

Hong Kong Customs seizes dangerous drugs worth about \$55 million in large-scale anti-narcotics operation (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs conducted a large-scale anti-narcotics operation between September 1 and today (September 15) with a view to combating drug trafficking syndicates smuggling drugs into Hong Kong through parcels.

In the operation, Customs cracked 40 cases of drug trafficking through parcels at airport cargo terminals and land boundary control points. Nearly 100 kilograms of suspected dangerous drugs were seized, including about 53kg of suspected methamphetamine, about 17kg of suspected cannabis, about 14kg of suspected ketamine, about 11kg of suspected cocaine, about 1kg of suspected ecstasy and about 1kg of suspected heroin. The total estimated market value of the seizures was about \$55 million.

In one of the cases, Customs officers arrested a 15-year-old teenager in Shau Kei Wan while he collected a parcel containing a batch of candles, in which about 4kg of suspected cannabis concentrate were concealed. After investigation, the teenager was released on bail pending further investigation.

In another case, Customs officers arrested a 35-year-old woman in Kam Tin while she collected a parcel containing a vacuum cleaner, in which about 2kg of suspected methamphetamine were concealed. After follow-up investigation, the officers believe that the woman was also involved in three other similar cases. She is being detained by Customs and investigation is ongoing.

The parcels seized during this operation originated from different places. Those containing methamphetamine mainly came from African countries, including South Africa and Malawi; those with ketamine and ecstasy mainly came from European countries, including Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands; those with cocaine mainly came from South America, including Brazil and Mexico; those with heroin mainly came from Malaysia; and those with cannabis buds mainly came from the United States and Canada.

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.

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.

Young people should especially pay attention to the fact that drug trafficking is a serious criminal offence. Criminal conviction will result in grave repercussions for their future and they should not take risks in the hope that they may not be caught.

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).

