

Subsidised diesel smuggled in modified lorry tanks in Kuantan, two nabbed

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Pahang Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Ministry director Datuk Mark Ujin said the modified compartment comprised eight square tanks with a storage capacity of 1,000 litres each. - NSTP/ Asrol Awang

KUANTAN: Two men were caught filling diesel from petrol stations into modified tanks on their lorry that could store up to 8,000 litres of fuel which was intended for sale at a higher price.

Pahang Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Ministry director Datuk Mark Ujin said the modified compartment comprised eight square tanks with a storage capacity of 1,000 litres each.

The seized subsidised fuel is believed to be intended for sale to buyers outside Pahang at a higher price.

An enforcement team from the Pahang Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry ambushed the lorry at 9.30am yesterday as the two suspects were filling their tanks at a petrol station in Indera Mahkota here.

"The seven-tonne lorry had a modified pump and illegally modified compartments. There was a pump and hose above the tank where the diesel from the fuel tank was channeled into the eight square tanks.

"On the surface, anybody would think that the men were refueling diesel into the vehicle's fuel tank.

"Since petrol stations are allowed to sell a limited amount of subsidised diesel for each transaction, the two men have been travelling from one petrol station to another to fill their tanks. Yesterday, they filled about 1,000 litres into the tanks," he said.

The seized fuel and vehicle was worth RM59,000, he said during a press conference at the state Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Ministry headquarters here today.

Mark said initial investigations showed that the fuel would be taken to a collection centre outside the state, before being sold.

"To avoid detection, the suspects change their modes of transportation, from lorries to pick up trucks. We are tracking down the owner of the lorry," he said, adding the two suspects had been detained.

The case is being investigated under Rule 18(1) of the Control of Supplies Act 1961 and convicted individuals may be fined not more than RM1 million, or imprisonment not exceeding three years or both.