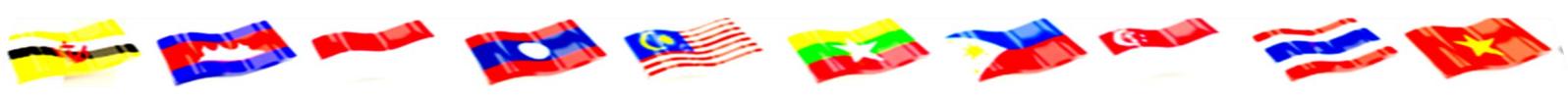


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# ASEAN CUSTOMS

**ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN**  
**VOLUME X**





**Bulletin Committee  
Brunei Darussalam**

## ***Special Point of Interest:-***

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# Foreword From the Country's Coordinator Desk

## ***Muhsin Ahmad***

*Acting Controller of Royal Customs and Excise,  
Ministry of Finance and Economy ,  
Brunei Darussalam*



**R**egional cooperation among Customs Administrations has become inevitable in today's globalized world. With Industry 4.0, foreseeable mutual cooperation among Customs Administrations is vital. It is important for Customs Administrations to be one step ahead of the evolving trends of modus operandi of illicit trade and smuggling activities to ensure the security and safety of our region as well as to provide a platform for trade facilitation..

ASEAN Customs Administrations have definitely tracked down the evolvment and advanced smuggling techniques over the years through the continuity of publishing Customs Enforcement Bulletins. Not only that the Bulletin shows the unity and cooperation among ASEAN, but a strong relationship between ASEAN also prevails/exists. We established that the requirement for collective responsibility is unavoidable to battle the continuous emerging trends of illicit trade.

The ASEAN Customs Enforcement Bulletin is a useful platform, not only for Customs Administrations but also to all, to learn and understand better on the latest modus operandi of offenders, challenges that customs are facing as well as way forwards to tackle these illicit trade. It is also important to note on how Industry 4.0 has proved to be an important mechanism for information sharing, managing coordination and assessing risks for any attempts to smuggle prohibited goods into the country. Here, I would like to emphasize that we should fully utilize the common information system as it can improve customs officers at networking, coordinating and assisting each other when required which in turn will help ASEAN Customs to enforce the national laws to intercept these illicit trade.

In this regard, I would like to extend my warmest appreciation to all ASEAN Customs Administrations especially the Customs Enforcement and Compliance Working Group (CECWG) for their endless commitment towards realizing the objectives of the Strategic Plan of Customs Development (SPCD). I would also like to encourage all to intensify our efforts in overcoming smuggling activities and continue working closely together in order to improve our collaboration in safeguarding the ASEAN region.

On that note, I am pleased to introduce the 10th Volume of the ASEAN Customs Enforcement Bulletin and thank everyone for their contribution towards the success of publishing this edition.

Thank You.

# Foreword From the Chairman's of ASEAN Customs Director General

## ***Dato' Paddy Abd Halim***

*Chairman  
ASEAN Directors General of Customs*



**S** In order to address existing and evolving challenges in the compliance and enforcement environment, there is a need to ensure a balance between effective security and control of international supply chain as well as an increasing demand for greater legitimate trade facilitation. The challenges that we face includes international terrorism, environmental protection, and the increase in transnational threats.

Thus, we must not forget our crucial role in protecting the border and the community through extensive information exchange, intelligence sharing, and coordinated joint operations. There is no doubt that Customs Enforcement and Compliance Working Group (CECWG) has played its important role by providing the assistance and sharing information for the mutual benefits of ASEAN Customs, where a lot of activities have been planned and implemented under the CECWG work programmes to cater these needs

On behalf of the ASEAN Directors General of Customs, I would like to convey my heartfelt gratitude to all the members of Customs Enforcement and Compliance Working Group (CECWG) for their diligence in implementing Strategic Plan of Customs Development (SPCD) on Customs Enforcement and Mutual Assistance.

I would also like to congratulate the Editorial Team for their exceptional effort in the publication of the Tenth Volume of Enforcement bulletin. I would further encourage all ASEAN Member States to contribute more outstanding Enforcement cases for the benefit of each other.

In today's environment, hoarding knowledge ultimately erodes your power. If you know something very important, the way to get power is by actually sharing it.

With best wishes.

# Foreword From the Chairman's Desk

## **Mr Sazali Mohamad**

*Chairman  
ASEAN Customs Enforcement and Compliance  
Working Group*



It gives me great pleasure to present the 10th volume of the Enforcement Bulletin published by the Royal Customs and Excise, Brunei Darussalam in its capacity as the Country Coordinator of Strategic Plan of Customs Development (SPCD) on Customs Enforcement and Mutual Assistance under the purview of the Customs Enforcement and Compliance Working Group (CECWG).

The role of Customs enforcement is to effectively protect society and secure the collection of legally due revenue by fighting against cross-border crimes. In discharging this mandate, Customs compliance and enforcement teams are involved in a wide range of activities including combating commercial fraud; counterfeiting; smuggling of highly taxed goods; drugs and precursors; money laundering and terrorist financing; electronic crime; wildlife trafficking; smuggling of arms; nuclear materials; ozone depleting substances; toxic waste; weapons of mass destruction as well as trafficking of cultural artefacts.

To further realise our vision, we shall collectively develop administrative and technical areas on customs so as to strengthen our administrations on a regional basis. The CECWG has become an important platform to apply risk management techniques where all ASEAN Member States (AMS) plays their role in providing and sharing information. To facilitate the exchange of intelligence information among AMS the CECWG has developed the Alert Notice System (ANS) which has been utilized by AMS since September 2018.

In this publication, the CECWG has worked together in accomplishing the deliverables and give due consideration to the Priorities for Customs in 2018 under CECWG namely to finalise the paper to raise awareness on the smuggling of tortoises through ASEAN. Besides other interesting enforcement cases, a collection of cases on smuggling of tortoises in ASEAN region will also be featured.

Thus, I would like to congratulate the Editorial Team and those who have contributed to this publication for their remarkable endeavour. Keep up the excellent work!

I personally believe, undoubtedly this volume will be a great accompaniment in enabling all AMS to learn through best practices from each other on tackling challenging enforcement cases throughout ASEAN region.

Often, we are too slow to recognise how much and in what ways we can assist each other through sharing expertise and knowledge. Therefore, in the spirit of ASEAN, let us agree that sharing knowledge is the most fundamental act of friendship because it is a way you can give something without losing something.

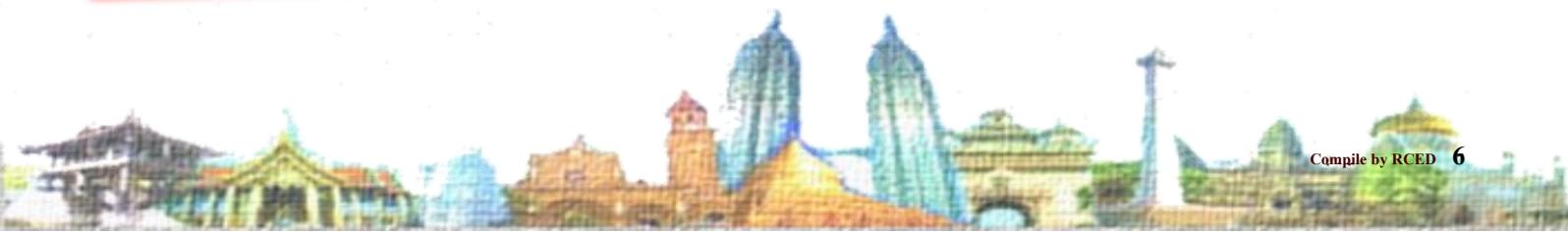
With warm regards.

# The 24<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Customs Enforcement and Compliance Working Group AT Rendezvous Hotel, Singapore 28<sup>TH</sup> - 30<sup>TH</sup> August 2018



ASEAN  
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## 24<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE WORKING GROUP (CECWG) 28-30 AUGUST 2018, SINGAPORE

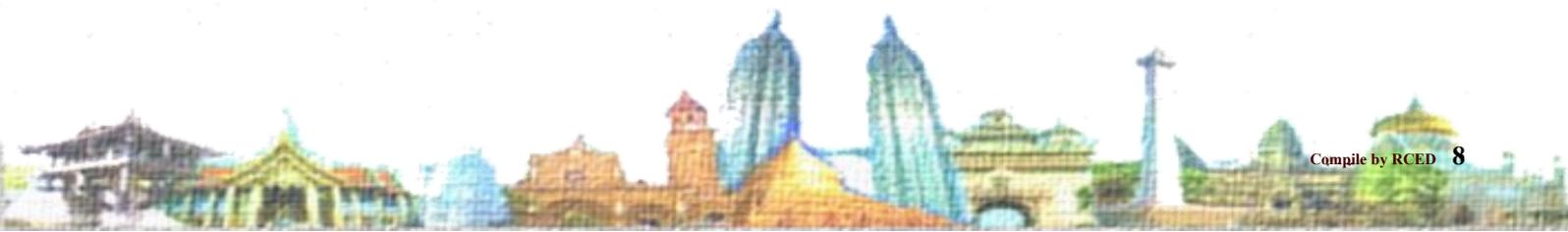


# Welcome Dinner

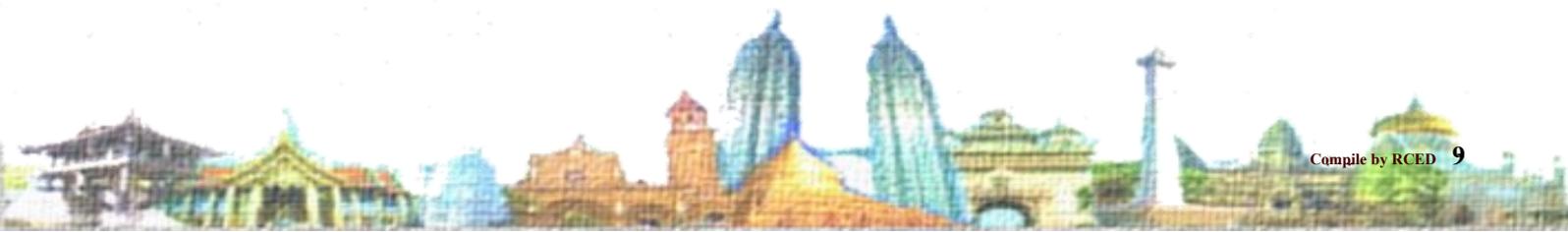
**The 24<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Customs Enforcement and Compliance Working Group**  
At SOFRA Turkish Café & Restaurant,  
Singapore on *28<sup>TH</sup> August 2018*



**The 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Customs Enforcement and Compliance Working Group**  
**At Radisson Hotel, Brunei Darussalam**  
**26<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019**



**Welcome Dinner**  
**The 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Customs Enforcement and Compliance Working Group**  
**At Horizons Seafood Restaurants, Brunei Darussalam**  
**27<sup>th</sup> February 2019**



# Special Headline

## ***PAPER TO RAISE AWARENESS ON THE SMUGGLING OF TORTOISES THROUGH ASEAN***

### **Introduction**

The paper provides a scenario and general background on the establishment of a paper to raise awareness on the smuggling of tortoises through ASEAN. This paper is designed to be the first step towards raising awareness amongst the Member States that the smuggling of tortoises through ASEAN is now a worrying trend in the region.

During the 22nd Meeting of CECWG (August 2017) in Cambodia, Thailand alerted the Meeting that there was a big syndicate on tortoise smuggling activities, and that Member States need to be aware and fully utilize their alert system.

