

S'pore firm nabbed selling fake car parts

By TANYA FONG

THE car part looked the same. But the price difference was so big, customers in Singapore became suspicious.

Regular buyers also found the material of the parts rather dubious.

Then, the company that owned the trademark got wind of it and decided to investigate.

Sankei Industry, which manufactures the motor parts for distribution, is a Japanese-owned company.

Its "555" trademark is well-known in the industry. It was registered in Singapore in 1990, and was renewed for 10 years from 1997.

The investigators Sankei hired found that a Singapore company, Fupek Auto Supplies, was making a bundle selling imitation motor parts.

A sting operation was planned.

A trap purchase was made on March 7 last year at Fupek's office at Serangoon Road.

The counterfeit goods and invoices detailing the transactions were seized.



On Oct 3, the company was fined \$100,000 for the offence.

Its director, Choo Kim Tah, 59, was also fined \$100,000 and sentenced to eight

months in jail.

For two years, Fupek Auto Supplies had been selling imitation motor parts for about half the price.

Ball joints, tie rod ends and rack ends were sold to customers in Singapore, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Nepal.

Unknown to Sankei, Fupek Auto Supplies had falsely put its trademark on boxes and the fake parts.

Choo said in his mitigation that he got the goods from a business contact, a "Mr Chua" from Grandview International Corporation in Taiwan.

He said Chua had told him that a shipment of motor parts could not clear Customs and could not be shipped back to Taiwan either.

So Chua had asked him to accept the goods into Singapore and to sell them. Choo agreed because of "goodwill".

Choo claimed that he was told the goods were made by Hwang Yu, which owned the trademark in Taiwan, and that it was entitled to sell them throughout the world.

After the first batch of goods were sold successfully in Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, Nepal and Indonesia, Choo accepted more batches.

DIFFERENT PRICE, INFERIOR QUALITY