

GOODBYE, HARRY RAMSDEN'S

Now, here's a little fishy story.

Harry Ramsden's outlet in the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) has ceased operations.

It ceased operations on March 25, or thereabouts.

At least one former supplier of this cockney, fish-and-chip joint is not too happy with the situation – because it is owed, what it considers, a sizeable chunk of change.

South Stream Seafoods Ltd, of the New Territories, HKSAR, has accused Harry Ramsden's of not paying for the fish that it sold and delivered to it.

It has sued the holding company for about \$HK145,200.

Harry Ramsden's, located in a slightly grotty area of Wanchai, is the Defendant in High Court Action Number 6643 of 2001.

South Stream Seafoods has alleged that Harry Ramsden's has not paid for its fish since the beginning of this year.

'Notwithstanding the repeated requests and demands of the Plaintiff and the letter of demand dated 26th March 2001 issued to the Defendant (Bluelane Ltd, trading as Harry Ramsden's) by their solicitors ... the Defendant have failed and/or refused to pay the said sum of HK\$145,200 or any part thereof,' Paragraph 2 of the Statement of Claim in the High Court Action alleges.

Harry Ramsden's was established in the HKSAR about 9 years ago, at the time that squaddies (British military personnel) and British bodies roamed the Wanchai area in search of Chinese, luscious lovelies, when they (the British bodies, that is) were sober.

But those times have come and gone and, today, the cost of a meal in the (former) Harry Ramsden's is too high for the Chinese residents of that area of Wanchai where open markets and furniture retail shops spill out onto the pavements.

While Harry Ramsden's restaurant in Wu Chung House was very tastefully done, of late, it did not attract too many Chinese, who much prefer fresh fish to the frozen fish that the cockney shop was dishing out, smothered in a batter, which was swimming in oil.

According to one source, the lease of Wu Chung House was coming up and Harry Ramsden's determined that it could not see its way clear of entering into a new lease as business had declined, considerably from days of yore.

South Stream Seafoods told TARGET that, for the past few years, it had been supplying Harry Ramsden's with frozen food, and that the company was quick off the mark to pay its debts as they fell due.

'We (South Stream Seafoods Ltd) were surprised to learn that Harry Ramsden's was closing down. They have always been good payers,' an official of South Stream Seafoods told TARGET.

The official went on to state that, according to his understanding, brought about during a conversation with a senior official of Harry Ramsden's, everything will be tidied up, correctly, and all the staff will be paid all that is owed to them.

Gone – and soon forgotten!

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