In that connection, the Meeting requested Thailand and other Member States to share the identified routes used by the smugglers.

At the 23rd CECWG (February 2018) in Malaysia, the Meeting noted that one of the 2018 Annual Priorities under the CECWG was “Finalize the paper to raise awareness on the smuggling of tortoises through ASEAN”. Based on inputs by ASEAN Member States, Thailand together with Brunei Darussalam as the country coordinator for SPCD 9 would finalize the paper. The Meeting encouraged Member States to be active in providing tortoise smuggling cases, together with the information of the routes.

The Meeting also agreed that the final paper would be treated as a special case together with other enforcement cases in the Customs Enforcement Bulletin Volume X.

Finally, as discussed at the 24th CECWG (August 2018) in Singapore, the Meeting agreed on the outline of the Paper which is as follows:

- i. General background (date, location, species and number of tortoise detained, origin);
- ii. Modus Operandi;
- iii. Routes Segments;
- iv. Action being taken;
- v. Decision.

The Meeting also agreed that Member States who encountered tortoise smuggling cases in their country to submit the cases as part of the Paper. Subsequently, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore and Viet Nam submitted their cases.

## Way Forward

In this regard, Member States are encouraged to:

- i) establish a compilation of a quick and accurate data that may be used and shared among Member States for the identification of modus operandi and routes segments of the tortoise smuggling activities through ASEAN.
- ii) enhance cooperation and coordination in law enforcement and intelligence sharing;
- iii) exchange best practices among Member States;
- iv) establish communication procedures, ideally using the Alert Notice System (ANS), as well as a proper tool for monitoring of the tortoise smuggling activities throughout the region.
- v) be committed in combatting the smuggling of tortoise as well as other wildlife as stipulated and listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

## Summary Cases of Tortoise Smuggling through ASEAN



### General Department of Customs and Excise

Period of offence	October 2015 – May 2018
Place of offence	-
Number of tortoise detained	Most significant: 15 May 2018: 355 live tortoises.  Notable cases: 19 Oct 2015: 30 kg (elongated tortoises); 04 June 2016: 464 kg (elongated tortoises); 15 Sept 2016: 36 live tortoises.
Modus operandi	Tortoises concealed in bus and cars.
Routes segments	Thailand – Cambodia. Cambodia – Vietnam.
Species identified	-
Action being taken	Seized.



## Indonesian Customs And Excises

Period of offence	2015	2017	2015 – 2018	
Place of offence	Tanjung Priok International Port	Entikong, Indonesia-Malaysia border	Soekarno-Hatta International Airport	
Number of tortoise detained	59 tortoises.	2 tortoises.	84 tortoises	578 tortoises.
Modus operandi	Undeclared goods in export shipment.	Illegal import through border crossing.	Illegal export (false declaration through postal/courier service).	Flight passengers (concealment as passengers' goods).
Routes segments	Export shipment.	Import.	Export.	Import.
Species identified	-	-	Cuora amboinensis.	-
Action being taken	Handed over to Indonesia Natural Resource Conservation Body (Quarantine Body); Followed by investigation.	-	Handed over to Indonesia Natural Resource Conservation Body (Quarantine Body).	

Date of offence	19 March 2018
Place of offence	International Arrival Terminal 3, Soekarno-Hatta International Airport
Number of tortoise detained	122 tortoises.
Modus operandi	Concealed in passenger baggage.
Routes segments	Flight from Hong Kong.
Species identified	-
Action being taken	Seized tortoises were handed over to SHIA Quarantine for further investigation.



## Lao Customs Department

Date of offence	05 August 2018
Place of offence	Road No.13 South Part of Laos
Number of tortoise detained	25 live tortoises. Also detained: 19 kg of pangolin; 43 kg of snakes.
Modus operandi	Tortoise, pangolin and snakes kept in a car.
Routes segments	Pakse Capital to Vietnam.
Species identified	-
Action being taken	Seized tortoises, pangolin and snakes handed over to Provincial Forest Department for further investigation.



## Royal Malaysian Customs

Period of offence	2015 – August 2018	
Place of offence	Kuala Lumpur International Airport.	
Number of tortoise detained	All cases: 574 tortoises. Most significant: November 2015: 133 tortoises; May 2017: 330 tortoises.	
Modus operandi	Tortoises concealed in passengers' suitcases (checked-in luggage bags).	Concealed in cargo and parcel shipments.
Description of modus operandi	3 cases: concealment of tortoises in air passengers' baggage (from Dhaka, Bangladesh using Malaysian Airlines).	9 cases: concealment in cargo and parcel shipments; Cargo (from Madagascar using Etihad airways via Abu Dhabi, UAE); Parcel (from Taiwan and Hong Kong).
Routes segments	Flight from Dhaka, Bangladesh.	Flight from Madagascar; Taiwan and Hong Kong.
Species identified	-	-
Action being taken	Cases were investigated under Section 135(1)(a) of Customs Act 1967 if convicted, carries a fine of between 10 and 20 times the value of the goods, or up to three years imprisonment, or both.	



## Myanmar Customs

Period of offence	October 2015 – July 2018	
Place of offence	Ye Pu Check Point	
Number of tortoise detained	Most significant: 18 July 2018: 95 live tortoises.	
Modus operandi	Tortoises concealed in one Express Car.	
Routes segments	Mandalay– China	
Species identified	-	
Action being taken	Seized.	



## Bureau Of Customs Philippines

Date of offence	03 March 2019
Place of offence	-
Number of tortoise detained	1530 of Tortoises and Turtles
Modus operandi	Four unclaimed baggage's left at carousel area
Routes segments	Last depart from Hong Kong, China
Species identified	Indian Star Tortoises, Red Footed Tortoises, Razor Back Turtles, Mata-Mata Turtles, False Map Turtles, Common Snapping Turtles and Red Eared Slider Turtles.
Action being taken	



## Singapore Customs

Date of offence	09 February 2018	13 April 2018
Place of offence	Land checkpoint.	Land checkpoint.
Number of tortoise detained	One land tortoise.	One Leopard tortoise.
Modus operandi	Kept in a plastic container hidden in a car jack compartment.	Hidden in an eyewear case in a car glove compartment.
Routes segments	Illegal import (Malaysia to Singapore)	Illegal import (Malaysia to Singapore).
Species identified	A Greek tortoise ( <i>Testudo graeca</i> )	Leopard tortoise.
Action being taken	Seized and the offender was fined S\$3,500.	Seized and the offender was fined S\$4,000.

Date of offence	30 April 2018
Place of offence	Land checkpoint.
Number of tortoise detained	Two live turtles.
Modus operandi	Kept in car boot.
Routes segments	Illegal import (Malaysia to Singapore).
Species identified	Malayan flat shelled turtles ( <i>Notochelys platynota</i> ).
Action being taken	Seized and the offender was fined S\$1,000.



## Vietnam Customs

Date of offence	04 November 2015	21 October 2016
Place of offence	Hai An Port, Hai Phong City.	Moc Bai international border gate.
Number of tortoise detained	16 kg live tortoises; 9,000 kg tortoise shells;  Also detained: 1,300 kg of gecko.	66 tortoises (weighing about 50 kg).
Modus operandi	False declaration (goods in the bill of lading declared as coconut product)	Concealed in 3 cartons in transit vehicle (transit vehicle did not have Customs declaration and shipping permit).
Routes segments	Cargo shipment from Pontianak, Indonesia.	From Cambodia.
Species identified	-	-
Action being taken	Seized.	Issued temporary seizure for further investigation.



## CASE 1

### FAILURE TO DECLARE CURRENCY

#### Case Facts:

On the 04th of July 2018, Royal Customs and Excise officers stationed at Sungai Tujoh Control Post, Brunei Darussalam had detained a foreign national for failing to declare a large amount of money into Brunei Darussalam.

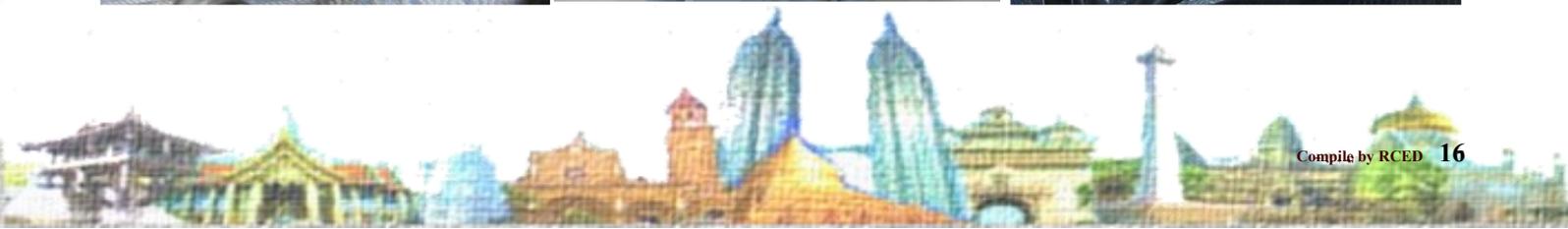
#### Modus Operandi:

Customs officers based in Sungai Tujoh Control Post conducted a routine inspection and discovered a large sum of money inside a backpack - amounting to BND\$ 101,010.00.

Based on the investigation report, the money belongs to a foreign company. It was also stated that the money was brought from Sabah to Miri via air and planned to be transported into Brunei for business purposes.

#### Decision:

The case was brought to the Court and if convicted, the offender will be charged under Section 37(2) of CARO Order, 2012.





## CASE 2

### SEIZURE OF 730 TURTLE EGGS

#### Case Facts:

On the 07th of August 2018, RCED Enforcement Officers had seized 730 turtle eggs; consisting of Green Turtle Eggs, Olive Ridley Turtle Eggs and Hawksbill Turtle Eggs.

#### Modus Operandi:

Based on the information obtained by the Intelligence Unit, it was found out that the turtle eggs were intended to be distributed for illegal domestic market.

The smuggled eggs were stored in white cooler boxes and planned to be sold at a rate of BND 18.00 per 20 eggs or BND 9.00 for 10 eggs. The negotiation and collection of the eggs were done via text messages between the seller and the buyer.

The raid was conducted at a meeting point in which 730 eggs, divided into sacks for different buyers, were discovered inside the vehicle.

#### Decision:

The case has been forwarded to the Attorney General Chamber (AGC) for further legal proceeding.





## CASE 3

### CHICKEN TAILS AND CIGARETTES

#### Case Facts:

On the 3rd January of 2019, Royal Customs and Excise Department (RCED) has successfully raided two individuals inside a vehicle parked within the vicinity of a clinic center suspected for possessing undeclared goods containing 312.2kg of frozen chicken tails; 45 cartons and 6 packets of contraband cigarettes.

#### Modus Operandi:

Based on the investigation, the two locals were hired by a man to deliver the undeclared goods and they testified that there were two other individuals involved in delivering the undeclared goods to them via river-route sometime at 2am in the early morning.

#### Decision:

The case was brought to the Court on the 05th January 2019 and both were found guilty under Section 140, Custom Order 2006 and Section 146, Excise Order 2006.

