

## Angry confrontation between illegal hawkers and officers

BY CATHERINE NG

TWO hawkers have been charged with obstructing police following an angry confrontation between illegal hawkers and Urban Services Department anti-hawking teams in Sham Shui Po.

The confrontation developed during a demonstration by 70 illegal hawkers angry that they had not been given licences for two temporary markets nearby.

The General Duties Team of the Urban Services Department moved to clear empty stalls at the old market on Tai Nan Street. District Board member Leung Kam-tao said it was "unfair" that the illegal hawkers "in the removal process . . . have no right to tender for the stall in the new market".

The department's principal information officer John Tam said the clearance of the old market was yet to be confirmed.

"Our arrangement is to relocate those licensed hawkers to the two temporary markets in Nam Cheong Street and Tung Chau Street but all those without licence have to go," he said.

Two men, one aged 30 and another 37, were charged with obstructing officers and released on \$500 bail each.

A 37-year-old woman was held then released.

One department officer was reported slightly injured.

Hawkers said the two-week notice to vacate was too short. The department has said more than 2,000 illegal hawkers would be cleared from the old market.