

Hong Kong Customs detects smuggling case involving about \$80 million of goods by ocean-going vessel (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs on June 4 detected a suspected case of using an ocean-going vessel to smuggle goods to Malaysia at the Kwai Chung Container Terminals. A large batch of suspected smuggled electronic components and waste, with a total estimated market value of about \$80 million, was seized.

Through intelligence analysis and risk assessment, Customs discovered that criminals intended to use ocean-going vessels to smuggle goods and thus formulated strategies to combat related activities, and identified an ocean-going vessel preparing to depart from Hong Kong for Malaysia for inspection.

Customs officers on June 4 mounted an operation and seized a large batch of suspected smuggled goods, including integrated circuits, motherboards, capacitors and a batch of electronic waste, inside two containers, which were declared as containing aluminium materials and copper alloy respectively, aboard the vessel.

An investigation is ongoing. The likelihood of arrests is not ruled out.

Customs is the primary agency responsible for the suppression of smuggling activities and has long been combating various smuggling activities at the forefront. Customs will keep up its enforcement action and continue to fiercely combat sea smuggling activities through proactive risk management and intelligence-based enforcement strategies, along with mounting targeted anti-smuggling operations at suitable times to land a solid blow against relevant activities.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

Under the Waste Disposal Ordinance, it is an offence for anyone to import or export hazardous waste without obtaining a valid permit beforehand. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment. For subsequent offences, offenders are liable to a fine of \$500,000 and two years' imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/).