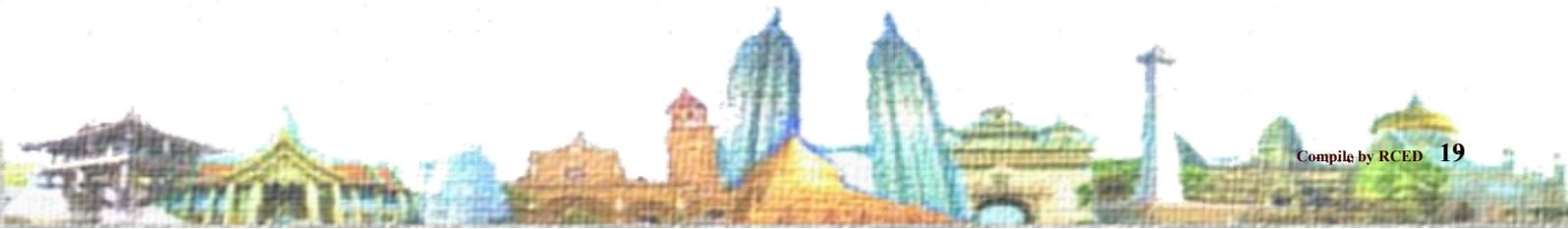
Each of the defendants were charged with court fines of:

- i) Section 140, Customs Order 2006 (undeclared chicken tails) - BND\$ 3,200 or 03 months imprisonment;
- ii) Section 146, Excise Order 2006 (cigarettes) - BND\$ 33,200 or 14 months imprisonment.





# Royal Customs And Excise Department





## CASE 4

### **FAILURE TO COMPLY TO ROUTINE INSPECTION**

#### **Case Facts:**

On the 14th November of 2018, Royal Customs and Excise Department (RCED) officers managed to apprehend four Bruneians for failure to comply with the routine-inspection by Customs officers on duty at Kuala Lurah Control Post.

#### **Modus Operandi:**

The Customs officers at Kuala Lurah Control Post were conducting routine-inspection and suddenly four cars strategically drove passed though the inward section to enter Brunei without any intention to comply for procedural inspection.

Based on the investigation, three of them mentioned that they did not notice the Customs officers on duty; whereas the other offender admitted that they had already agreed among themselves beforehand to avoid Customs inspection to avoid detection of possessing undeclared goods from Limbang.

In addition, their travelling documents have been analyzed which indicates suspicious yet consistent travelling activities that raises further suspicion on top of the contradictory claims between the suspected individuals.

#### **Decision:**

The case has been brought to the Court and if found guilty, the offenders will be charged under Section 143 (b) of the Customs Order, 2006 for failure to comply for Customs inspection.



## CASE 1

### COMMERCIAL FRAUD OF HIGH DUTY GOODS

#### Case Facts:

On the 8th January 2018, customs officers found 3,000 cartons of UHT sweet flavored milk and 900 cartons of bird nests in which the quantity was under declared. The importer had taken the advantage of the automatic customs clearance system i.e. green channel for immediate release.

#### Modus Operandi:

Upon a tip-off received from an informer on a truck that had been transporting illicit goods through a specific checkpoint in a province located at the Cambodia – Thai border, the Director of Prevention and Suppression Department had instructed a search that was led by the Deputy Director of the Department, Anti-smuggling Regional Office No.1 for a truck travelling to the capital city of Phnom Penh.

Customs officers had detected that truck and stopped it for a primary inspection at the Customs Regional Office No. 1. The customs officers were targeting goods such as soft drinks, fruit juices, wine, beer, milk, electronics, electrical appliances, automobile, motorcycle, gasoline, diesel, construction materials, drug, CITES goods including timber and etc. As a result, the under-declared UHT sweet flavored milk and bird nests were found in the truck.

#### Decision:

All the items were seized by the Cambodian Customs and a total amount of duty, excise, VAT and penalty of more than 97 million Riels (USD 24,000) were collected.



## CASE 2

### SEIZURE OF SMUGGLED SOFT DRINKS

#### **Case Facts:**

On the 15th March 2018, 1,320 cartons of Aje BIG soft drinks which were not paid with duty and taxes were found to be smuggled into Cambodia via an illegal route at the Cambodia – Thai border.

#### **Modus Operandi:**

Based from the information provided by an informer, the Anti-smuggling Regional Office No. 5 in cooperation with Gendarmerie had conducted a search for a truck that was believed to be transporting illicit cargoes along the national road of No. 6 from the illegal route via the Cambodia – Thai border.

At 2:30 o'clock in the morning, the customs officers found that truck and stopped it for physical inspection. The customs officers were targeting on some high duty, restricted and prohibited goods such as soft drink, fruit juice, wine, beer, milk, electronics, electrical appliances, automobile, motorcycle, gasoline, diesel, construction materials, drug, CITES goods including timber and so on.

As a result, soft drinks were found in the truck. This case has been identified as smuggling of dutiable items in order to avoid the payment of duties.

#### **Decision:**

The items were seized by the Cambodian Customs and the case was filed under the Customs Department of Legal Affairs and Public Relation. According to the Article 74 of the Law on Customs, this case was subjected to a fine of 1 time of duty and taxes amount which altogether totaled to more than 117 million Riels (USD 29,000).



## CASE 3

### FIRST SEIZURES OF NPS - KHAT

#### Case Facts:

In April 2018, the Phnom Penh Post Center in Phnom Penh received 188 cartons of dried leaves that was sent from Ethiopia by an Indian mail service. It was found that the leaves were actually KHAT leaves, a new form of drugs.

#### Modus Operandi:

The packages of leaves were sent to three different addresses in Cambodia. Suspicious with the sender address of the packages, customs officer at the Phnom Penh's Post Center placed the consignment for further investigation.

On the 4th and 8th June 2018, customs officers at the Phnom Penh Post Centre together with other members in the Working Group for Combating Trafficking of Illicit Drug at the Post Centre opened all the cartons and found green leaves resembling tea leaves packed around paper cartons. The working group decided to send the samples of the leaves to the National Authority for Combating Drug (NACD) for laboratory test.

The result of the laboratory test confirmed that the dried leaves contained cathinone substance which is in the category of ATS, and the leaves were identified as KHAT leaves. KHAT is classified as a new drug group (NPS) in 1980 by WHO, which was harmful to the people's health if it is consumed. The traffickers of the leaves knew that customs officers have limited knowledge in identifying KHAT leaves, therefore, they were using this tactic to deceive the customs officers.



#### Decision:

Due to some loopholes in the current regulation in Cambodia, NACD, an authority coordinating all government ministries and agencies involved called for an ad-hoc meeting to solve the issue.

A total of 188 cartons of 2,963.16 kilograms of KHAT was seized and disposed of. The suspects of three or four African foreigner and local persons involved were placed under investigation by competent authority i.e. the Anti-Drug Police.



## CASE 4

### SMUGGLING OF NPS - KETAMINE

#### Case Facts:

On the 13th June 2018, 959 grams of drugs named Ketamine was found in an express consignment sent from the Netherlands to Cambodia at the Phnom Penh Post Center in Phnom Penh.

#### Modus Operandi:

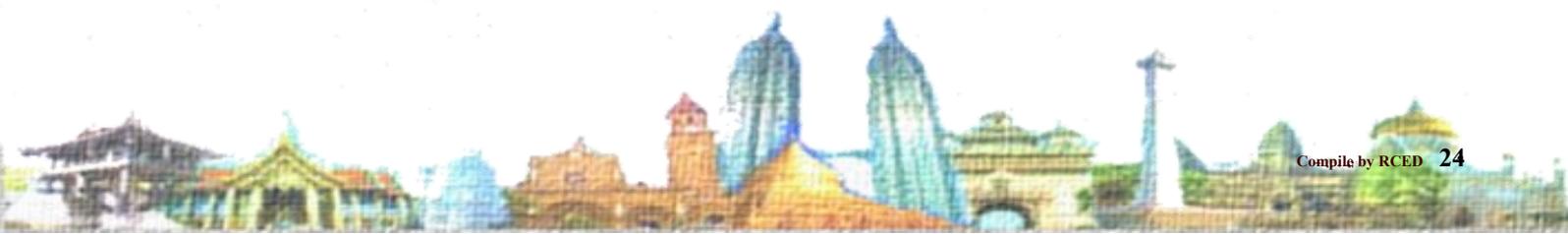
As the express consignment was sent from the Netherlands which is a country on the targeted list, customs officers got suspicious with the parcel. As a procedure, the Working Group for Combating Trafficking of Illicit Drug at the Post Center in which the customs branch of the Phnom Penh's Mail Center is a member, decided to open up the parcel to examine the items inside. There were five small packets of white powder found in the parcel. The recipient name of the parcel also looked suspicious.

As a way forward, the working group sent the sample of that white powder to the National Authority for Combating Drug (NACD) for laboratory test. The result of the laboratory test by NACD has confirmed that the white powder was Ketamine which is banned in Cambodia. On the 15th June 2018, the working group has conducted a controlled delivery as the recipient address has been identified. On the 16th June 2018, the recipient of the parcel who is a Chinese woman of 39 years old came to claim the parcel at a provincial post center at a town near the Cambodia - Thai border.



#### Decision:

The Chinese woman was arrested and the drug of 959 grams Ketamine was seized.





## CASE 5

### SEIZURE OF E-CIGARETTES

#### Case Facts:

On the 24th June 2018 at 10:15 AM, five kilograms of 47 packets of e-cigarettes were found in two boxes at the cargo section at the Phnom Penh International Airport. Sisha and e-cigarettes were prohibited under the circular number 001/14 NACD dated 25th February 2014.

#### Modus Operandi:

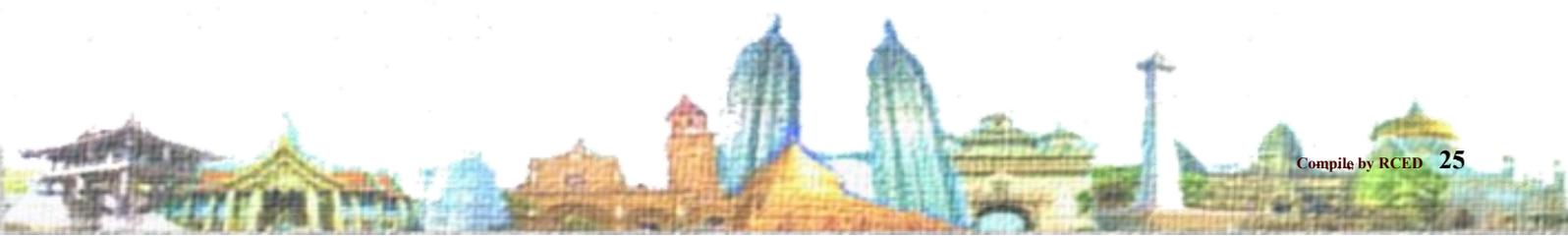
Suspicious with the weight of more than 300 kilograms of boxes that were declared by an express courier service company, customs officers at the cargo section of the Phnom Penh International Airport conducted a physical inspection of the boxes. As a result, the e-cigarettes which were not declared were detected.

The consignment was belonged to a Chinese man in the Guangdong province in China, and the recipient was a Cambodian woman living in Phnom Penh. A Cambodian woman reported that the consignment was brought into Cambodia for personal use only. However, e-cigarettes are prohibited to be imported into Cambodia by the said regulation.



#### Decision:

The items were seized by Customs and the case was placed under the procedural proceeding.





