

**Customs Dept Collects RM8.07 Billion To Date, 90 Per Cent Of Jan-March Target**  
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JASIN, March 27 (Bernama) -- The Royal Customs Department has collected RM8.07 billion to date or 90 per cent of the RM9.1 billion target set for January to March, a senior customs official said Thursday.

Customs Deputy Director-General (Enforcement and Compliance) Datuk Matrang Suhaili said the department aimed to collect RM36 billion this year.

The cigarette tax is the second largest contributor after the vehicle tax though cigarette smuggling has caused the nation to lose about RM1.9 billion every year, he said.

The department collected RM33.13 billion last year, up 2.49 per cent from RM32.2 billion in 2012, he said.

"This year's target is achievable through enforcement strategies designed to deter smuggling of goods, especially smuggling of cigarettes and liquor," he told reporters after the launch of a campaign to eradicate illegal cigarette sales and a community service programme with Felda Tun Ghaffar settlers in Bukit Senggeh, here.

The campaign was launched by State Executive Councillor Datuk Latiff Tamby Chik.

Matrang said the department has thwarted 1,515 smuggling attempts and seized contraband worth about RM345 million between January and March 20 against 1,650 cases with unpaid duty on goods valued at RM156 million in the same period last year.

Vehicles, drugs, cigarettes, alcoholic beverages, firecrackers and fireworks formed the bulk of the seized items, he said.

A total of 7,050 smuggling cases with contraband worth RM646.5 million were seized last year, he added.

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