

以假亂真

yi3 jia3 luan4 zhen1

Customs officers smashed (粉碎、搗破) a counterfeit products racket (非法勾當、非法集團) when they arrested 16 men and women and seized more than 1,000 bottles of suspected fake makeup removal solution.

The seized products came with packaging (包裝) and product labels that were almost identical (相同的) to the genuine ones. They were also priced similarly, so it was difficult for unsuspecting (無戒心的) consumers to tell the difference.

We can use the idiom “以假亂真” (*yi3 jia3 luan4 zhen1*) to describe such illegal activities.

“以” (*yi3*) is “to use as,” “with,” “假” (*jia3*) is “fake,” “亂” (*luan4*) is “to confuse” and “真” (*zhen1*) means “genuine,” “real.” Literally, “以假亂真” (*yi3 jia3 luan4 zhen1*) is “with fake confuse genuine.”

It means to “pass a fake imitation for genuine,” “to mix the spurious (偽造的) with the genuine.”

Idiom by Lon Yan

A customs spokesman advised, “To identify (辨認) the genuine products from the counterfeit ones, consumers should pay attention to two distinctive features as shown at the bottom of the bottles.”

Like the character “假” (*jia3*), the word “counterfeit” also means “fake,” the opposite of “真” (*zhen1*) (genuine).

Counterfeiting is rampant (猖獗) and involves all kinds of products. To combat such illegal activities, the Customs and Excise Department (海關) has five reward schemes (舉報計劃) for tips from the public.

“假” (*jia3*) also carries the meaning of falsehood, deception or untruthful.

Terms containing the character “假” (*jia3*) include:

裝假 (*zhuang1 jia3*) - to pretend, disguise

假髮 (*jia3 fa4*) - wig

假如 (*jia3 ru2*) - if, supposing

假冒 (*jia3 mao4*) - pose as, pass for