## CASE 1

### SMUGGLING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES VIA HIGH SPEED CRAFTS

#### Case Facts:

Date	:	29 – 30 July 2018
Locus	:	Pekanbaru, Riau – east coast of Sumatera
Detained Goods	:	± 2230 liter = ± 2900 bottles of alcoholic beverage
Modus Operandi	:	Smuggling via 2 High Speed Crafts from Malaysia
Operation Scheme	:	Riau Special Regional Customs Office's Enforcement Team
Follow Up	:	Investigation (Excise Law)

#### Findings:

On 29th to 30th July 2018, Riau Special Regional Customs Office's Enforcement Team managed to thwart an attempt to smuggle approximately two thousands two hundred and thirty liter which equals to approximately two thousands and nine hundred bottles of alcoholic beverages from Malaysia to Pekan baru, Riau.

#### Modus Operandi:

The attempt was carried out by using 2 high speed crafts with 5 motors attached to each one.

#### Decision:

The case was followed up by Investigation for allegedly violating the Excise Law.





## CASE 2

### FALSE DECLARATION OF 3 CONTAINERS FOR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

#### Case Facts:

Date	:	28 June 2018
Location	:	CTPS TPS Container, Port of Tanjung Perak
Detained Goods	:	2.160 Colly = 5.720 Cartons = 51.100 Bottles of Alcoholic Beverage
Modus Operandi	:	Misdeclaration
Origin	:	Singapore
Estimated Goods Value	:	± 1.2 million USD
Alleged Violation	:	Customs Law
Follow up	:	Investigation



#### Findings:

In June 2018, DGCE's Enforcement Team tackled an attempt to smuggle 3 containers containing alcohol beverages brought in from Singapore to Indonesia through Tanjung Perak International Port, Surabaya.

#### Modus Operandi:

The booze was declared as "polyester yarn" and was shipped from Singapore to Tanjung Priok, Jakarta first, then transshipped to Tanjung Perak, Surabaya. DGCE's Enforcement team managed to detect the adversary owing to the fact that its arrival in Tanjung Priok and Tanjung Perak, it was declared with different manifest information.



## CASE 3

### SEIZURE OF COCAINES

#### Case Facts:

Date	:	23 March 2018
Location	:	International Arrival I Gusti Ngurah Rai International Airport (DPS), Bali
Detained Goods	:	± 2 kg of Cocaine
Modus Operandi	:	Drugs concealed inside cardboards and sanding tools compartments
Origin	:	Doha, Qatar (Flight Number QR962)
Estimated Value	:	USD ±350,000
Alleged Violation	:	Narcotics Law
Follow up	:	Handed over to Police for investigation



Sanding Tool Compartment



Cardboard Compartment



#### Findings:

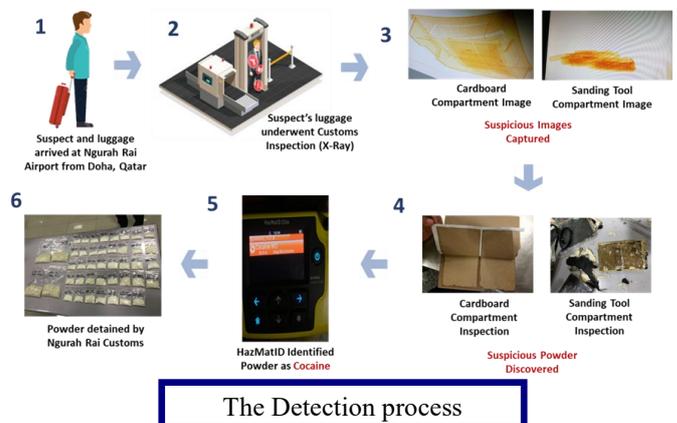
In March 2018, Ngurah Rai Customs successfully detained ± 2 kg of Cocaine concealed inside the Cardboards and Sanding tools compartments. The drug was carried by a passenger with Indonesia nationality from Doha, Qatar onboarding flight number QR962.

#### Modus Operandi:

It was concealed inside the Cardboards and Sanding tools compartments.

#### Decision:

The case was handed over to the Police for further investigation.



The Detection process



## CASE 4

### MISLEADING DECLARATION – DISMANTLED GUN PARTS

#### Case Facts:

<b>Date</b>	:	28 July 2018
<b>Location</b>	:	Renon Post Office, Bali
<b>Goods Detained</b>	:	Gun parts (5 pistol slides and 12 magazines)
<b>Modus Operandi</b>	:	Parts declared as and packed together with lock parts
<b>Origin</b>	:	United States
<b>Alleged Violation</b>	:	Regulation on Gun Circulation
<b>Follow up</b>	:	Seized by Customs



#### Findings:

In July 2018, Ngurah Rai Customs Officers stationed in Renon Post Office in Bali successfully detained 5 pistol slides and 12 magazines which were declared and packed together with door lock parts. The shape of these gun parts made it hard to distinguish from the lock parts they were packaged together with.

#### Modus Operandi:

The package breakdown process figured as below:





## CASE 5

### ATTEMPT TO EXPORT CARVED SKULLS

#### Case Facts:

<b>Date</b>	:	25 May 2018
<b>Location</b>	:	Renon Post Office, Bali
<b>Goods Detained</b>	:	5 units of Carved Skull Ornament
<b>Modus Operandi</b>	:	Concealed inside box souvenir
<b>Destination</b>	:	United States
<b>Violation</b>	:	Law on Cultural Heritage Conservation
<b>Follow up</b>	:	Handed over to National Natural Resource and Culture Conservation Body



#### Findings:

In May 2018, Ngurah Rai Customs Office, Bali detained 5 carved skulls concealed inside a box souvenir ready to be shipped to USA at Renon Post Office. The skulls deemed to have cultural properties which is according to the Law of Cultural Heritage Conservation, the movement of the related goods must be accompanied with license from National Natural Resource and Culture Conservation Body .

#### Modus Operandi:

The shipment was only declared as “Box Souvenir” and had not provided with any license from National Natural Resource and Culture Conservation Body.

#### Decision:

The case was handed over to National Natural Resource and Culture Conservation Body for further examination.



## CASE 6

### COCAINE DETAINED

#### Case Facts:

Location and Date	Customs Office of Ngurah Rai, 06 December 2018
Identification	using X-Ray, and Goods examination
Detained Goods	4.080 gram / cocaine
Aircraft/Route	EK450 / Emirates / UEA - Denpasar
Suspect	D03196896 / JORGE RAFAEL ALBORNOZ GAMARRA / M / Nationality: Peru
Modus operandi	Concealed as suitcase compartment
Follow up	Bali District Police



#### Findings:

In December 2018, Ngurah Rai Customs seized 4.080g of Cocaine concealed inside the passenger's suitcase compartment. The drug was carried by a passenger with Peru nationality onboarding flight number EK450.

#### Modus Operandi:

It was concealed inside the compartment of his suitcase.

#### Decision:

The case was handed over to the Police for further investigation.



## CASE 1

### **SMUGGLING OF WILDLIFE FROM LAOS TO VIETNAM BY PASSENGER BUS**

#### **Case Facts:**

On the 5th August 2018, Lao customs inspection officers of the Regional Customs VI at Savannaket Capital, Laos had detected wildlife animals concealed in one of the vehicles around the area. There were 25 live tortoises, 19 kilograms of pangolins and 43 kilograms of snakes found hidden in the vehicle. The total value of the smuggled wildlife was estimated to be about USD 3,500 .

#### **Modus Operandi:**

A tip-off was received via a phone call on a syndicate of smuggling of wildlife by using a passenger bus from the Pakse Capital to Vietnam. Lao customs inspection officers at the Savannaket Capital then carried out a surveillance patrol on the Road Number 13 of the Southern part of Laos at 9:00 A.M. The customs officers were targeting that passenger bus and when it showed up, it was stopped for physical inspection.

A female passenger was found to have in possession of wildlife inside the bus. Immediately, the customs officers seized all the wildlife and detained the syndicate and conducted some investigation afterwards .

#### **Decision:**

The case was handed over to the Provincial Forest Department for prosecution under the Lao law and CITES Convention .



## CASE 1

### **CUSTOMS SEIZED 7.4 MILLION STICKS OF CIGARETTES**

#### **Case Facts:**

Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD) Negeri Sembilan and Malacca has foiled an attempt to smuggle cigarettes, after seizing three lorries at the North-South Expressway on 31st July 2018. The three 3-tonne trucks were seized at two different locations (Kilometer 188.4 and Kilometer 201.8 of the highway) laden with 7.4 million sticks of cigarettes. Total value of the cigarettes was estimated at MYR 592,000.00 (USD 146,676.00), with import duty of MYR 1,480,000.00 (USD 366,690.00) and excise duty of MYR 2,960,000.00 (USD 733,381.00).

#### **Modus Operandi:**

The three lorries of the same type were suspected from a syndicate as they seemed to be in convoy and carried a same brand of cigarettes. The cigarettes were smuggled from a neighboring country by using a fishing boat and unloaded into the lorries at an illegal jetty for the local market .

#### **Decision:**

Investigation is being carried out under Section 135(1)(e) of Customs Act 1967 for attempting to smuggle dutiable goods. If convicted, the smugglers are liable to a fine of not less than 10 times and not more than 20 times the value of goods or imprisonment of up to three years or both.





## CASE 2

### **CUSTOMS SEIZED 12.3 MILLION STICKS OF CIGARETTES AND 2,600 LITRE OF LIQUORS**

#### **Case Facts:**

Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD) Selangor has succeeded in suppressing two syndicate smuggling involving commodities of liquor and cigarettes. Customs had seized and confiscated the trucks containing 2,600 liters of liquor and 12,300,000 sticks of cigarettes which did not go through Customs approval. Total value of the cigarettes was estimated at MYR 984,000.00 (USD 236,544.00), with total duty of MYR 8,216,400.00 (USD 1,975,143.00). While the total value of the liquor was estimated at MYR 27,533.00 (USD 6,618.00), with total duty of MYR 357,944.00 (USD 86,046.00).

#### **Modus Operandi:**

The modus operandi of the syndicate was to bring in the goods into the free trade zone before being brought out without going through the Customs approval process. The cigarettes were smuggled from a neighboring country by using a fishing boat and unloaded into the lorries at an illegal jetty for the local market.

#### **Decision:**

Investigation is being carried out under Section 135(1)(d) of Customs Act 1967 for attempting to smuggle dutiable goods. If convicted, the smugglers are liable to a fine of not less than 10 times and not more than 20 times the value of goods or imprisonment of up to three years or both.





## CASE 1

### APPREHENDING SPECIALLY DESIGNATED GOODS

**Case Facts:**

On 31st July 2018, Myanmar Customs officers had detained a suspicious container at Hteetan Port Terminal. 500 undeclared refined sugar was found in the imported container which the company failed to provide proof of declaration .

**Modus Operandi:**

The Customs officers found that the items in the imported cargo did not match with the declaration form. They suspected that the company had falsified their import declaration and other related documents. They believed that the company had taken the advantage of the automatic clearance system where the documentary check is subjective.

**Finding:**

The Customs officers found 500 refined sugar during the inspection that was not stated in the declaration. Moreover, these items had arrived over 60 days without permission.

**Decision:**

As a result, the Customs officers charged a fine amounting to USD 225,925 on the company for undeclared goods and falsifying the declaration documents. The suspected company failed to pay for the fine thus the cargo was seized.



## CASE 2

### SEIZURE OF ASSORTED KINDS OF SNAKES

#### Case Facts:

On 17th May 2018, the Myanmar Customs had conducted an inspection on a vehicle and seized assorted alive and dead snakes totaling to 456kg with an estimated value of USD 28,345 (43 million Kyats) at YE PU Checkpoint in the Northern Shan State.

