



Press Release – OP Persian Express

Introduction

The Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF) have once again showcased their determination in mitigating the flow of narcotics into the region. Although perceived to be a small island nation, service personnel of the SDF have proven that they are an experienced, motivated and effective organization continually punching above their weight and delivering decisive blows to those who are intent on destroying lives and creating social unrest through the distribution and consumption of narcotics.

The Operation

The operation began on the evening of Tuesday 04th June 2024. Intelligence had reported that a Dhow of Iranian origin was believed to be delivering narcotics in the region, the position of the Dhow was reported to be just outside the Seychelles EEZ and working in collaboration with the Regional Coordination Operations Centre (RCOC) and the National Information Sharing Coordination Centre (NISCC) an operation was launched to identify the suspected Iranian Dhow by the Seychelles Air Force (SAF), a Patrol Ship was also deployed by the Seychelles Coastguard to conduct visit, board, search and seizure on the suspect vessel.



The SAF successfully identified the position of the Flagless Dhow of Iranian origin and relayed the information to the SCG Patrol Ship, the Special Forces Unit (SFU) team onboard then mounted a successful boarding and an initial search. It was decided that the vessel should be safely escorted back to Port Victoria for a more comprehensive search to be conducted.



The Dhow was escorted back to Port Victoria and on arrival the Seychelles Police and Coastguard search teams wasted no time in commencing a thorough search. After extensively assessing potential locations to conceal narcotics, the search teams discovered a false wall, after investigating a little further a significant amount of narcotics was identified and correct evidence handling was applied by the search teams.



Outcome

The interception by the Seychelles Coastguard resulted in one of the largest ever seizures of narcotics within the Seychelles EEZ. The Seychelles Police Force revealed that the initial findings on the intercepted vessel show 897.33 kilograms of cannabis resin, 9.65 kilograms of herbal material, 7.3 kilograms of heroin and 3 kilograms of methamphetamine.

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