

Hong Kong Customs smashes high-value seafood smuggling syndicate for first time (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (June 26) conducted an anti-smuggling operation and smashed an organised high-value seafood smuggling syndicate for the first time. A total of about 5.2 tonnes of suspected smuggled chilled fish with an estimated market value of about \$1 million were seized in Sha Tau Kok.

Customs earlier conducted an in-depth investigation on the smuggling syndicate and took enforcement action yesterday. Customs officers found three men moving a batch of chilled fish from a lorry onto a speedboat at the seashore of Sha Tau Kok. Customs officers then took action and seized a batch of suspected smuggled chilled fish.

Customs officers later intercepted three lorries suspected to be related to the case in the vicinity. A further batch of suspected smuggled chilled fish was seized inside the cargo compartments of two of the lorries.

After follow-up investigation, Customs officers searched five companies suspected to be in connection with the case in Sha Tau Kok, Mong Kok and Kowloon Bay, and seized a batch of relevant documents for investigation.

In the operation, Customs arrested eight men aged from 36 to 54. Six lorries and eight speedboats were also detained for further investigation.

Investigation is ongoing and the arrested men have been released on bail pending further investigation.

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.

Hong Kong Customs will continue to take stringent enforcement action to combat smuggling activities.

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).

