



PRESS RELEASE

SINGAPORE CUSTOMS SEIZED 2450 CARTONS OF DUTY UNPAID CIGARETTES

On 20 April 2005, Customs Special Investigations Branch officers arrested one male Indian Malaysian, (aged 35) and seized a total of 2,450 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes from a Malaysian registered lorry. The customs duty and GST on the seized cigarettes are \$172,480 and \$11,025 respectively. The value of the cigarettes is estimated at \$269,500.

2 At about 5.00 am, officers from Singapore Customs conducted an operation at the vicinity along Woodlands Road to keep watch for the suspect lorry. At about 7.25 am, officers sighted the lorry driven by the accused traveling along Woodlands Road. They intercepted the lorry and found it to be loaded with 3 pallets of plaster boards. Suspecting the cigarettes might be concealed under the plaster board, the lorry was escorted to Customs Office at Keppel Road for a thorough inspection. Upon unpacking a pallet, officers found the plaster boards to be cut-out and packed with cartons of cigarettes inside the hollow. A total of 2450 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes were uncovered from the hollow space of the 3 pallets of plaster boards.

3 The driver admitted that he was employed by a Malaysia-based syndicate and was given RM\$1500 to smuggle in the cigarettes into Singapore. He will be charged in Court on 21 April 2005.

4 Storing, possession, conveying or dealing with any duty-unpaid cigarettes are offences under the Customs Act. Singapore Customs takes a serious view of any attempt to evade duty and tax and will not hesitate to prosecute offenders in court. If convicted, they could be liable to a fine and/or imprisonment. Members of the public with information on smuggling activities or evasion of customs duty or GST may contact the Singapore Customs Intelligence Hotline at 1800-2330000 or email to customs_intelligence@customs.gov.sg

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SINGAPORE CUSTOMS
20 April 2005