

Hong Kong Customs detects suspected smuggling case worth over \$30 million (with photos)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs yesterday (April 2) conducted an anti-smuggling operation and detected a suspected smuggling case using a fishing vessel and a speedboat in the waters off Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA). A large batch of suspected smuggled goods, including high-valued food, electronic products and cosmetics, with an estimated market value of about \$31 million in total were seized.

Customs officers yesterday conducted an anti-smuggling operation in the waters off HKIA and spotted several suspicious men moving cartons from a fishing vessel onto a speedboat. Officers then took action and the men immediately jumped onto the speedboat and fled.

During the operation, Customs officers detained a fishing vessel suspected to be in connection with the case for further investigation. A batch of suspected smuggled goods, including dried sea cucumbers, dried fish maws, dried shark fins, bird nests, computer display cards, smartphones, computer RAMs, solid-state drives and cosmetics, was seized on board the vessel.

After follow-up investigation, Customs today (April 3) arrested the 43-year-old male owner of the fishing vessel suspected to be related to the case. An investigation is ongoing.

Customs stresses that it will keep up its enforcement action and will continue to fiercely combat sea smuggling activities by actively pursuing 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.

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).

