

## **Zero tolerance for black sheep**

KUCHING: The Customs and Excise Department recorded a total of 92 disciplinary cases involving its officers throughout last year.

Director-general Datuk Seri Mohamed Khalid Yusuf said among others, the cases involved absence from duty, not following procedures, abuse of power and corruption.

"Thirty-one officers were terminated from their services in which most involved absence from duty.

"There were 24 corruption cases with 11 cases involving abuse of power," he told a press conference before chairing the 68th Malaysian Customs Directors Meeting here yesterday.

He said apart from termination, officers who were found guilty were either demoted or suspended.

"We will take strict action against any of our officers who are found to have committed any offences.

"We want to ensure that our officers discharge their duties efficiently as integrity and discipline are important to our department," he said.

On another matter, Khalid said the department arrested a total of 92 cases of drug smuggling so far this year, an increase of 34 cases recorded throughout last year.

"In 2009, most of the drug mules arrested were citizens from the Indian continent, while last year, most of them were from the Middle East.

"However, most of those arrested so far this year were Malaysians," he said, without revealing the figures.

To curb drug trafficking, he said the department was hoping for more budget to purchase high-tech equipment to be stationed, particularly at airports, on top of the X-ray machines, closed-circuit televisions and cameras currently available there.

"We are also working closely with with our counterparts in other countries where we always exchange intelligence information.

"At the same time, local mail and express delivery agencies are also working closely with our department, especially when it comes to parcel deliveries," Khalid added.