

4 caught in raids over new boat laws

POLICE yesterday made their first arrests under a law which makes it an offence to build, or repair, a vessel that is used for smuggling purposes.

They arrested four men in two separate raids in Sai Kung following the anti-smuggling operation that was carried out on Wednesday.

During the operation they found the hulls of three speedboats under construction.

Officers of the anti-smuggling task force, in a follow-up operation to the simultaneous operations carried out in Hongkong and Chinese waters, raided a warehouse in Hongkong Kin Road, Sai Kung, at about 10.50 am.

They arrested two men, aged 25 and 63, who were found near the hull of a suspected speedboat.

Officers later went to a vacant plot of land in Luk Mei Village where they arrested another two men aged 41 and 52.

The Import and Export (Amendment) Ordinance 1991, which came into effect last month, makes it an offence to repair, construct or maintain a vessel that is used for smuggling purposes.

The new legislation is designed to combat smuggling by cutting off the supply of speedboats.

These boats can easily outrun Marine Police launches.

■ Two illegal immigrants who were caught trying to smuggle two motorcycles to China from Hongkong, were jailed for 18 months yesterday.