



05 APR, 2024

Customs busts counterfeit alcoholic beverage syndicate in Klang

New Straits Times, Malaysia



1,753 LITRES OF ALCOHOLIC DRINKS SEIZED

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KLANG: The Central Zone Customs Department has busted a locally manufactured counterfeit alcoholic beverage syndicate, seizing 1,753 litres of alcoholic drinks.

Its deputy director, Norlela Ismail, said the syndicate would bottle alcohol for local manufacturing, with the seizure amounting to RM165,000.

The syndicate, she said, was operating behind the premises of a recycling company and a welding company in Batu 9, Cheras, Selangor, to avoid detection.

Two men, aged 64 and 54, believed to be workers of the syndicate, were detained to assist in an investigation into the seizure.

One of the detainees is a person with disabilities.

Norlela said: "On April 1, acting on information and investigation, the enforcement unit raided and inspected the premises in Batu 9, where bottling of hard liquor is suspected to have taken place.

"We found that bottles and packaging of various brands and types of hard liquor bore counterfeit tax stamp labels.

"The 1,753 litres of hard liquor is estimated at a total value of RM40,500, with an estimated unpaid duty amounting to RM124,500," she said at the Customs Department's marine base here yesterday.

She added that further inves-



Central Zone Customs Department deputy director Norlela Ismail (centre) showing the seized counterfeit alcoholic beverages and illicit cigarettes at the department's marine base in Klang yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

tigations were ongoing to determine if the alcoholic beverages were fake, as no machines to manufacture the drinks were found.

"We also found 100 cartons of empty bottles at the premises. The syndicate is believed to have been in operation for six months."

Norlela said the premises was found to be unlicensed under the Excise Act 1976.

The case is being investigated under Section 135(1)(d) of the

Customs Act 1967 for knowingly storing untaxed goods or prohibited items and Section 3(1) of the Law Reform (Eradication of Illicit Samsu) Act 1976.



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SUMMARIES

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