company operating at Jebel Ali Free Zone Area (JAFZA).

Dubai Customs launched their comprehensive media campaign to familiarize the concept of Intellectual Property Rights and the fight against counterfeiting and piracy, which will be crowned by hosting the Fourth Global Conference on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy, next February in Dubai, which will be held for the first time outside Europe.

Mr. Ahmed Butti Ahmed, Director General of Dubai Customs, said today during a press conference held at Dubai Customs Headquarters in the presence of officials from Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, that the confiscation is one of the largest of its kind in the region.

The warehouse of the company contained many kinds of counterfeit medicine from different international brand names, in addition to large quantities of unknown drug pills. Customs inspectors also found various amounts of fake Pfizer's Lipitor, GlaxoSmithKline's Augmentin and Bayer's Levitra pills.

Mr. Ahmed Butti Ahmed said: 'The popularity of the confiscated drugs makes them very dangerous. The food products could have caused serious health problems if the company had managed to sell them in the local market. I call upon the consumers to be aware of such dangers, and I assure that Dubai Customs is keen to protect and keep the society safe and secure.

'The confiscation, carried out in cooperation between Dubai Customs and the Ministry of Health, Dubai Economic Crimes Police, Dubai Municipality and Dubai Public Prosecution, clearly indicates that the free zones in Dubai are highly secured and fully controlled,' added Mr. Butti.

'Dubai Customs protects the interests of investors in the UAE and is also committed to implement the international agreements and the Federal laws of the UAE, thus contribute in the welfare and security in the UAE and turn it into an international leading center for combating counterfeit products,' he concluded.

Officials from Pfizer expressed their pride of Dubai Customs' big achievement as it has helped in protecting the Company's reputation, products and business in general in the UAE.

Dr. Dalia Abdel Chehid, External Affairs Manager - Pfizer-Gulf States said: 'Pfizer believes that there is no higher priority than ensuring that consumers have safe and effective medicines. To realize this goal we must all work cooperatively to fight counterfeiting and secure the integrity of the pharmaceutical supply chain.'

During the operation, the inspectors succeeded also in seizing 40 different kinds of expired food products distributed over 6,000 packs. The inspectors also seized food packing machines that were illegally used to change the expiry dates for varied sorts of food products. The warehouse manager and other workers were arrested.

This confiscation reflects the efforts exerted by Dubai Customs inspectors, the unknown soldiers who are always ready to defend the community against the health and safety hazards and protect the Intellectual Property Rights laws.

<http://www.dxbcustoms.gov.ae/Content/NewsCenter/News/confiscate-5-million-pills.htm>