

Penang Customs foil municipal waste smuggling bid

BUTTERWORTH: An attempt to smuggle two containers loaded with 40.25 tonnes of municipal solid waste was foiled at the North Butterworth Container Terminal.

The effort was a collaboration between the Penang Customs Department (JKDM) and the Environment Department.

Penang Customs director Datuk Rohaizad Ali said the containers contained waste materials such as plastic, rubber, wood, stones and metal, all of which are classified as prohibited imports under the Customs Act 1967.

He stated that the containers had been shipped from Savannah in the United States by a local company and that the inspection was also observed by a representative from the company.

"The importer falsely declared the items as 'aluminium flakes' in an attempt to avoid the need for an Approved Permit," he told a

press conference at the state Customs Prevention Complex in Perai here yesterday, Bernama reported.

The inspection on Aug 23 revealed that the actual contents were municipal waste, which is subject to special controls and requires technical approval from the relevant authorities.

Following this, JKDM detained two local men, in their 40s and 50s, for investigation under Section 135(1) (a) and Section 133(1)(a) of the Customs Act 1967.

Rohaizad also said that as of Aug 31, the state had seized various commodities worth RM75.227mil, including duties, across 214 cases.

Of these, cigarettes accounted for the highest value of seizures, totalling RM11.51mil, with an additional duty of RM26.485mil from 80 cases, he added.



Illegal haul: Rohaizad (centre) displaying some of the municipal solid waste imported by a local company from the United States. — Bernama