



## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

### **SINGAPORE CUSTOMS – ICA JOINT OPERATION RESULTED IN SEIZURE OF 22,500 CARTONS OF CONTRABAND CIGARETTES**

On 8 August 2006 at about 2.25 pm, Singapore Customs seized 22,500 cartons (225,000 packets) of duty-unpaid cigarettes at Tagore Lane. The cigarettes carry an estimated market value of \$2 million. The total duty and GST payable is about S\$1,775,700.

2 The Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) scanned and detected suspicious contraband items in a 20-footer container and alerted Singapore Customs. On 7 August 2006, the container was trucked out of the PSA Tanjong Pagar port to Tagore Lane. The team of officers from Singapore Customs moved in to check the container and found 22,500 cartons of undeclared Marlboro cigarettes. Singapore Customs is conducting further investigation into the case.

3 Just five days ago, on 3 August 2006, Singapore Customs officers seized 23,700 cartons (237,000 packets) of duty-unpaid cigarettes with market value of over \$2.1 million and duty and GST payable of \$1,859,000. The cigarettes were hidden in three large cylindrical tanks at Kranji Way.

4 Singapore Customs warns that the storing, possession, conveying or dealing with any contraband cigarettes are serious offences under the Customs Act and will be prosecuted. The public are also advised against buying duty-unpaid cigarettes. Buyers and consumers of duty-unpaid cigarettes stand to pay a composition of \$200 per packet.

5 Members of the public with information on any illegal activities involving duty-unpaid cigarettes are encouraged to contact the Customs toll-free hotline on 1800-2330000.

6 As our country's first line of defence against terrorist threats, ICA has a duty to ensure the security and safety of Singapore. We have tightened our security checks on passengers and vehicles at the checkpoints to prevent attempts to smuggle in undesirable persons, drugs, weapons, explosives and other contraband. We would like to advise the public against smuggling unlawful goods into Singapore.