

Hong Kong Customs detects suspected smuggling case involving about \$160 million (with photos)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs detected a suspected smuggling case using a river trade vessel in the western waters of Hong Kong on April 21. A large batch of suspected smuggled goods with an estimated market value of about \$160 million was seized, including assorted electronic products, musical instrument accessories and audio equipment.

Customs officers conducted an operation against sea smuggling in the western waters of Hong Kong in the evening of that day and intercepted a river trade vessel heading towards Mainland waters. After inspection, the officers found the batch of suspected smuggled goods, including solid-state drives, integrated circuits, memory cards, musical instrument accessories and audio equipment in three of the containers on board the vessel.

After a follow-up investigation, Customs officers the next day arrested a 69-year-old woman suspected to be connected with the case and detained the three containers involved.

An investigation is ongoing. The arrested woman has been released on bail pending further investigation, and further arrests are not ruled out.

Given that the epidemic is gradually subsiding and sea freight has been resuming as normal, it has been noticed by Customs that criminals have taken the opportunity to use river trade vessels to conduct smuggling activities. They also declared that low-valued items were being carried in order to evade detection by law enforcement officers.

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).



