

Hong Kong Customs detects three passenger drug trafficking cases in two days and seizes suspected cocaine valued at \$10 million (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs detected three cases of drug trafficking by passengers in the past two days (December 31, 2019, and January 1, 2020) at Hong Kong International Airport. About 10 kilograms of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$10 million were seized in total.

A female passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Dubai on December 31. During customs clearance, about 4.5kg of suspected cocaine were found concealed inside four boxes of chocolate in her backpack.

Also, two male passengers arrived in Hong Kong from Brazil via France and from Ethiopia yesterday. During customs clearance, about 4.4kg of suspected cocaine were found concealed inside the false compartments of the carry-on suitcase and briefcase of the first male passenger, while about 1.2kg of suspected cocaine were found concealed in four personal hygiene product bottles inside the check-in suitcase of the second male passenger.

The three persons connected with the cases were arrested and have each been charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. They will appear at West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (January 3).

Customs will continue to apply a risk assessment strategy to select inbound, outbound and transit passengers for clearance to intercept different kinds of drug trafficking activities. Before or after long holidays and festive occasions, there is a possibility that drug trafficking syndicates may increase drug trafficking in order to meet keen demand. Customs will further step up enforcement action to suppress drug trafficking activities effectively before the coming holiday.

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.

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).

