

Australian drug suspect a frequent visitor here

KUALA LUMPUR: The Australian who was arrested by police at a cafe in Jalan Yap Kwan Seng here for alleged drug possession last week was a frequent visitor to Malaysia, especially in the last three months.

Checks revealed that since December, he had come here on five occasions before he was nabbed with two packets of syabu worth RM56,000 in a sting operation last Thursday.

The drugs were found hidden in a container of potato chips.

The suspect, a 32-year-old lorry driver from Western Australia, was said to have several previous convictions in Australia.

It was revealed yesterday that prominent lawyer Datuk Seri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah has taken up his case here. Shafee said he met his client for 35 minutes on Tuesday and was confident that they had a strong defence. He added that the suspect looked fine.

The suspect's remand order expires today and police are expected to seek an extension to facilitate investigations. Two locals and a Filipina maid who were picked up from the Australian's rented upmarket condominium in Jalan Yap Kwan Seng were also expected to be further remanded.

The unit had closed-circuit television cameras at the front door. Police are puzzled why the Australian needed them as the condominium building had all the necessary security features.

Sources also revealed that the Australian and the two locals tested positive for drugs.

Reports stated that the suspect had studied at Christian Brothers College in Fremantle and had worked in numerous jobs, including as a dog groomer and physical training instructor.

His arrest has been widely reported in Australian newspapers, with one quoting Prime Minister Julia Gillard as saying that she did not want to speculate on the suspect's fate.

"The best thing we can do is to provide him with consular service," she had said.

In a separate case, police arrested four suspects and seized heroin worth RM300,000 at a nursery in Jalan Hulu Langat, Batu 9, Cheras, here, on Monday.

City police chief Datuk Mohamad Salleh said police seized 20 packets of heroin which were in a travel bag.

The suspects, between the ages of 25 and 41, have been remanded.