

13 March 2012 | Last updated at 11:28PM

Drug mule nabbed with syabu worth RM770,000

BUKIT MERTAJAM: A local woman's first-ever holiday trip abroad could turn out to be her last after she was nabbed with 3.1kg of methamphetamine worth RM770,000 at the Penang International Airport on returning from Bangladesh.

The arrest of the woman, in her 20s, has prompted the authorities to suspect that international drug trafficking syndicates are using the airport as an entry point to smuggle drugs into the country.

State Customs Department director Datuk Zulkifli Yahya said this was the first arrest of a drug mule involving arrivals from Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Zulkifli did not discount the possibility that international drug trafficking syndicates were now using different countries to smuggle drugs into Malaysia as authorities had stepped up surveillance on passengers arriving from particular nations.

Previously, syndicates had been using passengers departing to India, China, Iran and South American countries to smuggle drugs into the country.

On Sunday's haul, Zulkifli said the woman was stopped by the department's passenger inspection special unit upon arriving from Dhaka at about 10.50am.

She was stopped after a scan revealed dubious items in her two luggage bags.

The woman, who was unemployed, had departed from Dhaka and transited in Singapore before arriving in Penang.

"We found 17 pairs of sandals in her luggage and following a thorough inspection discovered 18 packets containing methamphetamine or syabu in nine of the sandal pairs," he said at a press conference in Prai yesterday.