

China bans actors impersonators in medical advertisements

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BEIJING, Feb. 16 (Xinhua) -- The Chinese government issued a circular Monday, prohibiting actors and celebrities from hosting medical programs on radio and TV after a few actors impersonators were found on advertisements.

In a story published on Feb. 4, The Beijing Times exposed a middle-aged actor who imitated four experts under different names on TV while selling drugs.

The article also mentioned an actress who mimicked patients suffering from lung, liver, kidney and heart problems. She claimed that her diseases were cured after taking drugs mentioned in all the advertisements.

The government said impersonating experts or patients was misleading, so new rules were set to prohibit the behavior, according to the Ministry of Health.

The circular, which was jointly issued by the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, the State Administration For Industry and Commerce, the Health Ministry, the State Food and Drug Administration and the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, reiterated other rules for releasing medical and drug advertisements on radio and TV media.

Those advertisements which use experts and patients' images to prove the effects of drugs or medical products should not be broadcast, according to the circular.

Those which contain the content of cure rates, effective rates and hotline interaction between doctors and patients should not be broadcast. Information service programs produced by pharmaceutical companies or medical organizations should not be broadcast, the circular said.

Radio and TV broadcasters were asked to check for those kinds of programs and advertisements and immediately stop broadcasting them. If they did not act swiftly enough, the heads of relevant radio and TV stations would be punished and their names exposed to the public.

