



MEDIA RELEASE

Immediate

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SINGAPORE CUSTOMS ARRESTS TWO MEN FOR EVADING NEARLY HALF A MILLION IN DUTIES AND TAXES

Two male Singaporeans, aged 19 and 26, were caught with 4,150 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes on 3 May 2023.

Singapore, 8 May 2023 – In its ongoing efforts to detect and deter tax evasion, Singapore Customs conducted two operations in Tuas on 3 May 2023. The operations saw two men arrested for the possession of 4,150 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes with the duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded amounting to \$444,216.

2 In the vicinity of Tuas Bay Close, Singapore Customs officers sighted a man opening the side compartment of a van containing black squarish objects. Following a check conducted, the officers uncovered 2,072 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes in the van and arrested the man. A second man subsequently seen approaching the van was also arrested. Investigations revealed that the first man was allegedly engaged by the second man to collect the van at Tuas Bay Close to deliver the duty-unpaid cigarettes.

3 The officers conducted a follow-up operation and checked on another van at Tuas Avenue 2, which led to the discovery of another 2,078 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes. The duty-unpaid cigarettes and the two vehicles were seized. The total duty and GST evaded amounted to about \$407,530 and \$36,686 respectively. Investigations are ongoing.

4 Buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, possessing or dealing with duty-unpaid goods are serious offences under the Customs Act and the GST Act. Offenders can be fined up to 40 times the amount of duty and GST evaded and/or jailed for up to six years. Vehicles used in the commission of such offences are also liable to be forfeited.

5 Members of public with information on smuggling activities or evasion of duty or GST can call the Singapore Customs hotline on 1800-2330000 or email customs_intelligence@customs.gov.sg to report these illegal activities.

Annex A: Photos of the operations

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About Singapore Customs

Singapore Customs, a lead agency under the Ministry of Finance, protects revenue and facilitates trade. We make trade easy, fair and secure. We ensure compliance with customs regulations and collect taxes and duties on dutiable and taxable goods. We promote trade competitiveness and ensure the security of the supply chain.

We work closely with other government agencies, industry partners, and international organisations as we safeguard Singapore's borders against potential risks and threats. With the use of data analytics and various advanced technologies, we continuously leverage digital initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of customs processes.

By proactively balancing these intricate requirements of trade facilitation, security and regulatory compliance, Singapore Customs strengthens Singapore's position as a global trade hub trusted by businesses operating in Singapore and foreign trading partners.

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ANNEX A



Duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the first van.



Duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the second van.



The two men arrested and duty-unpaid cigarettes seized from the first van.