

SEIZES RM1.6B WORTH OF CONTRABAND

Customs Dept foils 7,215 smuggling attempts

KUALA LUMPUR: The Customs Department foiled 7,215 smuggling cases last year, with a total seizure and tax value amounting to RM1.64 billion.

Customs director-general Datuk Anis Rizana Mohd Zain-udin said this was an increase of 85.92 per cent compared with RM884.27 million in 2023.

She attributed part of the success to a shift in the department's enforcement strategy implemented last year, moving from an output-based approach (number of cases) to an outcome-based approach (value and duties/taxes).

"The main focus is on high-impact cases, such as those involving large-scale containers."

"This approach aims to maximise the effectiveness of enforcement and ensure that the nation's revenue is more comprehensively protected," she said in an interview on Bernama TV's *Ruang Bicara* programme.

She said the Customs Department was crucial in driving fiscal policies, ensuring orderly trade management and combating smuggling, contributing to the nation's prosperity.

"The allocation given to the department is not just for operational costs like other government agencies, but a strategic investment to ensure a high

economic return for the country in terms of revenue collection and enforcement effectiveness," she said.

While on-air, Anis Rizana said the department had acquired 66 new high-tech, artificial intelligence-powered scanning machines for officers to perform their duties more efficiently, 30 units of refurbished marine boats to combat crossborder crimes and 20 Labrador Retriever sniffer dogs to boost drug detection.

"The department has also taken proactive measures by utilising the allocated funds to repair outdated quarters, involving 124 housing locations across the country, to look after the welfare of its personnel," she said, adding that assistance was also extended to its personnel in Kelantan affected by floods.

Anis Rizana invited the public to celebrate the 43rd International Customs Day, which will be held at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre on Monday.

"Various activities and exhibitions by nearly 30 exhibitors will be featured, in addition to a theatrical performance of 'Syahbandar' that reflects on the history of the Customs' role since the Melaka Sultanate," she added.

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