



MEDIA RELEASE

Immediate

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FOUR MEN ARRESTED FOR EVADING MORE THAN \$50,000 IN DUTIES AND TAXES

Three male Singaporeans and a male Chinese national, aged 23 to 54, were caught with 436 cartons and 745 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes from 16 to 18 May 2023.

Singapore, 26 May 2023 – In its ongoing efforts to detect and deter revenue evasion, Singapore Customs conducted three operations in Pandan Loop, Toa Payoh East, and Canberra Road from 16 to 18 May 2023. The operations saw four men arrested for the possession of 436 cartons and 745 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes with the duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded amounting to about \$54,170.

2 In the first operation conducted at a carpark of an industrial building at Pandan Loop, Singapore Customs officers sighted a Singaporean man, 54, carrying black trash bags from a car walking towards the lift lobby. Officers conducted checks on the man and uncovered 142 cartons and 180 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes in the trash bags and in the car. A follow-up search at a unit of the building uncovered another 100 cartons and 20 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes.

3 In another operation conducted at a carpark in the vicinity of Toa Payoh East, Singapore Customs officers conducted checks on a Chinese national, 42, and a car and uncovered 194 cartons and 316 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes packed in canvas bags in the car boot.

4 In the third operation conducted at a multi-storey carpark at Canberra Road, Singapore Customs officers sighted a man passing a red plastic bag to another man who was on a motorcycle. Following a check on the two Singaporeans, both aged 23, officers uncovered 229 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes.

5 The duty-unpaid cigarettes and the three vehicles were seized. The total duty and GST evaded amounted to about \$49,690 and \$4,470 respectively. The four men were arrested and court proceedings are ongoing.

Offences and penalties

6 Buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, possessing 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. Vehicles used in the commission of such offences are also liable to be forfeited.

7 Members of public with information on smuggling activities or evasion of duty or GST can call the Singapore Customs hotline on 1800-2330000 or email customs_intelligence@customs.gov.sg to report these illegal activities.

Annex A: Photos of the operations

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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 promote trade competitiveness and ensure the security of the supply chain.

We work closely with other government agencies, industry partners, and international organisations as we safeguard Singapore's borders against potential risks and threats. With the use of data analytics and various advanced technologies, we continuously leverage digital initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of customs processes.

By proactively balancing these 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
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ANNEX A



Duty-unpaid cigarettes found and the man arrested near Pandan Loop



Duty-unpaid cigarettes found and the man arrested in Toa Payoh East



Duty-unpaid cigarettes found near Canberra Road