

Chain of operations by Hong Kong Customs results in seizure of suspected dangerous drugs worth over \$230 million (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs conducted a series of anti-narcotics operations between July 12 and yesterday (July 24) and detected three dangerous drugs trafficking cases. Suspected dangerous drugs worth above \$230 million in total were seized in various districts and Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA). The seizures include about 145 kilograms of suspected liquid methamphetamine, 72 kilograms of suspected cocaine and 61 kilograms of suspected heroin. Four men and one woman, aged between 31 and 60, were arrested during the operations.

In the first case, Customs officers raided an industrial building premises in Fo Tan on July 12. About 72 kilograms of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$85 million were seized from plastic bottles labeled as healthy food products. Follow-up investigation led to the arrest of a 43-year-old man in Sha Tin on July 15, who is suspected to be connected with the case. Investigation is ongoing. The arrested man has been released on bail pending further investigation.

In the second case, officers at the HKIA inspected an air cargo consignment declared as avocado food oil arrived from Mexico on July 20. About 145 kilograms of suspected liquid methamphetamine with an estimated market value of about \$80 million were seized from 288 glass bottles, each carried around 500 grams of the suspected drugs. Subsequent investigation resulted in the arrest of a 60-year-old man in Tsing Yi on July 24. Investigation is ongoing.

In the third case, Customs officers examined a seaborne consignment declared as snacks arrived from Thailand on July 22. Around 61 kilograms of suspected heroin, with an estimated market value of about \$65 million, were found concealed in instant rice vermicelli seasoning packets. Two men and one woman, aged between 31 and 42, suspected to be in connection with the case were arrested in Kwai Chung on July 23. The arrested persons are holding charged with one count of attempting to traffic in a dangerous drug. They will appear at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (July 26).

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Customs reminds members of the public to stay alert and not to participate in drug trafficking activities for monetary return. They must not accept hiring or delegation from another party to carry controlled items into and out of Hong Kong. They are also reminded not to carry unknown items for

other people, nor to release their personal data or home address to others for receiving parcels or goods.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

