



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Immediate**

13 December 2024

### **THREE ARRESTED FOR EVADING OVER \$870,000 IN DUTIES AND TAXES**

Singapore, 13 December 2024 – Singapore Customs arrested three men in an operation targeting duty-unpaid cigarettes on 10 December 2024. The operation resulted in the seizure of 7,383 cartons and 7,031 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes, along with three vehicles.

2 During the operation, Customs officers uncovered 3,900 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes on a truck at Choa Chu Kang Street 64. The truck's driver, a 43-year-old Malaysian male, was arrested. Keys found in his possession led officers to another truck and an industrial unit at Gambas Crescent. The additional searches uncovered 2,509 cartons and 7,015 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes in the second truck, and 14 cartons and 16 packets in the industrial unit.

3 In another follow-up at Choa Chu Kang Crescent, officers checked a car and uncovered 960 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes. Two male Singapore Permanent Residents, aged 20 and 21, were arrested at the scene.

4 Investigations revealed that the 43-year-old Malaysian and the 20-year-old Permanent Resident were allegedly engaged by unknown persons to deliver duty-unpaid cigarettes. The 21-year-old Permanent Resident was allegedly recruited by the 20-year-old to assist in the deliveries.

5 The total duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded amounted to about \$876,305. Court proceedings against the three individuals are ongoing.

6 Under the Customs Act and the GST Act, buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, possessing or dealing with duty-unpaid goods are serious offences. Offenders can be fined up to 40 times the amount of duty and GST evaded and/or jailed for up to six years. Vehicles used in committing such offences are also subject to forfeiture.

7 Members of the public with information on smuggling activities or evasion of duty or GST can report it to Customs at <https://go.gov.sg/reportcustomsoffence>.

Annex A: Photographs of the operation

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### **About Singapore Customs**

Singapore Customs, a lead agency under the Ministry of Finance, protects revenue and facilitates trade. We make trade easy, fair and secure. We ensure compliance with customs regulations and collect taxes and duties on dutiable and taxable goods. We regulate the export of strategic goods and implement Singapore's commitments to some international trade regulations such as the United Nations Security Council Sanctions.

We work closely with other government agencies, industry partners, and international organisations in our mission and operations. With the use of data analytics, digitalisation of processes and various technologies, we continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of customs processes.

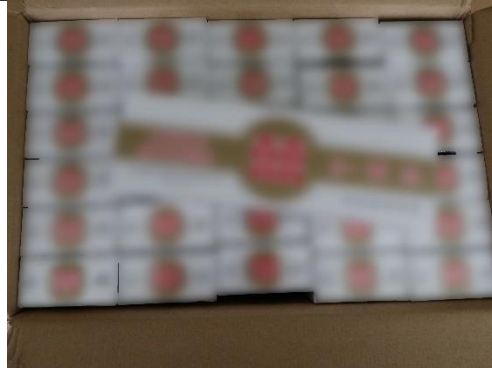
By proactively balancing the intricate requirements of trade facilitation, security and regulatory compliance, Singapore Customs strengthens Singapore's position as a global trade hub trusted by businesses operating in Singapore and foreign trading partners.

To find out more, visit our website at [www.customs.gov.sg](http://www.customs.gov.sg)

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**Annex A**



Duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the truck at Choa Chu Kang Street 64



Duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the truck at Gambas Crescent



Duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the industrial unit at Gambas Crescent



Duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the car at Choa Chu Kang Crescent