



07 JAN, 2024

## STRICTER CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT IN FOREST CITY

New Sunday Times, Malaysia



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### Customs boosting enforcement at Forest City

THE department's D-G, responding to an NST expose of the smuggling of duty-free alcoholic beverages and cigarettes from the special economic and financial zone in Johor, says stricter measures will be taken at the exit checkpoint. She emphasises that regular transfers of Customs personnel will result in 'a clean and well-organised work environment'.

» REPORT BY **JASSMINE SHADIQE** ON PAGE 5

### Duty-free cigarettes, liquor smuggled out of Forest City

RUNNERS are taking advantage of lax enforcement at the Special Financial Zone in Johor to spirit out crates of contraband.

» REPORT ON PAGE 5



*The NST Jan 5 report on smuggling at Forest City.*



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### ALLEGED SMUGGLING

# STRICTER CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT IN FOREST CITY

Recent transfers part of efforts to prevent misconduct, says Customs D-G

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**T**HE exposé of rampant smuggling of duty-free alcoholic beverages and cigarettes from Forest City in Gelang Patah has prompted the Customs Department into acknowledging it as a pressing concern.

Its director-general, Datuk Anis Rizana Mohd Zainudin, said stricter enforcement measures were needed at the Customs exit checkpoint gantry in Forest City, and this was being addressed by the department.

"The measures taken include several procedures to strengthen enforcement activities and ensure accountability," she said without going into details.

She said the recent transfer exercise involving Customs officers holding sensitive positions was part of ongoing efforts to prevent

occurrences of misconduct and abuse of power.

She said such transfers were in line with the department's policies for officers who had served between three and five years.

"Again, I am not suggesting that Customs personnel are being transferred due to corrupt practices. I am justifying that transfers and job rotation exercises are strategic measures aimed at maintaining a clean and well-organised work environment.

"It is important to embrace these changes despite potential resistance from those affected.

"Every government officer took an oath and signed a pledge of integrity and commitment to their duties and responsibilities," she said.

Anis Rizana said this when asked to comment on the *New Straits Times* article titled "Forest City a Smuggling Hotspot" published on Friday.



Forest City in Gelang Patah is the only commercial and residential property in the country that houses a duty-free complex within its compound. FILE PIC

It was reported that duty-free alcoholic beverages and cigarettes were being smuggled out of Forest City's duty-free complex, facilitated by agents willing to spirit out such items for the right price.

Acknowledging that the alleged smuggling activities involving duty-free liquor and cigarettes in Forest City would cause substantial losses in revenue for the government, Anis Rizana said stricter enforcement was required.

She also reminded Customs Department personnel of their pledge to uphold high ethical standards, abide by the regulations and laws governing their roles and perform their duties honestly, diligently and responsibly.

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**FOREST CITY A SMUGGLING HOTSPOT**  
 Agents at complex willing to bring out beer for minimum of RM425 per crate, while rates differ for liquor and cigarettes

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The exposé on smuggling in Forest City published by the 'New Straits Times' on Friday.



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### SUMMARIES

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