

## NEWS

# Fake goods worth Dh35m seized

NUMBER EXPECTED TO INCREASE WITH HEIGHTENED CONSUMER AWARENESS AND APPROACH OF EXPO 2020

ABU DHABI

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Staff Reporter

Over 139,000 counterfeit products worth Dh35 million have been seized by the Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (DED) this year, and the number is expected to rise with the public's heightened awareness of commercial fraud, officials said yesterday.

Government entities and private firms are therefore gearing up to fight this phenomenon especially as Expo 2020 approaches and the UAE economy flourishes.

"The market is currently

ripe, the country is booming and people want to exploit this fact. Counterfeit products in imports and exports are being stopped and seized," said Sharaf Al Hijazin, from the law firm Al Tamimi and Company.

Al Hijazin was speaking to *Gulf News* during the fifth Anti-Commercial Fraud Exhibition that opened in the capital's Marina Mall yesterday where genuine and counterfeit products are on display side-by-side for four days to educate consumers.

DED officials said the large number is due to a greater number of consumer complaints.

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**Mohammad Rashid Al Rumaithi** | Acting Executive Director of Commercial Affairs at the DED

phlets and after our many efforts to combat this problem, we have begun to receive more reports of suspicious products. We have therefore managed to confiscate four times the amount of illegal items this year than we did last year," Mohammad Rashid Al Rumaithi, Acting Executive Director of Com-

mercial Affairs at the DED, told *Gulf News*.

The DED conducted 6,130 inspection visits to commercial establishments in Abu Dhabi in the form of random checks and based on customer complaints from January to November.

Experts revealed that the most common items of fraud

include construction items and sanitary ware.

"Sometimes, price is the biggest indicator of authenticity. This, however, does not mean that high prices are automatically associated with quality. Consumers have to be diligent enough to carry out their own research, especially when making big investments in items such as mobile phones and car parts. Most companies have a list of agents on their websites that are authorised to sell their items," Al Hijazin said.

Good finishing and the presence of a trademark are usually signs of genuine products, according to Al Hijazin.