

PDRM: Nigerian international drug smuggling syndicate busted

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KUALA LUMPUR: Police have busted an international syndicate smuggling ganja from Nigeria with eight syndicate members detained in two major operations in Klang Valley.

Federal NCID director Commissioner Datuk Seri Mohd Mokhtar Mohd Shariff said this is the first time police have come across a case where ganja is smuggled into Malaysia directly from Nigeria.

"The success of the operations is also due to the close cooperation with the United States' Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Royal Malaysian Customs Department," he told reporters at press conference at Bukit Aman police headquarters here today.

In the first operation on Sept 30, the NCID and Special Tactical Intelligence Narcotics Group (STING) raided premises in Petaling Jaya, Puchong and Cyberjaya, leading to the arrest of five suspects.

"Two Nigerian men aged 31 and 25, a 30-year-old Republic of Guinea national, a Ugandan man, 30, as well as a 38-year-old local woman were arrested in the first operation.

"On Oct 4, our investigators nabbed two Nigerian men in their early 30s and a 29-year-old Indonesian woman after raids in Kepong and Cyberjaya," Mokhtar added.

He said both raids resulted in RM164,000 worth of syabu and ganja being seized.

"Some of the drugs were stashed in boxes of neckties but what surprised us is that this is the first time we foiled a ganja smuggling attempt directly from Nigeria via courier service," he said, adding that normally Ganja smuggled through the Golden Triangle.

The Golden Triangle is a region in Northern Thailand, Laos and Myanmar that is infamously known as a production region of drugs.

Mokhtar further revealed that about 125 Nigerians were arrested since January this year compared to 139 last year.

"These criminals are getting more creative in their attempt to evade the authorities but we are one step ahead of them. The worse part is when these foreigners try to abuse their student visa and carry out these unscrupulous activities. About 41 Nigerians have abused their student visa this year," he added.

The syabu was smuggled in from Mumbai, India.

He said the drugs were believed to be for the local market.

The suspects have been remanded and the case is being investigated under Section 39B of the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952 which carries the mandatory death sentence upon conviction.

Police have seized 36 pistols and 1,085 bullets, drugs worth RM161 million, namely syabu (593kg), ketamine (56kg), ecstasy pills (162,665), yaba pills (839,955) and Erimin 5 pills (1,812,038) between Jan 1 and Oct 2.□□□□