

'Smugglers aggressive in avoiding arrest'

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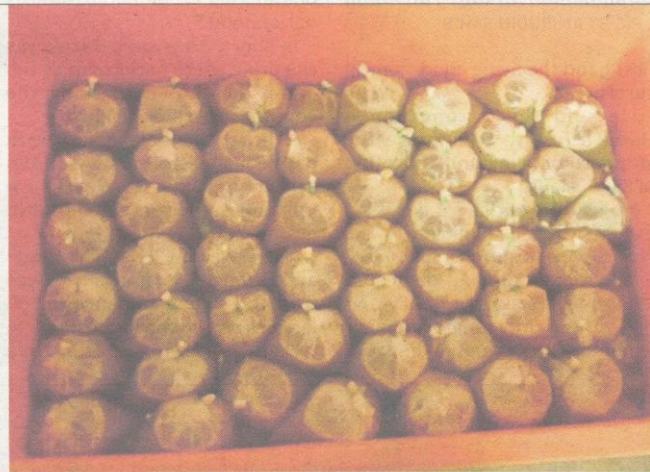
KANGAR: Tailgating and getting their vehicles rammed by smugglers are some of the challenges faced by Perlis National Border Security Agency (Aksem) personnel while protecting the borders.

The agency has suffered losses due to the damage caused by smugglers when they rammed the enforcement teams' vehicles to avoid being captured.

Perlis Aksem commander Deputy Superintendent Syed Basri Syed Ali said smugglers were becoming more aggressive, with even small-scale ketum smugglers acting boldly.

He cited last week's incident where two men trying to smuggle out more than 100 packets of ketum juice, rammed their Proton Saga into the side of the enforcement team's Toyota Hilux.

Fortunately, he said, none of his men were injured in the crash and



Ketum smugglers are getting bolder in trying to avoid arrest. FILE PIC

in previous incidents.

"We are used to getting threats from smuggling syndicates, especially those involving liquor, drugs or large-quantity items.

"These syndicates employ tontos to escort their smugglers.

"Sometimes, these tontos ram their vehicles into ours while we are pursuing the vehicles filled with contraband.

"Those operating on their own, such as ketum smugglers, are beginning to act violent as well.

"Previously, these smugglers hardly resisted arrest," he told

the New Straits Times.

To prevent casualties among his personnel, Syed Basri ensured that his teams followed standard operating procedures when carrying out operations.

"The reason we use four-wheel-drives during operations is to minimise the chances of such incidents taking place.

"The teams have to ensure that they have sufficient manpower and ride in at least two vehicles, especially when making arrests.

"Most importantly, they have to ensure they take along their weapons and equipment when on duty," he said.



Deputy Superintendent Syed Basri Syed Ali