

SINGAPORE CUSTOMS PRESS STATEMENT

42,600 cartons of contraband cigarettes seized

On 11 Apr 03, acting on intelligence received, Customs officers seized a container containing a total of 42,600 cartons of cigarettes with a value of \$3.15 million at a private warehouse at Keppel Distripark. The customs duty and GST of the cigarettes are \$2,172,600 and \$126,096 respectively. A 49-year-old Singaporean Indian male suspected to be involved in the import of the container was detained for investigation.

Officers mounted 4 days of round-the-clock operation between 8 and 11 Apr 2003 at the PSA wharves to keep surveillance on the suspect container, which was said to contain slippers.

On 11 Apr 2003, the container was trucked to a private warehouse in Keppel Distripark. Officers moved in at the time of unstuffing of the container. Stacked in front at the door of the container were cartons containing slippers and the boxes of cigarettes of the brand Benson & Hedges were stacked behind. The contents were seized.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the container was consigned to a fictitious company in Circular Road. Customs believe that the contraband cigarettes are meant for local consumption. Investigations are still in progress. This is the first major case detected since the formation of Singapore Customs on 1 Apr 2003.

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12 April 2003