#### Finding:

Myanmar Customs Examination Team had conducted a surprised inspection on a vehicle (Toyota Wish). During the inspection, they discovered undeclared assorted snakes at the back of the car as follows:

1. alive vipers (296 HDS);
2. dead vipers (23 HDS);
3. alive common rat snake (216 HDS), and
4. dead common rat snake (19 HDS)

#### Modus Operandi:

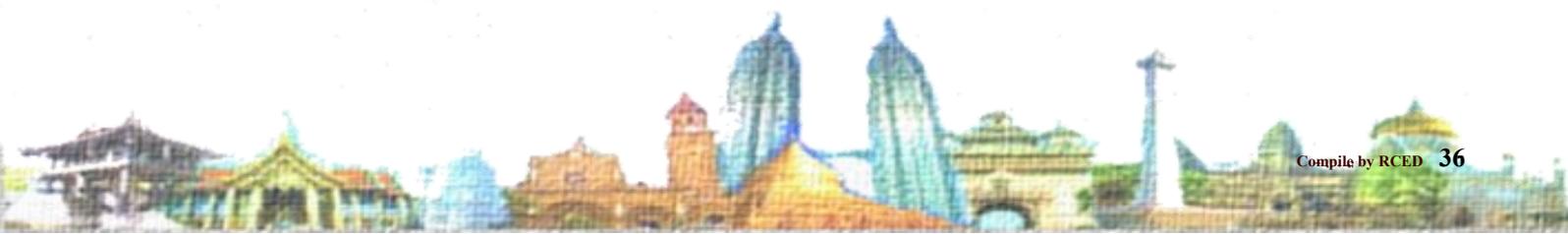
The vehicle was driven from Mandalay to Muse where it was stopped at YE PU Checkpoint in the Northern Shan State for a surprised inspection. The Myanmar Customs Examination discovered the assorted snakes in a different compartments at the back of the car.

#### Decision:

The Myanmar Customs had seized the undeclared assorted snakes and referred to the Forest Department (CITES). The Myanmar Customs will charge the owner of the vehicle for the failure to declare the items found.



Not allowed to import and export item of snakes with carried vehicle





## CASE 3

### SEIZURE OF ALIVE MYNAH

#### Case Facts:

On 21st November 2019, the Myanmar Customs had conducted an inspection on a bus and seized alive mynahs with an estimated value of USD 23,072 (35 million Kyats) at YE PU Checkpoint in the Northern Shan State .

#### Finding:

Myanmar Customs Examination Team had conducted an inspection on an express bus. During the inspection, they discovered undeclared alive mynahs (47 HDS).

#### Modus Operandi:

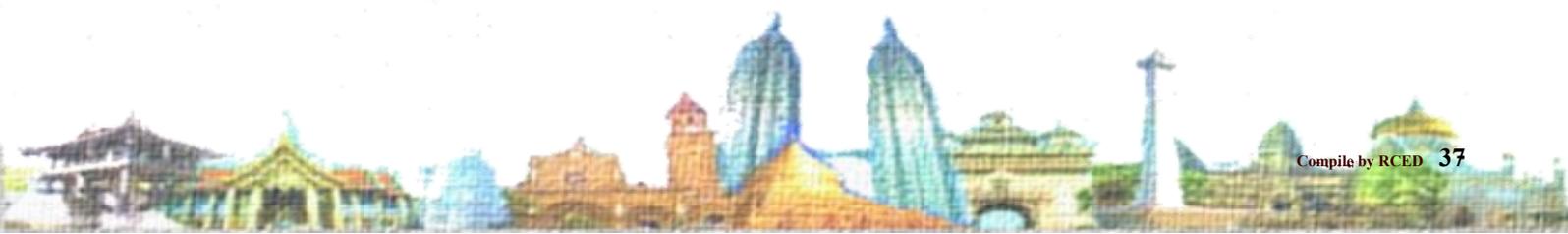
The express bus was driven from Mandalay to Muse where it was stopped at YE PU Checkpoint in the Northern Shan State for a routine inspection. The Myanmar Customs Examination discovered undeclared alive mynahs in the compartment of the bus.

#### Decision:

The Myanmar Customs had seized the undeclared mynahs and referred to the Forest Department (CITES). The Myanmar Customs will charge the owner of the mynahs for the failure to declare the items found.



Without declaration and permission for Mynah and carried vehicle





## CASE 4

### SEIZURE OF FROZEN SHARK FIN

#### Case Facts:

On 04th July 2018, the Myanmar Customs had conducted an inspection on a freezer box truck and seized 280kg frozen shark fins with an estimated value of USD 3,691 (5.6 million Kyats) at YE PU Checkpoint in the Northern Shan State .

#### Finding:

Myanmar Customs Examination Team had conducted a surprised inspection on freezer box truck (Mitsubishi). During the inspection, they discovered undeclared 280kg frozen shark fins.

#### Modus Operandi:

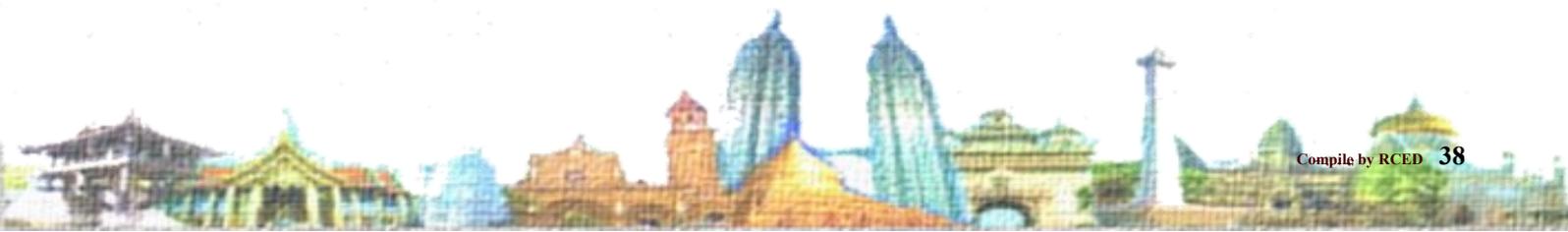
The freezer box truck was driven from Mandalay to Muse where it was stopped at YE PU Checkpoint in the Northern Shan State for a surprised inspection. The Myanmar Customs Examination discovered undeclared shark fins that were not properly declared at the checkpoint .

#### Decision:

The Myanmar Customs had seized the undeclared goods and will charge the owner of the vehicle for the failure to declare the items found.



Without declaration and permission for Frozen Shark Fin and carried vehicle





## CASE 5

### SEIZURE OF ORE POWDER

#### Case Facts:

On 02th November 2018, the Myanmar Customs had seized 36 bags of ore powder, weighing 54kg per bag, with an estimated value of USD 13,185 (20 million Kyats). These bags were dumped at an area near the Ma Yan Chaung Checkpoint in Mon State.

#### Finding:

Myanmar Customs Examination Team had conducted a surprised inspection on a warehouse that was located near Ma Yun Chaung Town. During the inspection, they had found undeclared 36 bags of ore powder totaling to 1,944kg.

#### Decision:

The Myanmar Customs had seized the undeclared goods and action will the taken to the owner of the warehouse.



Without declaration and permission for 36 bags of Ore Powder



## CASE 1

### SEIZURE OF A PARTY DRUG

#### Case Facts:

On 17 August 2018, approximately 14,720 tablets of Ecstasy with an estimated street value of PHP 25 million were detained at the Central Mail Exchange Center in Pasay City. The party drug was found in a package which arrived on 4 August 2018 from France..

#### Modus Operandi:

The party drug was concealed inside a Central Processing Unit (CPU) of a desktop computer .





## CASE 2

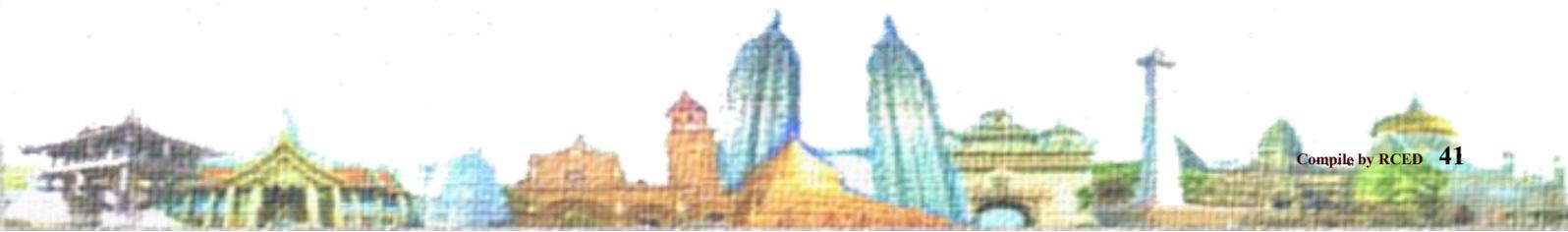
### SEIZURE OF LIVE CORALS

#### Case Facts:

On 19 November 2018, 254 pieces of live corals weighed around 39 kilograms were intercepted at the International Departure Area of Terminal 3, Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA), Pasay City, Manila.

#### Modus Operandi:

The various live corals were found inside two (2) luggage containing the personal belongings of a Taiwanese departing from Philippines to Taiwan.





## CASE 3

### SEIZURE OF SHABU

#### Case Facts:

On 24 January 2019, 26 packages of Shabu weighed approximately 13.1 kilograms with an estimated value of around PHP 90 million were intercepted.

#### Modus Operandi:

The packages were described as Auto Parts (Muffler Parts) originated from West Covina, California, USA, with a declared value of USD500.





## CASE 4

### SEIZURE OF FIREARMS

#### Case Facts:

On 13 February 2019, a total of eight (8) pistols (Glock 19-9MM and Heckler & Koch P2000 V3), 20 ammunition magazines and 266 live ammunition were intercepted in a warehouse in Pasay City from two (2) outbound packages for Taiwan.

#### Modus Operandi:

The shipments were declared as "Solar Panel" and "Tool Cart".





## CASE 1

### **SYNDICATE LEADER JAILED MORE THAN FIVE YEARS AND FINED S\$30 MILLION FOR SMUGGLING DUTY-UNPAID CIGARETTES AND BRIBING CERTIS CISCO SENIOR PROTECTION OFFICER**

#### **Case Facts:**

The offender, a leader of a cigarette smuggling syndicate, was found guilty of masterminding a plan to smuggle duty-unpaid cigarettes out of the Jurong Port into Singapore, and bribing a Certis CISCO senior protection officer stationed at Jurong Port.

On 30 March 2016, Singapore Customs officers conducted an operation in the vicinity of the Jurong Port and uncovered a total of 10,500 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes in a truck. The total duty and GST evaded amounted to about S\$898,600 and S\$87,230 respectively.

The offender was found guilty of abetment by engaging in a conspiracy with his accomplices to give the Certis CISCO senior protection officer gratification amounting to a total of S\$4,500 as a reward for facilitating the smuggling of duty-unpaid cigarettes out of the Jurong Port.

#### **Modus Operandi:**

The offender recruited a truck driver, accomplice A, and another person, accomplice B, to devise a smuggling plan to smuggle duty-unpaid cigarettes out of the Jurong Port.

The offender would place orders for the cigarettes to be shipped from country X to the Jurong Port, and instructed accomplice B who was familiar with the shipping process to receive the shipments of duty-unpaid cigarettes at the port. The offender also instructed accomplice A to collect the duty-unpaid cigarettes at the port and deliver them to other parts of Singapore.

