

Hong Kong Customs detects two smuggling cases involving about \$211 million of goods by river trade vessels (with photos)

â€¢Hong Kong Customs on February 29 and March 2 detected two suspected smuggling cases involving river trade vessels. A large batch of suspected smuggled goods with a total estimated market value of about \$211 million was seized.

Through intelligence analysis and risk assessment, Customs suspected that criminals were using river trade vessels to smuggle goods to the Mainland and thus formulated strategies to combat related activities. During the operation, two river trade vessels departing from Hong Kong and bound for Macao and Huangpu of Guangzhou respectively were selected for inspection on the above mentioned dates. Upon examination, Customs officers onboard the two vessels found large batches of suspected smuggled goods, including over 130 000 hard disks, about 200 000 electronic product accessories, about 160 000 cigarettes, about 13 000 bottles of health products and about 3 000 boxes of pharmaceutical products.

An investigation is ongoing.

Being a government department primarily responsible for tackling smuggling activities, Customs has all along been combating various smuggling activities proactively 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. Moreover, any person who imports or exports pharmaceutical products and medicines without a valid licence commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for two 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) or online form (eform.cefsc.gov.hk/form/ced002/).

