



**IMMIGRATION & CHECKPOINTS AUTHORITY
AND
SINGAPORE CUSTOMS**

JOINT NEWS RELEASE

**ICA, SINGAPORE CUSTOMS SEIZED CONTRABAND CIGARETTES
WORTH OVER A MILLION DOLLARS**

On a daily basis, Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers at the checkpoints come across contraband and security-related items such as duty-unpaid cigarettes, flick knives and airsoft guns. However, when a million dollars' worth of contraband cigarettes was seized, it was certainly something worth a mention. The seven-figure sum was not only eye-catching; it was also one of the largest seizures for this year!

2. On Wednesday, 13 November 2013 at about 4.15pm, a 40-footer container arrived at the Pasir Panjang Scanning Station for clearance. The consignment was declared to contain "candle holders, pens and towels". As part of our checks, ICA officers directed the container for radiographic scanning. In addition, the container had been identified by Singapore Customs for further checks. The experienced ICA officers noticed that the scanned images were inconsistent with the goods declared. The container was then directed for physical inspection.

3. In the course of their checks, the officers did not see any of the declared cargo inside the container. Instead, they found boxes of contraband cigarettes. Singapore Customs seized the container and its 14,400 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes. The estimated street value of the duty-unpaid cigarettes is a whopping

\$1.37 million. The evaded duty and GST involved amounted to about \$1.01 million and \$96,000 respectively.



Candle holders, pens, towels...or something more?



Singapore Customs seized 14,400 cartons of contraband cigarettes.

4. The case is now under the Singapore Customs for further investigations.

5. 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. Repeat offenders can be fined up to 40 times the amount of duty evaded and/or jailed for up to six years. Vehicles used in the commission of such offences are also liable to be forfeited.

6. Our borders are our first line of defence in safeguarding Singapore's security. The security checks are critical to our nation's security. We will continue to conduct security checks on passengers and vehicles at the checkpoints to prevent attempts to smuggle in undesirable persons, drugs, weapons, explosives and other contrabands. The same methods of concealment used by contraband smugglers may be used by terrorists to smuggle arms and explosives to carry out attacks in Singapore.

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