Another person, accomplice C, was introduced to the offender to make arrangements with a Certis CISCO senior protection officer not to conduct checks on the truck that accomplice A was driving. The offender agreed to pay the officer each time the officer assisted in smuggling the duty-unpaid cigarettes out of the Jurong Port.



Singapore Customs officers conducted an operation in the vicinity of the Jurong Port on 30 March 2016. A total of 10,500 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes was recovered from a white truck.



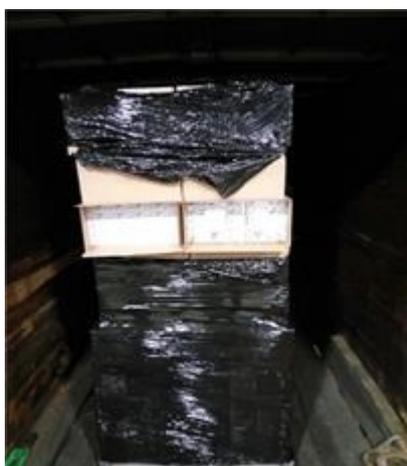
## Decision:

The offender was sentenced by the State Courts on 22 March 2018 to five years and three months' imprisonment and a fine of S\$30 million for masterminding a plan to smuggle duty-unpaid cigarettes out of the Jurong Port into Singapore, and another five months' imprisonment for bribing a Certis CISCO senior protection officer.

As the offender did not pay the court fine, he will serve another 30 months of default imprisonment, bringing the total imprisonment term to five years and 38 months.

The offender, being a repeat offender himself, is liable to an enhanced punishment under the Customs Act, which includes a mandatory jail term of up to six years, as well as a heavier fine of no less than 30 times the duty or Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded. He had been sentenced six years ago, on 15 August 2011, to seven months' imprisonment for dealing in duty-unpaid cigarettes.

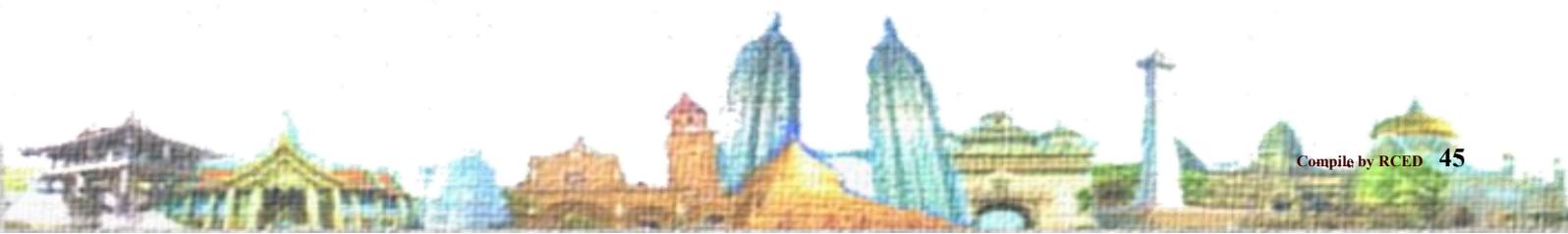
Accomplice A, B and C were sentenced to 36 months' jail each by the State Courts between November 2016 and February 2017 for their various roles in smuggling duty unpaid cigarettes. Accomplice B was also sentenced to a fine of S\$5,000 for his duty unpaid cigarette offence. Accomplice A and C were sentenced to an additional three months' jail each for their corruption offences.



Investigations revealed that the offender instructed accomplice A to collect the duty-unpaid cigarettes at the Jurong Port and deliver them to other parts of Singapore.



To avoid checks when accomplice A drove the truck carrying duty-unpaid cigarettes out of the Jurong Port, the offender agreed to pay a Certis CISCO senior protection officer for not conducting checks on the truck that accomplice A was driving.





## CASE 2

### **WOMAN FINED S\$5,500 FOR EVADING GST ON BRANDED GOODS BOUGHT OVERSEAS FOR SALE IN SINGAPORE**

#### **Case Facts:**

The offender arrived at the Changi Airport on a flight from Paris. She was stopped for checks as she was exiting via the Customs Green Channel. A total of 10 branded items which the offender had bought overseas, including wallets, a handbag and a belt, were found in her luggage. Despite knowing that GST would be payable on the goods, which were worth over S\$11,710, the offender did not declare them for GST payment, and was subsequently arrested.

#### **Modus Operandi:**

The offender had bought the branded goods from France, and she had posted photos of some of the goods on her social media pages (Carousell and WeChat accounts) for sale. The total amount of GST evaded on the goods amounted to about S\$819.

#### **Decision:**

The offender pleaded guilty to one charge of fraudulent evasion of GST on goods brought into Singapore.

Another charge of failure to keep documents and records on goods she had imported previously was taken into consideration in the sentencing.

The offender was sentenced by the State Courts on 18 July 2018 to a fine of S\$5,500 for fraudulent evasion of Goods and Services Tax (GST).

It is the responsibility of all arriving travellers to make accurate and complete declaration of the dutiable and taxable items in their possession for duty and GST payment. Under the Customs Act, any person found guilty of fraudulent evasion of GST will be liable to a fine up to 20 times the amount of tax evaded and/or be jailed for up to two years.

Any importer or exporter found guilty of failing to keep the documents and records relating to their goods for a period of not less than five years will be liable to a fine up to S\$10,000 and/or jailed for up to three years.



The offender was stopped for checks at the Changi Airport as she was exiting via the Customs Green Channel. Despite knowing that GST would be payable on the goods she had bought in France, which were worth over S\$11,710, the offender did not declare them for GST payment.



## CASE 3

### **SINGAPOREAN WOMAN FINED OVER \$32,890 FOR FAILING TO DECLARE BRANDED GOODS SHE BOUGHT OVERSEAS**

#### **Case Facts:**

The offender arrived at the Changi Airport from Europe. She was stopped for checks as she was exiting via the Customs Green Channel. A total of 30 items of luxury goods, including handbags, shoes, coats, dresses, scarves, and other accessories worth over \$469,890, which she had bought from various boutiques in Europe, were found. The total amount of Goods and Services Tax (GST) payable for the luxury goods involved amounted to \$32,892.78.

#### **Modus Operandi:**

The offender was stopped for checks by Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers, who asked her whether she had anything to declare, to which she replied no. Her four luggage bags were then put through the X-ray scanner, and images of several handbags were seen. The ICA officers referred the offender to Singapore Customs for further investigation.

#### **Decision:**

The offender was sentenced by the State Courts on 20 September 2018 to a fine of \$32,892.78 after she pleaded guilty to a charge of failing to declare taxable goods brought into Singapore.

It is the responsibility of all arriving travellers to make accurate and complete declaration of the dutiable and taxable items in their possession for duty and GST payment. Under the Customs Act, any person found guilty of failing to make declaration of dutiable and taxable items will be liable to a fine up to \$10,000, or equivalent of the amount of tax payable, whichever is the greater amount, and/or be jailed for up to 12 months.

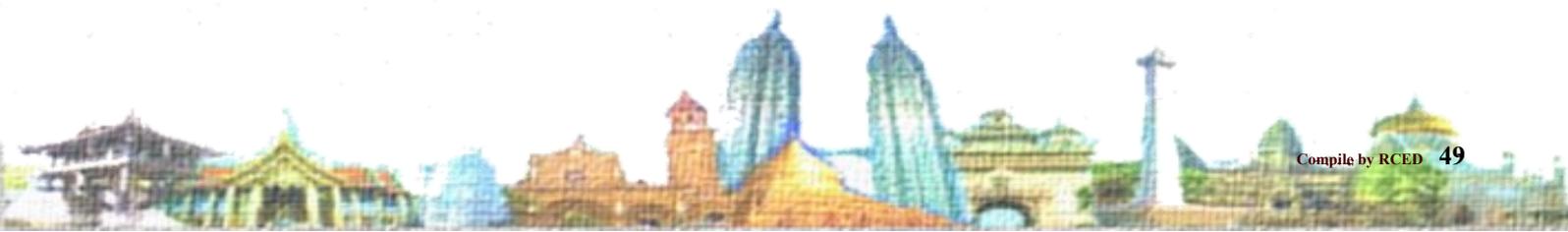




# Singapore Customs



Singapore Customs officers inspected the offender's four luggage bags and found a total of 30 items of luxury goods, including handbags, shoes, coats, dresses, scarves, and other accessories worth over \$469,890. The total amount of GST payable on these luxury goods amounted to \$32,892.78.





## CASE 4

### **SINGAPORE CUSTOMS ARRESTS 12 MEN AND SEIZES ABOUT 12,000 CARTONS OF DUTYUNPAID CIGARETTES FROM INDUSTRIAL PREMISES**

#### **Case Facts:**

Singapore Customs conducted three separate operations in industrial premises located in the western part of Singapore in Nov 2018. A total of about 12,000 cartons of assorted brands of duty-unpaid cigarettes were seized in the three operations. The duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded amounted to about \$1,074,390 and \$78,520 respectively.

#### **Modus Operandi:**

The duty-unpaid cigarettes were hidden in concrete slabs and used excavator arms which were imported into Singapore. These overloads were then transported to industrial premises for other men to dismantle the overloads and retrieve the duty unpaid cigarettes for subsequent distribution to other parts of Singapore.

#### **Decision:**

Nine men were sentenced by the State Courts to between 26 months' to 34 months' imprisonment for their involvement in dealing with duty-unpaid cigarettes, while court proceedings are ongoing for other men.

Buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, having in possession or dealing with duty-unpaid goods are serious offences under the Customs Act and the GST Act. Offenders can be fined up to 40 times the amount of duty and GST evaded and/or jailed for up to six years. Vehicles used in the commission of such offences are also liable to be forfeited.



Singapore Customs officers raided a yard in the western part of Singapore on 24 November 2018 and arrested four men who were retrieving duty-unpaid cigarettes that were hidden in concrete slabs and loading them onto a lorry.



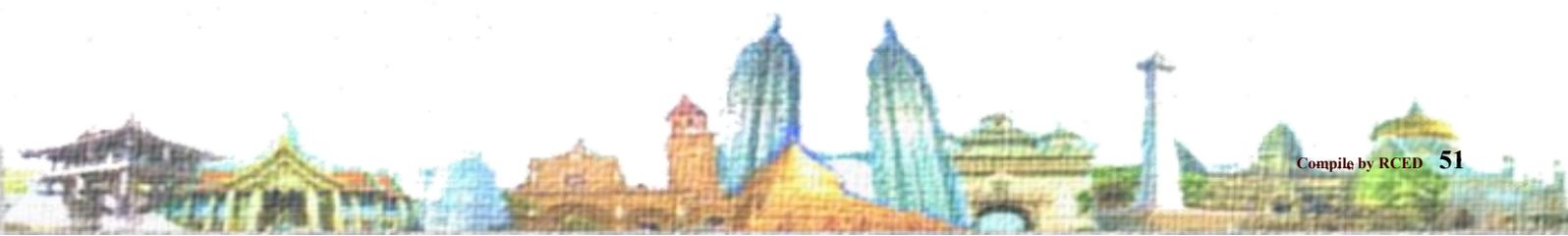
## Singapore Customs



On 7 November 2018, Singapore Customs officers conducted an operation in an industrial unit west of Singapore. Five men were arrested. The duty-unpaid cigarettes were hidden in excavator arms.



In another operation on 2 November 2018 evening, Singapore Customs officers arrested three men in an industrial unit west of Singapore. The three men were retrieving the duty-unpaid cigarettes, which were hidden in concrete slabs.



