



ICA
Securing Our Borders,
Safeguarding Our Home

JOINT NEWS RELEASE

JOINT OPERATION LEADS TO ARREST OF FOUR MEN AND SEIZURE OF MORE THAN 9,081 CARTONS OF DUTY-UNPAID CIGARETTES

Singapore Customs arrested four Singaporean men, aged between 24 and 48, and seized more than 9,081 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes in a joint operation with the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA).

2. On 12 May 2021, ICA officers at Pasir Panjang Scanning Station detected anomalies in the scanned image of a 20-foot container. Suspecting the container to contain duty-unpaid cigarettes, the information was shared with Singapore Customs.

3. On 13 May 2021, Singapore Customs officers mounted an operation at a store unit in an industrial building at Jalan Pemimpin. Three men were seen entering a store unit after four steel water tanks were unloaded from a container and moved into the unit. Officers moved in to check and found duty-unpaid cigarettes concealed in the water tanks. Small quantities of duty-unpaid cigarettes and e-vaporiser pods were also found in one of the men's car parked outside the industrial building. (See photos at Annex).

4. The operation led to a seizure of 9,081 cartons and eight packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes. The total duty and Goods and Services tax (GST) evaded amounted to about \$776,550 and \$62,280 respectively. The e-vaporiser pods were referred to the Health Sciences Authority for investigations.

5. Follow-up investigations revealed that a fourth man was also involved in the importation of the duty-unpaid cigarettes concealed in the steel water tanks. All four men have been arrested. One man has been charged in court which granted application for him to be remanded until 21 May 2021 for further investigations. Investigations are ongoing for the other three men.

6. 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 can be fined up to 40 times the amount of duty and GST evaded and/or jailed for up to six years.

7. Singapore's borders are our first line of defence against threats to Singapore's safety and security as well as efforts to clamp down on illicit trade such as smuggling of contrabands. ICA will continue to conduct security checks at the checkpoints and work with relevant authorities to prevent smuggling attempts. Members of public with information on smuggling activities or evasion of customs duty or GST can call the Singapore Customs hotline on 1800-233-0000 or email customs_intelligence@customs.gov.sg to report these illegal activities.

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Annex



The steel water tanks containing duty-unpaid cigarettes found at a store unit in an industrial building at Jalan Pemimpin. (Photos: Singapore Customs)



Duty-unpaid cigarettes and e-vaporiser pods found in one of the men's car parked outside the industrial building. (Photos: Singapore Customs)



More than 9,081 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes seized in the operation. (Photo: Singapore Customs)

**SINGAPORE CUSTOMS
IMMGRATION & CHECKPOINTS AUTHORITY**

18 May 2021