

### 3.2.2.3.4.6 Tongkat ali scam with forged and irrelevant government licenses

One tongkat ali scam currently making its rounds is to trick people out of their money by presenting forged or irrelevant licenses of the Indonesian government, as well as forged lab tests.

Irrelevant licenses are, for example, licenses pertaining to a business registration.

Indonesia is a Western democracy, with many rules equivalent to those of Western countries.

This means everybody of legal age can walk into the concerned municipal office and register a business. In Germany, such a document is called Gewerbeschein, and it is issued in 20 minutes.

Even street vendors of newspapers need to have such a Gewerbeschein, and so do drug-addicted youth selling their hand-made jewelry.

It's the same in Indonesia which still follows the old Dutch codes in many matters of trade.

The following licenses are issued to any Indonesian who applies for them:

SIUP - Surat Izin Usaha Perdagangan - general business permit; every Indonesian business obtains this simply by request

TDP - Tanda Daftar Perusahaan - business registration; just a fancy registration receipt

HO - Surat Izin Gangguan - a permit to cause disturbance; every Indonesian business has this

Akte Pendirian Usaha - a simple notarized form of business registration

It may not be as quick as in Germany, but all of the above are a mere formality, and cost only nominal fees.

Any Indonesian website selling tongkat ali that tries to project an image of legality and credibility by publishing such irrelevant documents on their website is taking consumers for a ride... and it's likely to be an expensive ride for the misled buyer, both financially and in terms of the damage done to his or her health.

The single relevant license that an Indonesian business selling tongkat ali must possess is a Nomor Depkes.

The Nomor Depkes is a product-specific registration code that permits a product to be sold as medicine or traditional medicine.

Any buyer of any tongkat ali product originating from Indonesia, or claiming to originate from Indonesia, should demand from the vendor the Nomor Depkes. If the vendor cannot provide this, it is obvious that the product is a fake, and most likely a dangerous one on top of that.

Now, if a supplier comes up with a Nomor Depkes, feel free to write to me. You may want to do this because some illegitimate distributors just usurp a Nomor Depkes from a legitimate sources, and I can show you how to find out.

Furthermore, I have seen documents in the name of a woman who has been named after the city of Medan. These documents misrepresented a large production facility belonging to "Sumatra Pasak Bumi" as belonging to her and her outfit, established just a few month ago.

Buyer beware. It doesn't take much computer knowledge to forge scans of documents, or jpgs stolen from other websites.

If ever you want graphic proof of how authentic a company is, look for photos. Photos are not as easy to manipulate as are scans of "licenses". Any genuine company will include on their website photos of their buildings, their staff, their raw materials, and their production processes.

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