



SINGAPORE CUSTOMS 新加坡关税局 **KASTAM SINGAPURA** சிங்கப்பூர் சுங்கத்துறை

MEDIA RELEASE

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Ex-company director fined \$1.95 million for importing duty-unpaid liquor

A former company director was sentenced by the court on 14 April 2014 to a fine of \$1,957,000 or in default 29 months and three weeks' jail for his role in importing duty-unpaid beer and rice wine.

Qi Shuai, 28, a Singaporean, pleaded guilty to six charges of importing, possessing and dealing in duty-unpaid beer and rice wine. Qi, who was the director of wholesale trading company Tita Logistics Pte Ltd, also pleaded guilty to one charge of unauthorised breaking of a Singapore Customs seal. Six more charges were taken into consideration in the sentencing.

The total duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded on the 28,406 bottles and 13,193 cans of duty-unpaid beer and 9,165 bottles of duty-unpaid rice wine exceeded \$198,000.

Singapore Customs began investigations into the company in May 2012. A container of goods imported by Qi, declared as soft drinks, instant noodles and vinegar, arrived at the Pasir Panjang Terminal on 26 May 2012 and was targeted by Singapore Customs officers for sealing to facilitate further checks on the goods.

Two days later, when Qi did not apply for Customs supervision to unstuff the sealed container, Singapore Customs officers proceeded to his company for an on-site inspection. They found the Customs seal placed on the container broken and the goods in the container removed.

The officers searched the company premises and seized a total of 15,780 bottles and 8,448 cans of duty-unpaid beer, and 1,500 bottles of duty-unpaid rice wine, which had been unloaded from the container.

They also seized another 1,766 bottles and 4,025 cans of duty-unpaid beer and 120 bottles of duty-unpaid rice wine, as Qi could not produce documents to show that duty and GST for these goods had been paid.

On 5 June 2012, Singapore Customs officers checked another consignment of goods imported by Qi, which was declared as soft drinks, seasoning and seasoning wine. When the officers opened the container, 750 bottles of duty-unpaid rice wine were found instead.

Further investigations revealed that Qi had sold 10,860 bottles and 720 cans of duty-unpaid beer and 6,795 bottles of duty-unpaid rice wine between December 2011 and May 2012. Qi could not produce documents to show that duty and GST were paid for the liquor sold.

“There will be no let-up in Singapore Customs’ enforcement efforts against those who try to evade duties on liquor products,” said Mr Wan Boon Oon, Head of Trade Investigation Branch, Singapore Customs (新加坡关税局贸易调查处处长万文恩). “Offenders will be caught and dealt with severely.”

Importing, 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 20 times the amount of duty and GST evaded for duty unpaid goods involving beer or wines.

Under Regulation 16(4) of the Customs (Container) Regulations, it is an offence for any person who does not have prior permission of Singapore Customs, to tamper with, open, break, alter or remove any lock, or seal used to seal a container.

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ANNEX



Singapore Customs officers found duty-unpaid beer in Qi Shuai's company premises.



Cartons of duty-unpaid rice wine were also found on the company's premises.