## CASE 1

### BABY OTTERS SMUGGLING FOR PET IN JAPAN

#### Case Facts:

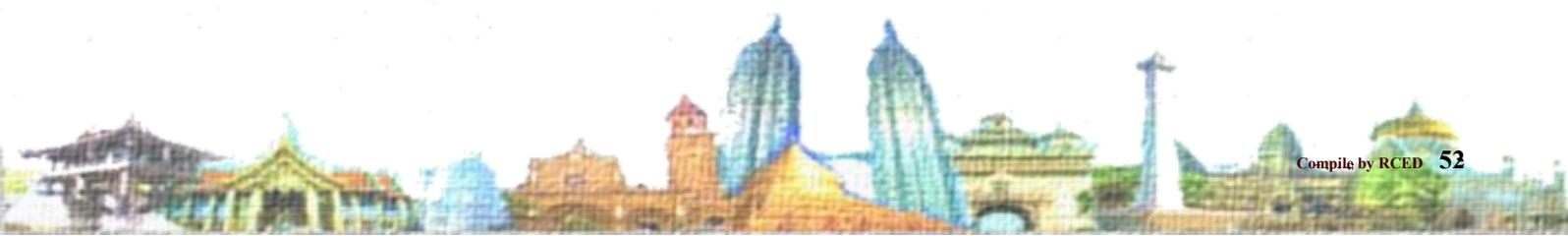
Thai Customs officers of Narcotic Enforcement Unit (Investigation and Suppression Bureau) had arrested 3 Japanese males who tried to smuggle 10 baby otters (*Aonyx cinereus*) from Thailand to Japan.

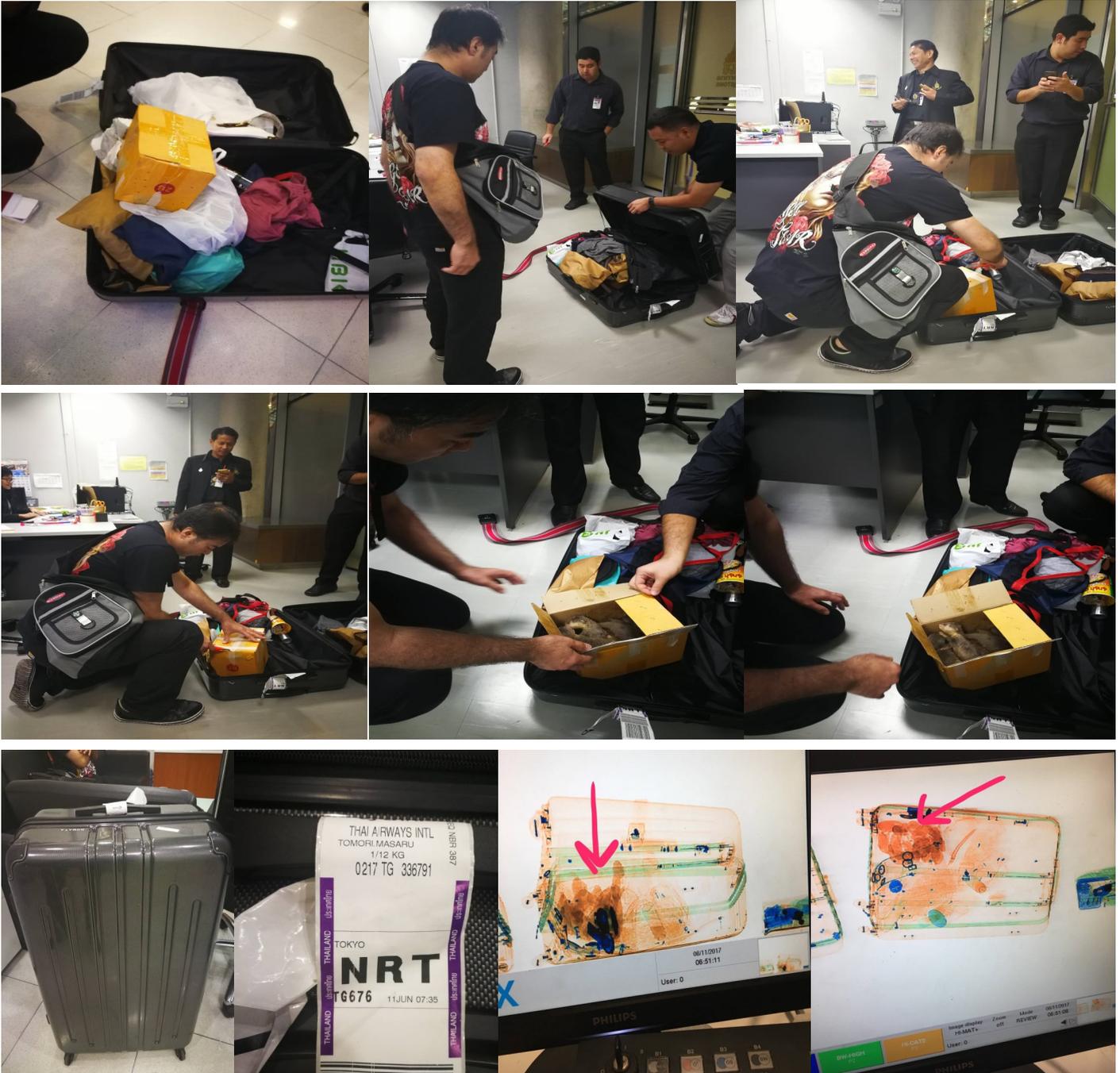


#### Finding:

Through risk profiling, Thai Customs officers had found a suspicious group of Japanese males who were about to fly outbound from Bangkok to Tokyo via Thai Airways on 11th June 2017.

When inspected, it was found that one of the Japanese passengers had intended to bring 10 live baby otters back to Japan.





### Modus Operandi:

Thailand is identified as one of the notorious otter black markets in Southeast Asia. International Union for Conservation of Nature reported that otters are endangered species and the trend for otter smuggling is increasing. Due to its attractive character, rich pet collector willingly to pay from USD 3000 to USD 5000 for one otter.

In relation to this case, the 3 Japanese males checked-in their luggage at the last minute with one luggage only, in the hopes that their actions would be undetected of wildlife trafficking. However, a Custom officer found unusual image from the x-ray and inspected the luggage. Ten live baby otters were found hidden in a box which violated the proper procedures for shipping live animals.



## *Thai Customs Department*

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**Decision:**

The suspects were charged with two charges: under Customs Act B.E. 2560 (2017) and under CITES Appendix II, Wildlife Preservation and Protection Act B.E 2535 (1992) for trafficking endangered species out of the country.

The suspects were to be imprisoned for not exceeding 10 years and the live baby otters will be sent to National Park Department for shelter.

## CASE 2

### IVORY TUSKS SMUGGLING FROM CONGO

#### Case Facts:

Thai Customs officer of Narcotic Enforcement Unit (Investigation and Suppression Bureau) seized 2 shipments which contained 40 and 116 kilograms of Ivory tusks from Brazzaville, Congo and Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo respectively.

#### Finding:

Thai Customs officer had found a suspected cargo, which was declared as Furniture Fitt, from Brazzaville, Congo, through Addis Ababa, Ethiopia inbound to Bangkok, Thailand via Ethiopian Airlines (Flight ET861 and ET628) on 18th September 2017. However, 29 ivory tusks – weighing 40kg was found hidden inside a paper box wrapped with foil paper in the hopes that the items would be undetected.

In addition to that, Thai Customs had also encountered the same case a month later on 30th October 2017. The suspicious cargo, declared as “Fish Maws”, was also from Democratic Republic of Congo through Istanbul, Turkey via Turkish Airlines (Flight TK064) inbound to Bangkok, Thailand. The cargo contained 43 ivory tusks weighing 116kg and 15kg of pangolin scales hidden inside a paper box with foil paper wrapping to avoid x-ray detection.

#### Modus Operandi:

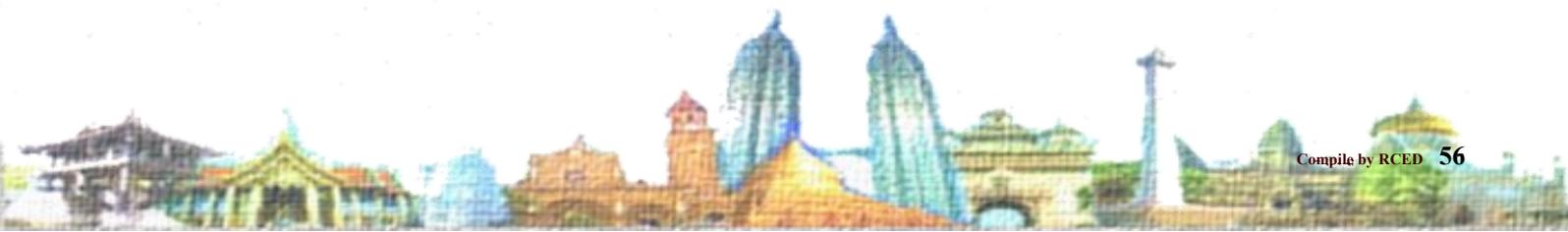
Falsifying declaration is the most common way to smuggle illicit items – for example, fish maws, nuts, stones or edible goods. It is understood that declared goods are mostly from the local products of a country and it is logical to export the items to other countries. However, such syndicate have misuse this privilege to falsify consignee’s name and address to avoid to be detected and tracked from respective authority.

In relation to these cases, Thai Customs are always aware of all the shipments originated from Africa and being declared as local, edible products or household appliances in which these two suspected shipments matched the criteria. The Thai Customs had investigated further where they sent a special team to visit the consignee’s house. They found that the house is bigger than standardized housing where Africans walked freely in and out from the house. The Ministry of Interior also reported that there were 5 person living in the house in which three of them are South Africans.

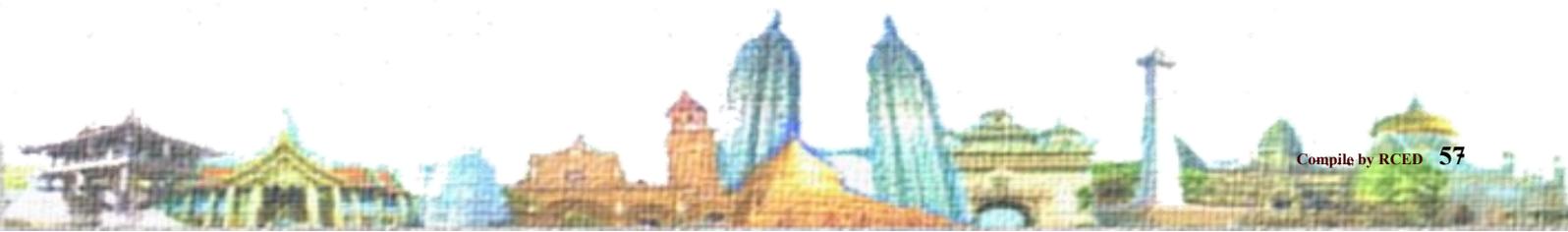
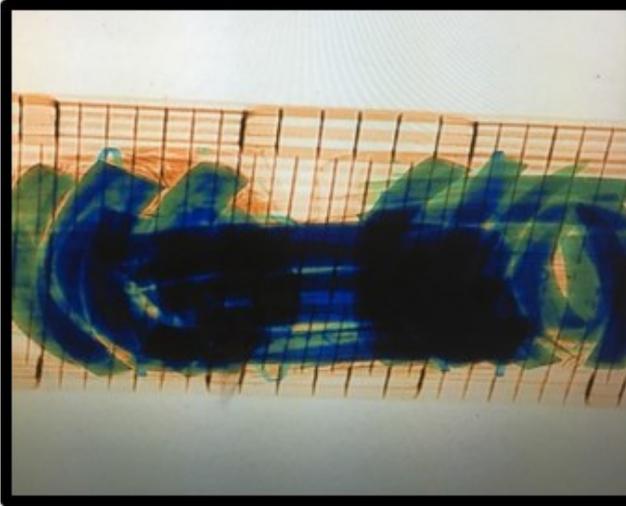
#### Decision:

The involved parties will be charge under Customs Act, B.E 2469 (1926), as well as Wildlife Preservation and Protection Act, B.E 2535 (1992) for bringing prohibited goods into Thailand, which they would be imprisoned for no longer than 10 years. Moreover, with close cooperation with the African counterparts, it was informed that the consignor and involved parties of Brazzaville, Congo were also being charged. The case was also transferred to the Natural and Resources Police for in-depth investigation.

