



17th June, 2020

PRESS RELEASE

The attention of the Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority has been drawn to media publications on the issue of 100.10 grammes of substances suspected to be narcotics which are alleged to have gone missing after a joint operation by security operatives at the Kpoglo border post in the Volta Region on Friday, 5th June, 2020.

The Authority wishes to inform the public as follows:

1. On Friday, 5th June, 2020, officers of the Customs Division on duty, together with other security operatives at the Kpoglo border post, intercepted a Toyota Land Cruiser Prado vehicle with registration number LSR 815 FV. Upon further investigation, some substances suspected to be narcotics and an amount of money in foreign currency amounting to USD 200,000 were found in the vehicle. Unfortunately, the driver of the vehicle fled the scene. All the items that were found in the vehicle were documented by the officers of the joint security operation at Aflao and handed over to the Customs Division for safekeeping.
2. On Monday 8th June, 2020, before the items could be escorted to Accra to be handed over to the Narcotics Control Commission, local officials from the Narcotics Control Commission (NACOB) requested that the substances be verified to ascertain whether they were all intact. Again, this exercise was carried out in the presence of all the security operatives. It was detected that 100.10 grammes of the substance were unaccounted for.
3. Customs officers, together with Immigration Service officers escorted the intercepted items to Accra, but at Dawa, the vehicle developed a mechanical fault and the items were therefore escorted to Accra without the vehicle. However, the vehicle was towed to Accra the next day and remains in the custody of the Customs Division headquarters.
4. The items were handed over to the Commissioner Customs Division in the presence of invited media personnel. Another inventory was carried with the report detailing the description of the exhibits. The report acknowledged that 100.10 grammes of the substance was missing. However, officers of the Narcotics Control Commission refused to take delivery of the exhibits because the vehicle was not part of the items.
5. When NACOB officials refused to take delivery of the exhibits, the Commissioner Customs Division then directed that the exhibits should be handed over to the Police Forensic Laboratory for the necessary testing and the cash amounting to USD 200,000 was deposited at the Bank of Ghana.

6. We want to put it on record that the process of arrest, handling of and handing over of all the exhibits has been inclusive, transparent and was carried out with the utmost integrity on the part of the Customs Division.
7. In this regard, the Customs Division is currently carrying out detailed investigations into the circumstances surrounding the handling and storage of the missing substance. When concluded, the outcome of these investigations and the findings of the Police Forensic Laboratory will be made public.
8. This notwithstanding, the Customs Division wishes not to, under any circumstance, engage in what could be perceived as a 'media war' with fellow government agencies with whom it regularly works closely, especially when investigations are ongoing.
9. The Customs Division remains steadfast in carrying out its preventive functions at all the country's borders and will not under any circumstance compromise on its mandate. We continue to cooperate with all state agencies, especially in joint border patrols in the common interest of good governance, including working with all other partner organisations and stakeholders to ensure the security and development of Ghana.

For: **COMMISSIONER, CUSTOMS DIVISION**

Signed
FLORENCE ASANTE (MRS)
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER
COMMUNICATION & PUBLIC AFFAIRS

