



SINGAPORE CUSTOMS 新加坡关税局 **KASTAM SINGAPURA** சிங்கப்பூர் சுங்கத்துறை

MEDIA RELEASE

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Singapore Customs seizes 17,601 cartons of contraband cigarettes over eight days

Singapore Customs has seized 17,601 cartons of contraband cigarettes in four operations over eight days.

The total street value of the cigarettes and the total duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded exceeded S\$1.8 million and S\$1.5 million respectively.

On 19 May 2013, a 20-foot container at the Tanjong Pagar Scanning Station was stopped for routine checks by Immigration & Checkpoints Authority officers. The consignment of goods had been declared as floor and wall tiles. But cartons containing duty-unpaid cigarettes were found instead. Singapore Customs was immediately notified of the detection.

Singapore Customs officers kept a close watch as the container was transported to a warehouse at Kallang Avenue. The following day, the officers saw four men attempting to unload the cigarettes from the container. They moved in to arrest the men and seized 14,400 cartons of cigarettes.

This is Singapore Customs' third largest seizure of contraband cigarettes since 2009.

On 20 and 23 May 2013, Singapore Customs officers inspected two targeted consignments at the Changi Airfreight Centre that were suspected to contain duty-unpaid cigarettes. The consignments had been declared as electrical components and "consolidated cargo". A total of 1,521 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes were recovered from these two operations at the Changi Airfreight Centre.

On 27 May 2013, Singapore Customs officers targeted a consignment at the Keppel Distripark that had been declared as garments. This resulted in the seizure of 1,680 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes.

Investigations into these cases are ongoing.

"There will be no let-up in our targeting, surveillance and enforcement efforts against smugglers who attempt to bring duty-unpaid cigarettes into Singapore," said Mr Goh Hoon Lip, Deputy Head of Special Investigation Branch, Singapore Customs (新加坡关税局缉私处副处长吴坤立). "Those who think that they will not be caught will be in for a big surprise."

Buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, having in possession or dealing with duty-unpaid goods are serious offences under the Customs Act and the GST Act. Offenders will be severely dealt with. They can be fined up to 40 times the amount of duty and GST evaded and/or jailed for up to six years.

The minimum court fine for first-time and repeat offenders of tobacco-related offences are \$2,000 and \$4,000 respectively. Repeat offenders who are caught with more than two kilogrammes of tobacco products will also face mandatory imprisonment. Vehicles used in the commission of such offences are also liable to be forfeited.

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ANNEX



A container of goods declared as floor and wall tiles was checked at the Tanjong Pagar Scanning Station on 19 May 2013...



...and they turned out to be 14,400 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes.



The consignment declared as electrical components at the Changi Airfreight Centre.



Part of the 1,521 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes seized in the two operations at the Changi Airfreight Centre on 20 and 23 May 2013.



The consignment declared as garments at Keppel Distripark...



... was actually 1,680 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes.

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