

# Man gets death for 200kg of drugs in Tawau

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*Tai (centre) being led away after being sentenced yesterday.*

**TAWAU:** A mechanic was sentenced to death by the Tawau High Court, Friday, for trafficking nearly 200kg of syabu - the first case here after the passing of the Mandatory Death Penalty Abolition Act 2023, which came into effect on July 4, last year. Tai Chee Kiong, 51, who is the father of a son, was seen wiping his eyes with his hand after the sentence was handed down by Judge Datuk Dr. Lim Hock Leng. In his judgement, Dr. Lim said the sentence was imposed because, although the case was Tai's first offence, it involved the largest amount of drugs in the State ever tried in court, which was 199,950.1gm. He said the Tawau High Court had convicted drug offenders involving 35kg, 12kg, 10kg, seven kg and four kg in the last three years, but the quantity was still not equal to the total weight of drugs brought by Tai. "The accused also did not show remorse for his actions and was not even mentioned in the defence's argument," Dr Lim said, who also took public interest into account in his decision. When the judge gave him the opportunity to speak before being sentenced, Tai chose not to say anything. Tai is accused of trafficking 199,950.1gm of syabu in the Kg Batu Payung area around 7.30 p.m. on Sept 6, 2021. Tai is charged under Section 39B (1)(a) of the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952, which is punishable under Section 39B(2) of the same Act, which carries the death penalty, life imprisonment, and caning not less than 15 times, upon conviction. Deputy Public Prosecutor (DPP) Hurman Hussain said although the decision of whether the accused is sentenced to death by hanging or life imprisonment (30 years) and a minimum of 12 lashes is at the discretion of the court. He applied that Tai be sentenced to death by hanging, taking into account the amount of drugs and public interest factor. The prosecution was conducted with DPP Mohd Suhaimi Suriana while Tai was represented by Darmin Acok. The trial of the case took place on Nov 27 and 28, last year with five prosecution witnesses being called to testify while the defence took place on Dec 5 and 6. The prosecution's first witness, State Chemistry Department Analyst, Billing Peter Raig, told the court during last year's trial proceedings that the drug was the largest sample analysed in the State and the largest number of positive samples after analysis from a seizure.