Brazzaville, Congo



Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo





## CASE 1

### SEIZURE OF METHAMPHETAMINE HIDDEN IN THE FORM OF PERSONAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL GIFTS

#### Case Facts:

After three (3) months of monitoring, on 25 and 26 June 2018, Ho Chi Minh (HCM) City Customs Department has successfully closed the special project E318, by seizing 12.5 kg of methamphetamine which were sent from European countries to HCM City through international post and express delivery, hidden in the form of personal and non-commercial gifts.

On 26 June 2018, the Anti-Drugs Enforcement Unit of HCM City Customs Department was assigned to coordinate with the Express Customs Branch, Unit 6 – Anti-smuggling and Investigation Department – General Department of Vietnam Customs, C47 – Ministry of Public Security, to conduct physical inspection of four (4) packages which were sent via international airmail. This led to the discovery of 4.5 kg of methamphetamine from the packages.

Earlier, the working group also examined four packages which were sent by express delivery and seized more than 8 kg of methamphetamine. Thus, with this special project, the Customs Department of HCM City has arrested about 12.5 kg of methamphetamine.

#### Modus Operandi:

At first glance, the packages are not particularly suspicious, even when they are opened for examination. They are just household items such as clothes, toys, shoes, and speakers. However, when the Customs officers detected thousands of drugs hidden in a carton, and in the bowels of the speakers, it showed the sophisticated tricks of drug smugglers.

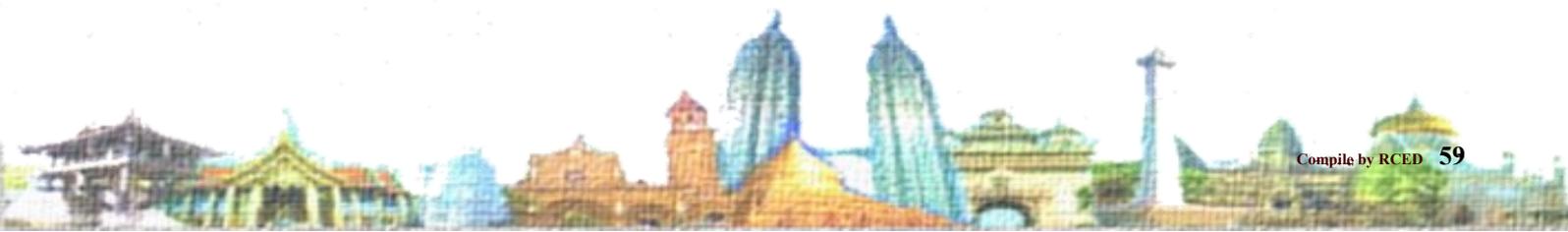
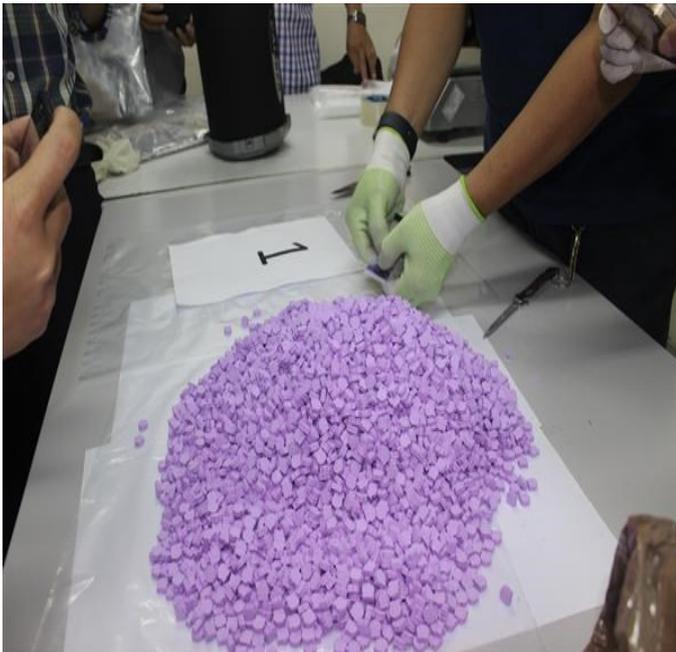
Thousands of methamphetamine tablets were pressed onto two-sided tape, spread in a thin layer and put in between the layers of the carton. The Customs officers had to use little sharp knives to cut into each carton, and then prized each tablet out in order to remove them from the tape.

For the speakers containing methamphetamine, the smugglers wrapped the methamphetamine packages using tape, tucked in the bowels of the speakers and re-inserted as normal. The senders stated fake addresses in the recipient's details. Even if the addresses were real, they were apartment blocks with hundreds houses or coffee shops. With this trick, the smugglers will be able to deny their involvement when the enforcement agencies investigate.

#### Decision:

The case is under further investigation.







## CASE 2

### DISCOVERY OF COCAINE IN SCRAP CONTAINER

#### Case Facts:

On 24 July 2018, Ba Ria - Vung Tau (BR-VT) Customs Department cooperated with PC 47, Police of BR-VT Province to seize 100 cocaine cakes hidden in a container of imported scrap taken into Cai Mep Port on the same day. It was the largest drug seizure ever in the province with about 100 kg of cocaine, estimated at about 700 billion VND.



Imported scrap shipment containing cocaine

#### Modus Operandi:

The ship loaded with the scrap container travelled from Trinidad and Tobago across Panama and China to Cai Mep Port in Vietnam.

The container that was inspected is one of the 17 scrap containers of Pomina 2 Steel Company (headquartered in Phu My 1 Industrial Zone, Phu My town, BR-VT Province) which had just arrived at Cai Mep Port on 24 July 2018. The imported goods were described as steel scrap on the e-manifest declaration.

The actual seal during the inspection of the container was different from the receipts, including the arrival notice of the carrier. After checking the container, the enforcement officers discovered four (4) sacks in which each sack contained a black nylon bag. Inside them were a total of 100 bars of white powder cake.

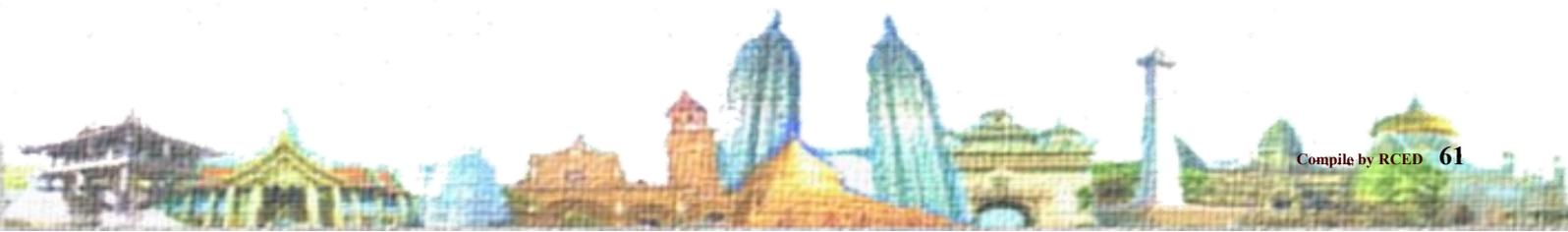
The test results showed that it was 100 bars of cocaine with a total weight of 100 kg.





**Decision:**

The Customs Enforcement Unit cooperates with Cai Mep Port Customs Branch and coordinates with PC 47, BR-VT Provincial Police to investigate the case.





## CASE 3

### SEIZURE OF IVORY AND PANGOLIN SCALES IN DA NANG PORT

#### Case Facts:

On 4 October 2018, the Central Anti-Smuggling Enforcement Unit – Unit 2 (Anti-smuggling and Investigation Department, General Department of Vietnam Customs) coordinated with Da Nang Customs Port Customs Branch (Da Nang Customs Department) and the Border Defense force, Police of Da Nang, Economic Police Department (Ministry of Public Security), to conduct a physical inspection and discovered ivory and pangolin scales. Nearly 2 tons (1,803.7 kg) of ivory and over 6 tons (6,334.2 kg) of pangolins scales were seized.

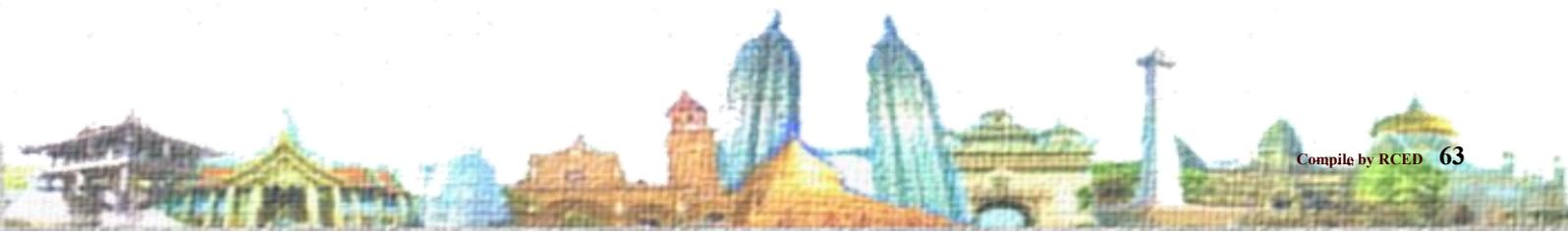
#### Modus Operandi:

The shipment containing the prohibited goods was transported by Lindavia ship to Da Nang Port on 29 September 2018. The shipment originated from Nigeria and the goods was stated on the bill of lading as scrap (new PET plastic). However, thorough inspection showed that there were lots of ivory and pangolins scales.

#### Decision:

Based on the jurisdiction of criminal procedure law, Da Nang Customs Department had finalized the case file and transfer it to the police for further investigation.







## CASE 4

### SEIZURE OF METHAMPHETAMINE HIDDEN IN THE FORM OF PERSONAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL GIFTS II

#### Case Facts:

In the first month of 2019, Ho Chi Minh (HCM) City Customs Department has successfully detected and seized nearly 8 kg (7.7 kg) of methamphetamine which were sent from different countries to HCM City through international post and express delivery; hidden in the form of personal and non-commercial gifts.

#### Modus Operandi:

The tricks used in hiding the drugs were very sophisticated. Thousands of methamphetamine tablets were hidden with various concealments in each parcel. The parcels' bill of lading described the items as a record player and toys sent from Belgium, Netherlands, and France to Vietnam via express delivery.

#### Decision:

The case has been transferred to the police for further investigation.



Concealment in record player



