

Record drugs bust for Kingdom-based CMF

\$2.1 million worth heroin and crystal methamphetamine was seized and destroyed by HMS Dragon crew

● The sales of illicit drugs are a known source of funding for terrorist groups and criminal networks.

● This year CTF 150 has destroyed 49,255 kg of illicit drugs.

TDT | Manama

HMS Dragon, operating under the Combined Maritime Forces, has conducted her second major seizure of narcotics in less than two weeks, the CMF website reported.

The Type 45 Destroyer was on patrol as part of CMF's Combined Task Force (CTF) 150 when the crew found and destroyed more than 500kg of drugs, including nearly 200kg of heroin and 9kg of crystal methamphetamine.

The drugs would have sold locally for more than \$2.1 million US dollars and for many times that had they made it to their final markets, according to CMF.

These sales of illicit drugs are a known source of funding for terrorist groups and criminal networks. This year CTF 150



The HMS Dragon team with seized drugs.

has destroyed 49,255 kg of illicit drugs.

CTF 150 has recently come under the command of the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN). The Task Force is led by Commodore Darren Garnier RCN.

"I thank HMS Dragon for its continued vigilance and support to CTF 150 so early in our tenure of command, and for a superbly executed drug interdiction operation. This seizure

of illicit drugs is continuing to deny terrorists the use of the high seas as a pathway for illegal activity," he said in the report.

HMS Dragon encountered the suspicious dhow on the "Smack Track" smuggling route running from the Makran Coast of Iran and Pakistan to the shores of East Africa.

Lt Jonathan Bennett, one of HMS Dragon's officers, said: "I

had just taken over the watch when I spotted this dhow, and whilst a common sight within the Middle East and the Indian Ocean, this was in an unusual area for the size of vessel. It looked suspicious, and as we closed in on the vessel, the boarding teams went out in the sea boats to talk to the crew of the dhow. Their answers raised our suspicions further, and so we started a boarding. Fol-

500
kilograms of drugs were seized by the HMS Dragon team.

lowing a search by our trained teams we were able to locate and recover these narcotics, stopping their onward likely travel to their final markets, as well as disrupting the funding of illicit activity."

Commander Michael Carter Quinn, the Commanding Officer of HMS Dragon, said: "To achieve this seizure, so swiftly after the last, is demonstration of the hard work and professionalism of all the Dragons on board. I am delighted for the new team at CTF 150 to start their Command so positively."

CMF is a multi-national military organisation based in Bahrain. CMF's purpose is to maintain maritime security in the busy sea lanes of the Middle East. HMS Dragon will spend the period over Christmas at sea continuing her support to CTF 150 and her great work ensuring the security of the high seas.

Book Fest begins today

TDT | Manama

Renowned Indian film actor and writer Prakash Raj will inaugurate the BKS-DC International Book Fest and Cultural Carnival at the Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam (BKS) Hall in Segaya today.

Mr Raj's book 'Namm Vizhunganma Maunam' will be released at the event.

On December 14, 'Narendra Modi: Creative Disruptor', penned by R Balashankar, will be released. A special function attended by Indian Member of Parliament Meenakshi Lekhi will also be held on the same day.

The events will continue until December 22, which will see many dignitaries including writers K G Sankara Pillai, N S Madhavan and Indian Administrative Service officer K V Mohan Kumar in attendance.

Art installations, photography exhibitions, cultural events, live concerts, food court, art and craft corners, literary camps and workshops, camp fire with celebrities, cultural quiz, live painting and tug of war will be held as part of the event, organisers said.

Legendary singer to headline event

TDT | Manama

Legendary singer Dr P Susheela will perform live at the Indian Club on December 16 as part of the event marking the National Day. A troupe of 20 musicians will accompany the legendary singer, who has found place in the Guinness Book of World Records.

Dialogue puts spotlight on cultural diversity

TDT | Manama
Harpreet Kaur

Major personalities belonging to the Arab and European cultural scenes came together to discuss the significance of culture as a structuring element in history.

"The Intercultural Dialogue Between World Cities" was attended by André Azoulay, senior adviser to King Mohammed VI of Morocco, Shaikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, Amandine Lepoutre, Founder and President of Thinkers and Doers, Manal Ataya, Director-General of the Sharjah Museums Department and Catherine Guillou, the Director of Visitors at Centre



From left, Mr André, Shaikha Mai, Ms Amandine, Ms Manal and Ms Catherine at the dialogue.

Pompidou.

They gathered in Paris for a unique

roundtable panel discussion under the

banner, 'Culture Diversity: at the heart

of new Citizenship in the Cities'.

Speaking to Tribune, Amandine said,

"In this restless period we are going through, culture appears to be the base of our identities. Tomorrow's world doesn't exist without a strong rooting in our values, our DNA, our heritage. This is what we noticed while organizing conferences in Europe, in the Arab world and in Africa under the title 'culture in cities is at the heart of development'.

"It is what is allowing us to think and act in a sustainable way, in order to better transform oneself and act with the others. Manama and Sharjah are symbolic examples of this dynamic."

André said culture can't solve everything but it leads to dialogue from a strong base.

"Culture always wins. It is a resistant tool," said Shaikha Mai.

Eligible employees approved for voluntary retirement

● CSB Organisation and Job budgeting director-general Jamal Abdulaziz Al Alawi urged the departments of human resources to verify the payments before closing the human resources system.

Manama

The Civil Service Bureau (CSB) has approved the applications of employees who met the terms of voluntary retirement programme. Lists of the eligible applicants have been referred to government departments which will, in turn, inform their employees officially within a week.

In a statement issued yesterday, CSB Chief Ahmed bin

Zayed Al Zayed said that lists of eligible applicants had also been sent to the General Organisation for Social Insurance (GOSI) to finalise retirement procedures. Employees planning to buy virtual years of service have been urged to co-ordinate with their respective departments and finalise the required procedures.

The directorates of human resources at Govern-



”

The lists of eligible applicants had also been sent to the General Organisation for Social Insurance (GOSI) to finalise retirement procedures.

MR AL ZAYED

ment departments have also been directed to enter in the system the end of service entitlements, the previous promotion differences and the final account of the admitted staff.

CSB Organisation and Job budgeting director-general Jamal Abdulaziz Al Alawi urged the departments of human resources to verify the payments before closing the human resources system.