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SEPANG: The Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) Customs Department has thwarted three attempts to smuggle methamphetamine (meth) totalling 27kg, worth RML9 million, into the country.

Customs deputy director-general (Enforcement/Compliance) Datuk Zulkifli Yahya said the drugs were flown in from Chennai, India, via KLIA and klia2 by four male "tourists", with Kuala Lumpur being their final destination.

The suspects, aged between 23 and 53, are Indian nationals.

One of them, aged 43, has entered the country eight times as a tourist.

They were detained by the KLIA Customs as they were going through the airport scanner system.

"The first case involved a man from Chennai who flew to KLIA on Oct 20. We detained him when we discovered the drugs hidden in his luggage.

"He was trying to smuggle 5kg of meth worth RM350,000," Zulkifli said yesterday.

Present was the new director of KLIA Customs, Abdul Wahabi Abdullah.

The suspect in the second case tried to hide the drugs in 35 cartoon-inspired minibags placed in his luggage bags.

"We detained him (at klia2) on Nov 2. When we scanned his two bags, we discovered 8.4kg of meth worth RM588,000."

The third case, involving two men aged 43 and 52, was the biggest catch.

Despite the suspects' attempt to hide 14kg of meth in two big cans of biscuits filled with turmeric powder, the KLIA airport scanner showed a different colour code for the hidden drugs.

Zulkifli confirmed that the drugs were meant for the domestic market.

The cases are being investigated under Section 39(B) of the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952, which carries the death penalty if found guilty. One of the suspects has since been charged, while the rest have been remanded.